

Customer Journey Mapping

The Critical Questions: What, Who, Where, When, Why, and How?

CX professionals are hearing a lot about Customer Journey Mapping these days, but with each new wave of ideas, there comes confusion surrounding it. As expert practitioners of journey mapping for over 15 years, we aim to clear up some of the confusion with this brief.



What

Customer Journey Mapping is a powerful tool for envisioning, designing, and visualizing a holistic experience from your customers' point of view. It helps you understand your customers' journey from their initial need for your product or service, to researching the competition, selecting your company, purchasing, using the product or service, and repurchasing or churning out. It helps you document your customers' journey (using sales and marketing materials, data, survey results, etc.) to create journey maps based on compelling rationale and emotional evidence.

Customer Journey Mapping isn't just a digital clickstream that shows you where your customers move around your digital properties. It's not just big data analytics around aggregate performance or response metrics. It's not a survey of Voice of Customer or social sentiment. It's not focused on one single set of interactions. Instead, Customer Journey Mapping is a tool that helps you better understand and engage your customers by viewing their interactions with your company across the full lifecycle of their experience, preferably broken further down by definable customer segments.



Who

CX managers usually begin with the question, "Who should be journey mapping in my company?" The answer contains not only heads of customer-facing departments, such as marketing, customer service, e-commerce, and direct sales, but it is also important to include other departments, such as finance, HR, and even purchasing, legal, and back-office teams. These people may protest, but if your company sends statements or bills, hires customer-facing staff, or sends out required regulatory documentation, then all of these departments are indeed customer-facing too. The effort of getting a diverse population together is well worth it in terms of truly understanding the good, the bad, and the ugly of your customers' experiences. Once you have identified the right people to conduct your journey mapping exercise, then you must make it relevant to each of them so that they will be properly engaged and motivated to contribute to the process.



Where

Ideally, your initial Customer Journey Mapping effort should be done in person, in a workshop setting. It is important to gather these diverse departments and participants to pull together all of the elements of the customer experience. Butcher paper, sticky notes, colored pens, and catering help keep everyone lively and engaged, and the result is well worth the effort. Participants come away with not only a greater understanding of the customer experience, but also a greater appreciation for their colleagues' contributions to ensuring that the customer experience is the best it can be. If needed, tools such as video conferencing and online collaboration tools can be used to pull in distant teams for both the initial exercises and also for ongoing efforts. Just be sure to carefully document and record these meetings to ensure everyone has the opportunity to validate and provide insights and feedback.



When

Customer Journey Mapping is not a one-and-done exercise. Your customers change, your company changes, and so does your customers' experience. While a moment-in-time view can help you understand your current state today, you also need to look towards the future. What is the experience you want your customers to have? What are the major opportunities for improvement? What are the major milestones you have to complete along the way? Your journey mapping should be an ongoing effort, starting with the current state and revisiting the work on a regular basis in order to show progress. It can and should be used to drive strategy through execution in areas like customer service, new product development, CX transformation, and communications and campaign design.



Why

Customer Journey Mapping may not seem like a mission-critical exercise to some, but in fact, after conducting hundreds of these projects over the years, there has not been one instance where a company has not found immediate revenue enhancement or cost-savings opportunities simply by conducting a simple workshop. One global automotive company saved hundreds of thousands of dollars and improved customer satisfaction rates when the journey mapping effort revealed that six separate surveys were going out to new car buyers within the first two weeks of buying the car. By revealing and fixing this issue, customer frustration was mitigated, surveys were consolidated and shared across various parts of the organization, and communications and satisfaction improved almost immediately.



How

Starting off with a workshop is the best way to launch your journey mapping effort. There are many approaches to mapping – most depend on the company doing the work. Detail-oriented, data-rich companies tend to have a bottom-up approach, documenting each touch first and then mapping them by segment and lifecycle phase. Others, however, take a top-down approach based on emotional, social, or brand-driven elements. They can be agile or structured, based on hypotheses or based on real customer data. Ultimately, the journey mapping effort should result in a sufficient balance between rational and emotional elements, in order to provide the depth of knowledge required to yield an actionable roadmap of initiatives for improvement.

Documenting the results of your workshop in a robust, collaborative tool is critical so that your journey maps can reflect all the valuable detail that the participants have provided. However, once you're done it can often be frustrating to deal with rolled up butcher paper with sticky notes flying all over the place! This is why we initially created SuiteCX™, to help companies easily map, document, display, edit, and share their journey maps and resulting action items electronically.

Just as Customer Journey Mapping is not a stand-alone exercise, neither should it be the only tool in your CX management toolkit. We find that best-in-class companies utilize a mix of well-crafted Voice of Customer and Employee surveys, CX maturity benchmarking, statistically accurate customer segmentation, modeling, and opportunity analysis, prioritization, and planning as inputs to CX transformation. Though there are many companies with pieces, parts, and tools that help you manage all of these important pieces to the CX puzzle, you should plan on consolidating this often disparate set of elements in one place. SuiteCX™ provides that living repository.

The institutional learning benefits that come from using a Customer Journey Mapping methodology are clear. When acted upon strategically and tactically, journey maps result in a measurable impact on both the top and bottom line.

Want to dive deeper into Frequently Asked Questions about Customer Journey Mapping? Go to www.suitecx360.com/CJM and use the coupon code CXPA2018 for a free download of some of our thought leadership.

Do feel free to email us at info@suitecx.com or call us at (510) 655-6511. We love to share ideas, insights, and information.