

# **The Customer Journey Explained**

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Release date: 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 2023

*“The customer journey is the path a consumer takes to ultimately purchase a particular product or service.”*

When you put yourself in the shoes of your customer, you soon find out that he is often not immediately ready to buy. He goes through a number of phases, has several contact moments (touchpoints) with your company and needs certain information or support in each phase. We call the sum of these phases the customer journey.

### **Why a customer journey?**

Due to the growth of online purchases, the customer journey is becoming increasingly important for the sale of products and services and customer satisfaction. The customer journey you offer your customers sets you apart from the competition. If you want to turn your initial customers into repeat visitors, you have to offer every customer an optimal customer journey.

Designing and improving your customer journey requires you to view it as your core product, which you actively manage, measure and continuously develop. This is key to elevating your customer journey to competitive advantage.

### **Three variants of the customer journey**

Various models are available to map out the customer journey schematically. Here we look at three popular models that represent the customer journey.

#### **1. Customer journey circle model**

Originally, the customer journey was seen as a cycle of four successive steps:

- To attract
- To convert
- To use
- Preserve

The simplicity and clarity are the major advantages of this model. The limitation is that the complexity of the customer journey is not fully reflected. For example, (the influence of customer experiences on) follow-up purchases are not taken into account. It also misses a typical e-commerce stage like delivery of the product.

The Customer Journey Circle model is a customer experience (CX) framework that represents the cycle of interactions and experiences a customer has with a company over time. It provides a visual representation of the different stages of the customer journey, and it emphasizes the importance of creating a positive, holistic customer experience that starts from the initial awareness stage and continues through post-purchase engagement.

The Customer Journey Circle model highlights the importance of creating a seamless and positive customer experience that covers all stages of the customer journey. It emphasizes the need for companies to understand the customer's needs and motivations at each stage, and to design their interactions and experiences accordingly. By creating a positive customer experience and building customer loyalty, companies can increase customer satisfaction and advocacy, and ultimately drive growth.

