

Unifying Online and Offline Worlds A Machine-Learning Framework for Cross-Channel Attribution and Marketing ROI

CONF42 MACHINE LEARNING 2026

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Conf42 Machine Learning 2026

The Modern Consumer Journey



The Challenge

Today's consumers move fluidly between digital and physical touchpoints, creating increasingly nonlinear paths to purchase. They research products online, visit stores to experience them, engage through social media, and ultimately convert through unpredictable channels.

Traditional attribution models fail to capture this complexity, leaving marketers blind to the true drivers of conversion and ROI.

Why Traditional Attribution Falls Short

Channel Siloes

Separate analytics platforms create fragmented views, making it impossible to see how touchpoints influence each other across the customer journey.

Linear Assumptions

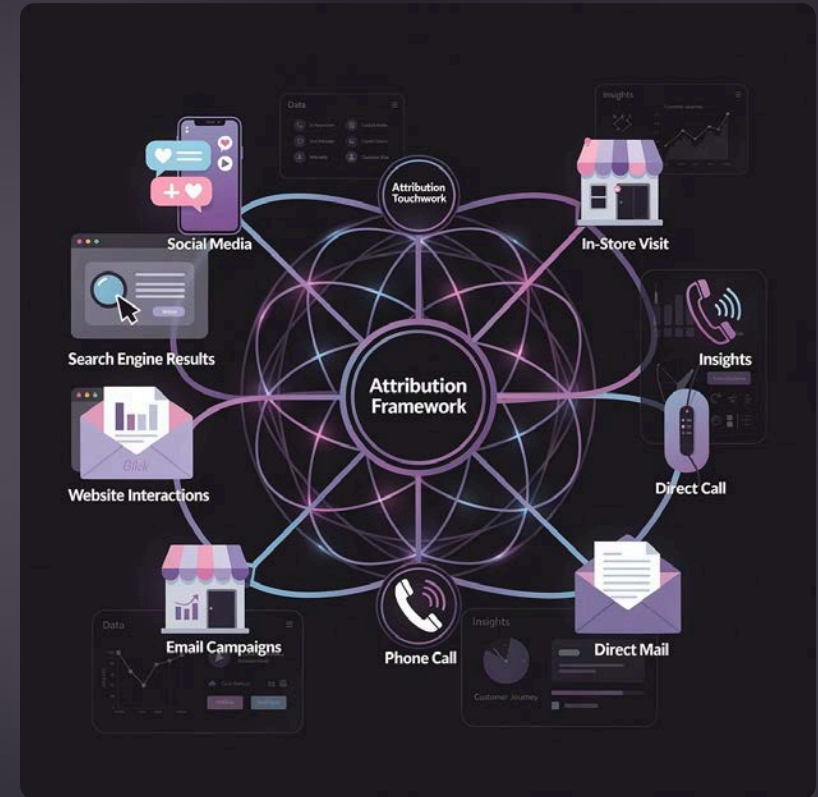
Last-click and first-click models oversimplify reality, ignoring the crucial mid-funnel interactions that shape purchase decisions.

Offline Blindspots

Point-of-sale data and in-person experiences remain disconnected from digital behaviour, creating massive gaps in attribution accuracy.

A Unified Attribution Framework

Machine learning enables us to bridge the online-offline divide by synthesising disparate data sources into a coherent attribution model. This framework integrates website analytics, social engagement, email behaviour, point-of-sale transactions, and in-person interactions revealing patterns invisible to traditional methods.



Core Components of the Framework

- **Data Integration**

Unify touchpoint data across all channels into a centralised repository.

- **ML Modelling**

Apply advanced algorithms to quantify channel contribution and interaction effects.

- **Identity Resolution**

Connect anonymous and known identities to track individuals across devices and contexts.

- **Activation**

Surface insights to optimise budget allocation and campaign strategy in real time.

Cross-Channel Identity Resolution

The Foundation

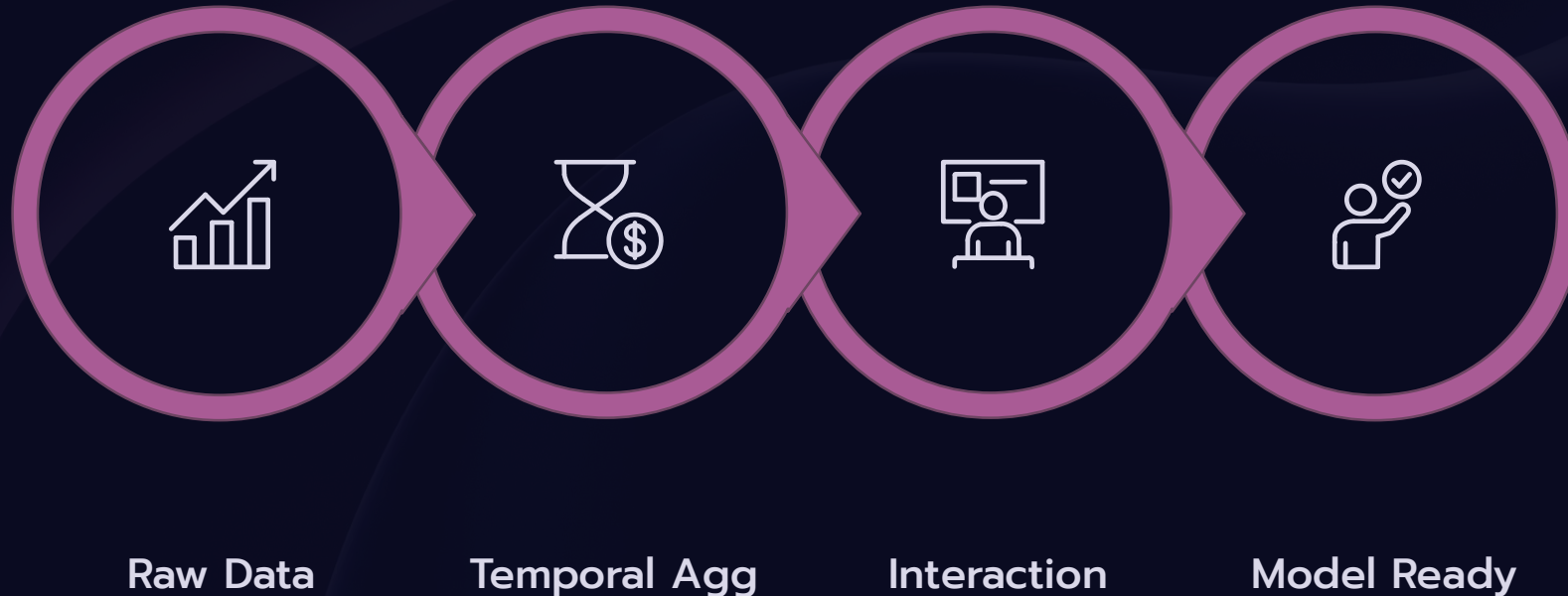
Effective attribution begins with identity resolution the ability to recognise the same individual across devices, sessions, and physical locations. Probabilistic matching techniques combine deterministic identifiers with behavioural signals to create unified customer profiles.

This process involves sophisticated graph algorithms that weigh evidence across touchpoints, balancing precision with coverage to maximise attribution accuracy.

Key Techniques

- Deterministic matching via logged-in states
- Probabilistic matching using device fingerprints
- Graph-based entity resolution
- Privacy-preserving hashing methods

Feature Engineering for Attribution



Feature engineering transforms raw touchpoint data into meaningful predictors of conversion. Temporal features capture recency and frequency, whilst interaction features model cross-channel synergies that drive purchase behaviour.

Advanced Statistical Modelling

Model Performance

Machine-learning approaches significantly outperform rule-based attribution methods. Ensemble models that combine gradient boosting, neural networks, and survival analysis capture complex interaction effects and non-linear relationships.

These models quantify incremental contribution by channel whilst accounting for synergies and diminishing returns.

Uncovering Hidden Channel Interactions

Beyond Independent Effects

The true value of unified attribution lies in revealing cross-channel synergies. Social media engagement may not directly drive conversions, but it amplifies the effectiveness of subsequent email campaigns by 34%.

In-store visits preceded by website browsing convert at 2.8× the rate of walk-ins. These interaction effects remain invisible when channels are analysed independently, leading to systematic budget misallocation.



Organisational Enablers

Data Governance

Establish clear ownership, quality standards, and privacy controls across all touchpoint data sources.

Cross-Functional Alignment

Break down siloes between marketing, analytics, IT, and sales to enable seamless data sharing and insight activation.

Stakeholder Collaboration

Secure executive sponsorship and cultivate buy-in from channel owners to operationalise attribution findings.

Operationalising Attribution Insights

From Insights to Action

Attribution models generate value only when insights flow directly into marketing decisions. Automated budget optimisation systems continuously reallocate spend based on updated attribution weights, whilst A/B testing validates model recommendations.

Campaign activation platforms integrate attribution scores to personalise creative and timing across channels, closing the loop between measurement and execution.

Future-Proofing Your Attribution Practice

01

Privacy-First Architecture

Design systems compatible with emerging regulations through on-device processing, federated learning, and differential privacy techniques.

02

Adaptive Modelling

Build continuous retraining pipelines that adjust to evolving customer behaviours and new channel dynamics without manual intervention.

03

AI Integration

Leverage large language models for automated feature discovery and causal inference to stay ahead of rapid advances in machine learning.

Measuring Success: Attribution ROI

- **Budget Efficiency Gain**

Average improvement in marketing spend efficiency through optimised channel allocation.

- **ROI Improvement**

Typical increase in return on marketing investment after implementing unified attribution.

- **Insight Accuracy**

Improvement in predictive accuracy compared to traditional last-click attribution models.

Your Roadmap to Resilient Attribution

Start Small

Begin with two channels and expand incrementally as capabilities mature.

Invest in Identity

Prioritise cross-device and cross-context identity resolution as your foundation.

Build Coalitions

Secure cross-functional support early to overcome organisational barriers.

Iterate Rapidly

Launch an MVP, measure impact, and refine models based on real-world validation.



Thank You!

Questions and Discussion?

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