

An unmapped customer journey is costing you sales

6-min read



Do you consider your business customer-centric?

After all, solving customers' problems and responding to their needs is what drives good business. However, in a recent poll of our own clients, a staggering 60% admitted to not having a customer journey - or, at least, not one that was up to date.

The reason for this is simple. In the hustle and bustle of everyday work, mapping our customer journey often gets relegated to the "important but not urgent" pile. This, our data suggests, is either never addressed at all or not regularly updated.

At SBR, we believe that if clients really are at the heart of your business, then you should have a strong understanding of their needs at every stage of the customer journey. In this article, we simplify this sometimes daunting task by breaking down the what, why, who and how of mapping the customer journey.

What is a customer journey?

There are many ways to define a customer journey, but here are a few examples:

A tool that helps marketers understand the series of connected experiences that **customers desire and needs** — whether that be completing a desired task or traversing the end-to-end journey from prospect to customer to loyal advocate.

Gartner

simply a way to describe **the chain of interactions** that begins at the moment a customer perceives a need—"I want help to resolve my service issues" or "I want to buy a home"—and continues until the need is satisfied.

BCG

A visual representation of the customer journey (also called the buyer journey or user journey). It helps you **tell the story of your customers' experiences** with your brand across all touchpoints.



Customer Journey Mapping is a way to **walk in your customers shoes and chart the course as they interact with your company**, creating a consistent and effective customer experience maximizing value for you and your customers.



Your customer journey is a way to carefully track your clients' needs, thoughts and actions through the different stages of their experience with your organisation. From awareness through to consideration, acquisition, service, and ultimately loyalty and advocacy.

On your side, it's a tool that should guide the plans and actions of your teams from Marketing to Sales to Customer Success. What are the different touchpoints along the way?

You can think of the customer journey as the progression from an online dating app to the altar. You don't suddenly go from swiping right to saying 'I do': there's a whole series of experiences and emotions that shape your perception of the other person and allow you to make an increasingly deeper commitment to them over time.

Why is the customer journey important?

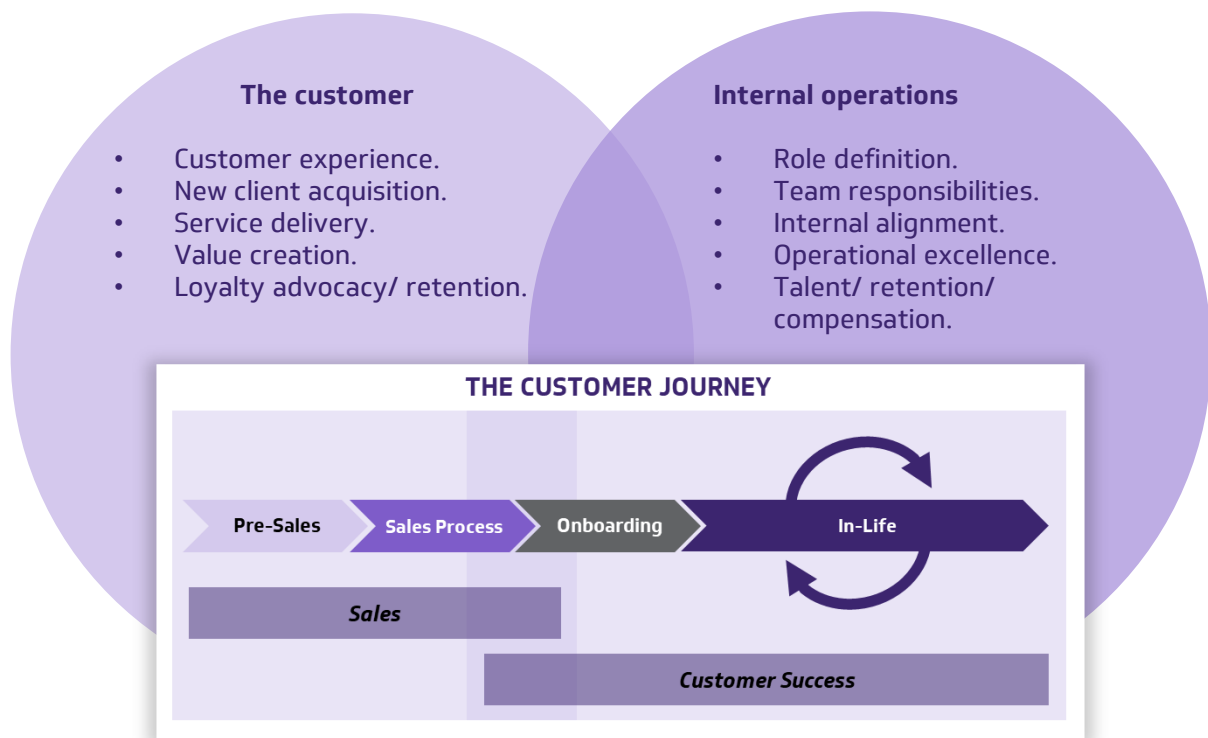
While your clients may once have been satisfied with basics like quality output and fair pricing, the modern buyer expects much more from your business. In fact, 80% of customers now think that the experience they get from a company is as important as the products or services they provide.

Your buyer wants to be wooed.

And, to do the wooing, you must be able to understand their needs, anticipate possible roadblocks and alleviate pain points. This is where your customer journey map is invaluable. With every touchpoint, your map highlights opportunities for you to create moments of value for your customer.

These are moments when your brand can shine and shape your customer's perception of your business in a positive way.

There will be key times in your customer journey when prospects are likely to fall through the net. That's often linked to a lack of effective communication between silos, whether between Marketing and Sales or between Sales and Customer Success. Defining everybody's role and responsibility, as well as processes for sharing vital information between services, allows a more seamless transition between stages.



Who should be involved in mapping your customer journey?

The customer journey stretches across different departments. So, it's important for key people from each team to take part in the mapping process. Each should be able to bring their unique perspective on their portion of your buyer's experience.

The customer, of course, should be part of that process too.

The best way to get an accurate picture of the buyer's experience is to collate feedback from them at each stage of the journey - from "how did you hear from us?" at the awareness stage to "would you recommend us to friends and family?" at the service stage.

Asking the right questions at the right time will help you understand where you can improve.

You should also take that journey yourself. Click on that ad, examine that landing page. Is your site easy to navigate? Can you quickly and easily find answers to your questions? And when you first speak to a member of staff, do you feel listened to, or do you feel like you're speaking to a robot?

How to map your customer journey?

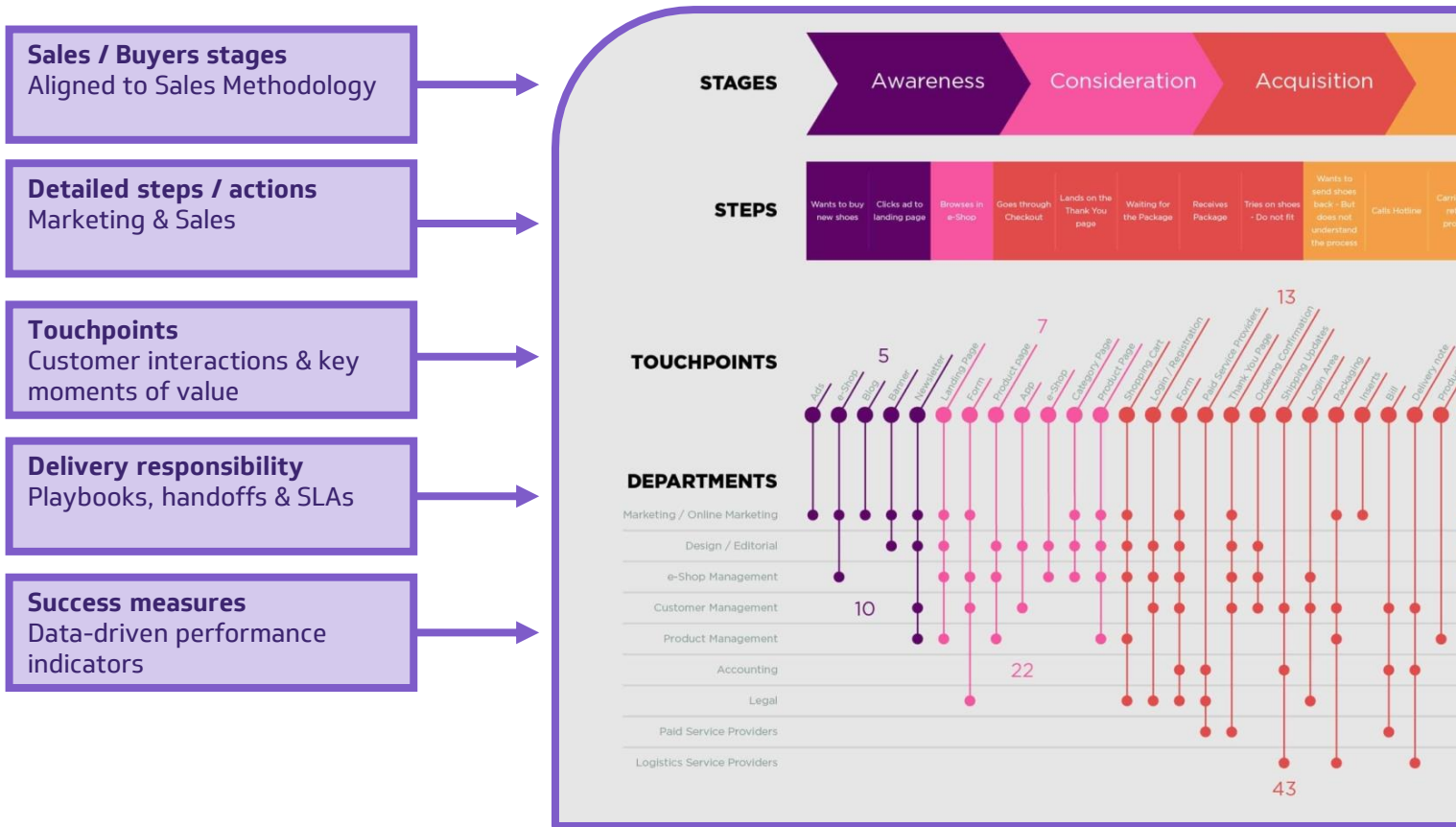
At first, you want to include as much detail as you possibly can.

When we work with different organisations, we often start with something that looks like an A1-sized document with pt. 6 writing. Only then, when we've included everything we can think of, we start to whittle it down to a more accessible and digestible document for everyone to refer back to.

Every customer journey map should start with your buyer persona. Depending on your business, you may have different-tier customers and a variety of typical buyers. So, you'll need to define those and ideally create a customer journey map for each of them.

Then, your map should typically include:

- The **different stages** of your customer journey.
(Awareness, Consideration, Acquisition...)
- The **steps or actions** taken on your side to guide your customer through each stage of their journey.
These might include e-mail blasts, webinars, blog posts or sponsored ads. They could also be, in later stages, regular phone calls and e-mails, face-to-face meetings, and so on.
- The **touchpoints** – points of interaction between your business and your prospective or existing clients.
What are your customers' needs, expectations and emotions at each point, and how do you cater for them? What are your clients' pain points, views and actions as they move through the journey?
- The **different departments** within your organisation responsible for meeting the customer's needs at each touchpoint.
Make sure to define roles and responsibilities for each key moment of the customer journey.
- Your **success measures**.
What and how will you measure success? What are your KPIs?



In summary

The customer journey should be at the heart of any customer-centric business. It is the ultimate tool to identify opportunities to shape your customer’s perception of your brand, and to ensure that you meet or exceed their expectations at every touchpoint.

It should also be the hymn sheet that people across your teams sing from to ensure effective alignment with your customer’s needs.

While its value is clear, however, customer journey mapping can be challenging and time-consuming if you want to do it properly. So, it may be worth calling on the help of experts to guide your team through this process.

To discover more about defining and mapping your customer journey, [let’s talk growth](#).