TOTANGO

The complete guide to customer journey mapping

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01

What is a customer journey map?

A customer journey map shows the steps a customer undergoes during their interactions with your company. Mapping out your customer journey helps you optimize each step in the process in order to improve customers' experience and promote more sales and repeat business. You can create a customer journey map by identifying milestones that mark your customer's progress in their relationship with you. Mapping out these milestones helps you make more effective use of customer engagement strategies and analytics tools.

In a modern customer journey map, the buyer's journey doesn't end with onboarding. There are many stages throughout the customer lifecycle. In order to lower customer churn, maximize revenue and promote advocacy, you need to establish a Customer Success strategy that manages your customers throughout the entire lifecycle with your product or service. This means mapping out the ideal path to recurring value for your customer and recurring revenue for your organization.

Let's explore this guide to customer journey mapping.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

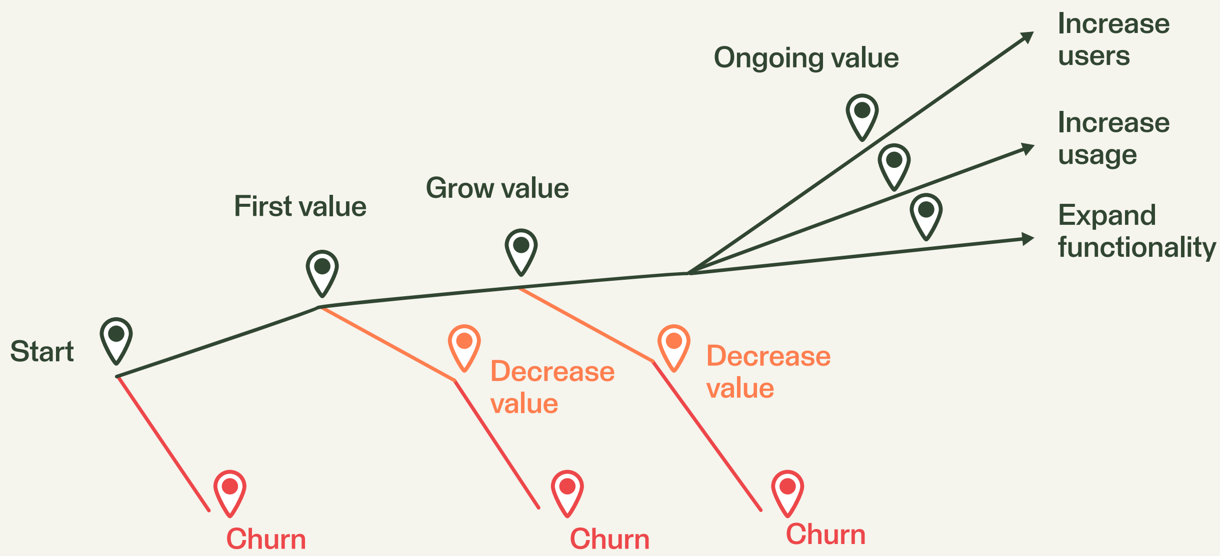
02

Why does your business need a customer journey map?

For any business, a customer journey map can help enhance customer experience and boost repeat business. For most companies, a customer journey map can prove invaluable for optimizing your marketing, sales, and customer service processes in numerous ways. Mapping your customer journey can help you:

1. Promote a customer-centered culture
2. Gain insight into your customer base
3. Pinpoint your ideal buyer
4. Increase inbound marketing efficiency
5. Improve sales conversion rates
6. Enhance customer experience
7. Reduce customer support workloads
8. Generate repeat business
9. Decrease customer churn
10. Increase customer lifetime value

Together, these advantages translate into higher sales for your business. Let's look at each of these benefits in more detail.



1

Promote a customer-centered company culture

Your company experiences your customers differently than your customers experience you. Your marketing and sales team, tech support team and customer service team may each interact with customers differently. But for customers, every interaction with your company is part of a single experience that determines how they feel about your brand and whether they want to buy from you again or recommend you to their friends. This means that awareness of your customer's experience can improve your ability to convey a more positive impression of your brand. A customer journey map heightens your awareness of your customers' experience so that every department in your company can deliver a more consistently positive interaction with your brand.

2

Gain insight into where your customers are coming from

Mapping your customer journey helps you identify how customers are finding your brand. Part of the mapping process includes distinguishing ways that customers are reaching your website through sources such as organic searches, social media, paid advertising, and email marketing. Your map can also include information about which devices and promotional campaigns are generating the most customers. This can lend you insight into how to optimize your marketing mix to meet your customers where they're at.

3

Focus on your ideal buyer

Unfocused marketing generates unqualified leads, which wastes money. When you focus on your ideal buyer's profile, you attract more qualified leads, improving your marketing efficiency and making your promotional campaigns more cost-effective. Mapping how customers are arriving at your website helps you better understand not only where your buyers are coming from, but also who your buyers are. Once you've used this information to better understand the demographics of your buyers, you can then replicate your success by using analytics tools to identify where buyers with similar profiles can be found online.

4

Increase marketing efficiency by leveraging inbound opportunities

Outbound marketing intrudes on customers' everyday lives, which can make them feel negatively about your brand and less likely to buy. Inbound marketing leverages customers' natural interest in your product in order to encourage their propensity to buy products that meet their needs. Mapping your customer journey helps you identify what's drawing inbound customers to your site, giving you insight into how to increase and leverage inbound opportunities.

5

Improve sales conversion rates

Mapping your customer journey provides several benefits that can boost your sales conversion rate. When you focus on inbound marketing to prospects who match your ideal buyer profile, visitors become more likely to follow you on social media, subscribe to your email list and become buyers. A map of your customer journey also helps you optimize each stage of your sales process to promote higher conversion rates at each stage. Additionally, you can track individual customers' progress in the sales process, allowing your marketing and sales representatives to take appropriate action to promote further progress towards a conversion.

6

Enhance customer experience

By helping you identify the stages in your customers' interactions with your brand, mapping empowers you to optimize the customer experience at each stage. You can define exactly what a customer should be experiencing at each point in the process and determine what the desired outcome should be. You can then take steps to remove any barriers to that preferred outcome, such as preventing potential technical problems.

7

Reduce customer service workloads

Mapping out your customer's journey and what might go wrong at each stage helps you reduce the frequency of customer support issues. Since you're aware in advance of potential problems, you can take preventive measures. You can also provide self-service tools such as FAQ lists to help customers handle routine issues they can address themselves. This frees your support staff to focus on issues that truly require their assistance, saving your customers time in the process.

8

Promote repeat business

By improving the quality of your customers' experience, a customer journey map increases your rate of repeat business. Customers who enjoy a smooth experience of your brand are more likely to have high satisfaction rates and more likely to renew their subscriptions. You can also build the renewal process into your customer journey map in order to make it easy for your customers to continue doing business with you.

9

Reduce customer churn

Just as a customer journey map promotes repeat business, it also reduces customer churn. Customers are more likely to walk away from your brand when they experience frustration with using your product due to issues such as user interface problems or technical support issues. By mapping out potential issues and preemptively heading them off, you reduce the odds of customer churn.

10

Increase customer lifetime value

By promoting repeat business and reducing customer churn, customer journey maps increase the average lifetime value of your customers. Because your customers stay with you longer, they buy from you more often. In addition to promoting subscription renewals, a customer journey map also promotes cross-sell and upsell opportunities that can further increase your customer lifetime value.

03

Step-by-step guide to creating a customer journey map

In order to create a customer journey map, it helps to have a map of the steps involved. You can break the process of creating a customer journey map down into the following steps:

1. Deciding what to map
2. Describing your customers
3. Identifying customer interaction touchpoints
4. Laying out your customer journey
5. Marking customer milestones
6. Flag events that require action
7. Adjust and optimize

Here are some guidelines for completing each step.

1

Decide what to map

Customer journey maps come in several major varieties, so you'll first need to decide which type of map you want to create. Four types of maps are common:

- Current state maps
- Day in the life maps
- Future state maps
- Service blueprint maps

Current state maps

Current state maps focus on the thoughts, feelings and actions your customer experiences during the stages of their interaction with your brand. This type of map is usually used to improve your customer's journey.

Day in the life maps

Day in the life maps take a broader view of your customer, encompassing their thoughts, feelings and actions throughout their day including times they're not interacting with your brand. This type of map serves to gain better insight into customer pain points.

Future state maps

Future state maps set goals for what the thoughts, feelings and actions of your customers should be when they interact with your company. This type of map helps you develop ideal objectives to achieve with your customers at each point in their journey.

Service blueprint maps

Service blueprint maps can build on any of the map types above, adding an emphasis on the factors that serve to contribute to customers' thoughts, feelings and actions at a given stage in their journey. These factors can include software user experience, policies and procedures, technical issues and other elements. Service blueprint maps help you identify the variables that determine your customers' experience so that you can make adjustments and improvements.

Using map templates

You don't need to start from scratch when developing these types of customer journey maps. Customer journey map templates for each type of map are available online.

2

Describe your customers

When creating a customer journey map, you'll need to identify and describe the customers whose journeys you'll be mapping. You can do this by creating customer personas that represent a typical customer experience. If your target market includes different types of customers, you can create personas for each type of customer. However, don't create too many different personas or you'll make the mapping process too complex to be practical.

For each customer persona, consider questions such as:

- What are the customer type's demographic characteristics?
- How did they hear about your company?
- What communication channels do they use to interact with your brand?
- What attracted them to your website?
- What goals do they hope to achieve by interacting with your brand?
- What problems are they trying to solve?
- Have they bought anything from you, and if so, what led them to decide to buy?
- Have they started the purchase process but failed to complete it?
- Did they find your website easy to navigate?
- Did they encounter any customer service issues?

To help you answer these types of questions, you can use tools such as surveys of your current customers and analytics data reflecting how customers use your website. You don't necessarily need to answer all of the above questions, but you can focus on the ones that serve your purpose.

A GOAL
WITHOUT
A PLAN
IS JUST
A WISH

3

Identify customer interaction touchpoints

To better understand your customers' journey in their relationship with your brand, your map should include a list of the touchpoints where your customers interact with you. These touchpoints can include:

- Organic search
- Paid ads
- Social media
- Website hot spots
- Email marketing

Start with a comprehensive list of touchpoints, and narrow it down to focus on the ones most relevant to your customers' journey.

4

Lay out your customer journey

After identifying your customers' touchpoints, you should lay them out in a sequential fashion that depicts the path customers take as they progress in their relationship with your brand. While specifics will vary by company and product, the typical customer journey progresses through these stages:

- Marketing activity which attracts prospects to the lead generation stage
- Sales activity which transforms leads into buyers
- Onboarding after purchase
- Adoption of your software following onboarding
- Escalation of support issues
- Renewal of subscriptions or licenses

Each of these stages will have its own sub-stages. Identifying these will help you develop a more granular understanding of your customer journey.

5

Mark customer milestones

At each stage in your customer's journey, your customer's experience breaks down into several key elements:

- Thoughts: What is your customer potentially thinking about at this point in their journey?
- Feelings: What are your customer's potential emotional states?
- Actions: What possible actions is your customer taking?

Your customer journey map will describe your customer's possible experiences in each of these areas at each major stage in their journey. To deliver a satisfying customer experience, seek to identify the ideal components your customer should be experiencing at each stage in order to achieve their goals in using your product. At the same time, you can define how these experiences correspond to milestones related to your business goals. Customer journey milestones can include:

- Pre-sale software demonstrations or trials
- Initial purchase transaction
- Onboarding activities such as activation
- Adoption activities such as usage of a particular product feature
- Cross-sells and upsells
- Renewal

Customize your milestones to fit the specifics of your sales model and customer journey.

6

Flag events that require attention

As you're marking customer milestones, you can also identify what could go wrong at each stage of your customer's journey and what negative experience components might accompany each of these scenarios. For instance, you might identify places in your onboarding process where your customer can experience frustration. You can then develop procedures for how to respond to potential events that threaten to disrupt your customer's experience. Proactively preparing to address such typical issues will allow you to minimize experiences that lower customer satisfaction.

7

Adjust for customer journey optimization

Once you've charted your customer journey map, you can use it to promote customer journey optimization at each stage. You can identify ways to improve your customer journey by using several methods:

- Testing your customer journey process
- Tracking customer behavior with analytics tools
- Soliciting customer feedback through tools such as surveys and interviews

After making adjustments, use ongoing monitoring to test whether your changes represent genuine improvements.

04

Post-purchase customer journey

This stage of the customer journey begins with your first engagement with your customer post-purchase. Totango's SuccessBLOC's allow you to follow them through each stage of the journey and monitor the usage of your product or service—all the way through renewal. This process comprises tracking, measuring, and monitoring customer health at every stage, predicting issues before they occur, and providing course-correcting to ensure the delivery of continuous business value.

In order to accurately chart your post-purchase customer journey, there are five key steps you must complete:

1. Define the customer lifecycle stages
2. Identify milestones and events that require attention at each stage
3. Create health scores and alerts customized to each stage
4. Establish key customer success plays for each lifecycle stage
5. Implement a feedback loop using signal analysis

1

Define customer lifecycle stages

In order to devise a plan to ensure a customer's success, you must first understand which stage they are at in the customer journey. For instance, someone who has just started using your product will act entirely differently than an expert user who has had the product for months. The stages you define are totally unique to each individual company, but generally companies have at least the following three stages:

Stage #1: Onboarding

It is often said that the first 90 days decide the fate of most implementations. Depending on the complexity of your product, this timeframe may be shorter or longer. If the customer feels let down during onboarding, then the journey ahead could be precarious. This is the stage after someone has purchased the product and before they have seen their first value. To ensure a smooth start to your customer's journey, you need to invest in making sure that they have the right support and resources from your company to implement your solution and deploy it successfully across their organization. This stage generally ends when the customer first begins seeing the business impact and value of using your solution.

Stage #2: Established

Once a customer has begun to see value from your product on a regular basis, they become an established user. Ideally, at this stage, your product and the value it delivers would be integral to the customer's success, but it still requires monitoring by your success team to ensure the customer stays on track. Ongoing milestones should be based on establishing goals around product usage and adoption, increased user engagement, user growth, and advocacy. Your customer success team can help meet these goals by creating nurture campaigns that ensure the customer continues to experience increasingly more value.

Stage #3: Pre-renewal

As a customer approaches renewal, it is important to be aware of any challenges they may be encountering and carefully measure the business impact and results your solution is providing. This allows you to be sure that you're delivering enough value to have the customer continue using the product. At this stage, it is particularly important for your customer success team to address any outstanding issues that may cause a negative experience for the customer, like support tickets or new user training. Renewals can also present a good time for upsell or add-on sales to accounts that are in good health, so monitoring positive behavior is important.

2

Identify customer milestones and events that require attention

Once you've mapped out the stages of the customer journey, the next step is to highlight the key milestones that show whether or not your customer is seeing value at each stage. Milestones should be things like usage of key features, particular business outcomes, the number of users who are logged in, etc. With each milestone you should be able to determine how long it should take for a user to accomplish.

In addition to milestones, it's important to track any key events that may need the attention of your team. These can be both positive and negative and include things like: significant increases or decreases in usage, changes in administrators, data exports, a drop in health score, or specific user behavior like the CCO not signing in. Using active, real-time monitoring to notify your customer success team about these actions enables them to proactively engage customers and manage them appropriately.

The milestones and events will be specific to your customer journey; here are some examples of events to track in the various stages:

Stage #1: Onboarding

- Administrator completed system setup
- New users have been added to the account
- 20% of licenses have been used
- First "wow" moment with product
- Implementation not completed in set time period
- Activity since purchase

Stage #2: Established

- Consistent and frequent user logins
- More users have been added to the account
- Administrators are viewing reports daily
- Use of advanced features has increased
- Adoption of a new module

Stage #3: Pre-renewal

- User engagement
- Administrator or champion has left the company
- High number of support cases are still open
- Licenses are being under utilized
- Engagement at QBRs and other programs

3

Monitor health scores and alerts

Now that you are tracking milestones and key events, you can use them to build a customer health score for each stage of the customer journey. The health score combines several KPIs, metrics and other variables into one comprehensive metric to help you understand the overall health of your customer. By combining the relevant data points, the health score will tell you whether an account is happy, at risk, or somewhere in the middle.

Your customer success team can monitor the health score over a period of time to get a better understanding of where the customer is and why their status has changed. Alerts can notify you of any changes in account status quickly so you can deal with issues as soon as they occur.

Good customer success teams use objective, data-driven leading indicators and alerts to help them identify:

- Which customers are in trouble so they can proactively reach out and intervene quickly

- Which segments of customers are struggling and which are doing well so the team can focus resources and efforts where they are needed most
- Whether the programs in place are being effective and getting the desired results to achieve goals

Below are some of the key factors that drive health. It is important to remember that health models are not set in stone. They need to be monitored and tweaked to ensure they are adequately representing the true health of your customer.

Primary indicators:

Business outcomes
Is the customer getting the end result they expected when they purchased your product?

Product engagement
Are users logging in and using the application in the way to maximize benefits?

Service utilization
Is the customer fully utilizing their subscription?

Secondary indicators:

Customer satisfaction
What is the feedback from customers and CSMs?

Support and operations
Are there outstanding support, SLA and/or invoicing issues?

4

Define customer success engagement plans for each stage

Once you've defined customer health, it's important to tell your teams what to do with this information. Customer success engagement plans are customized, defined programs that help your team target the right set of users and move them on to the next stage in their journey. These plans include things as simple as a phone call, as well as more complex activities including automated email campaigns and in-person training. As with all other parts of the journey, these key plays must be tailored to the goals of each stage of the customer journey. Below are some examples of customer success plays:

Stage #1: Onboarding

- Account is in good health: This is great! Now you can incorporate some training programs for features you know are key to their success.
- Onboarding has not started yet: Reach out to stakeholders to make sure they get started.
- Schedule a progress review on a weekly basis.
- 10 new users joined the account: Schedule training session for new users or share relevant training tips.

Stage #2: Established

- Started using new feature: Send best practices and power tips documentation. Schedule an adoption review in 30 days.
- Low engagement with reporting functionality: Invite sponsors to a review session that is focused on their particular needs.
- Account is in poor health: Escalate this account. Schedule a meeting with key stakeholders to understand what the issue is, and put a program in place to resolve quickly.

Stage #3: Pre-renewal

- Open support tickets: Escalate tickets to make sure they are resolved quickly. Reach out to key stakeholder and notify about progress.
- Account is in average health: Set up business review with key stakeholder and establish plan to ensure renewal.
- 20% decline in active users: Add this account to watch list to keep an eye out for further decline. Escalate internally to create win-back plan. Invite all users to training webinar.

5

Implement feedback loop using signal analysis

Manually tracking each customer's journey, is like drawing a map by hand and expecting it to be accurate and to scale. Use technology to help you measure, map, and track your customer's journey, drilling down into each milestone and using data to verify your observations.

Once you've established your customer journey, it's important to revisit it regularly with any data you've collected to ensure that is still aligned with the customer's objectives.

By looking at lists of churned and renewed customers, you can identify common events or milestones that may help to refine your customer's journey. At a minimum it is recommended that you review your customer journey on a quarterly basis.

Putting this into practice

Once you've mapped the customer journey you can use it to implement an Early Warning System for your organization. This solution helps you move away from fire fighting at-risk accounts and helps your customer success team focus on proactive customer retention by alerting you to the customers who need attention.

05

Conclusion

By helping you improve customer retention and promote repeat business, your customer journey map points the way towards higher sales revenue for your company. Totango's Spark platform can help your company maximize the value of your customer journey map by making it easy for you to monitor customer buying signals and health scores via their digital scorecard. To find out how Totango can help boost your revenue and enable your team, request a demo at totango.com.

REVENUE ON REPEAT

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It's a commitment to continuous improvement and innovation, led by the customers you've got. So, they meet their goals, and you meet yours.

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