



## WHITEPAPER

Strategies to drive profitable  
**business growth in a  
customer journey**



# Table of Contents

<b>1) Executive summary</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>2) What is a customer journey and its phases?</b>	<b>03</b>
• Awareness/Connection	04
• Consideration	05
• Conversion/Purchase	05
• Retention	06
• Advocacy	06
<b>3) Importance of a customer journey in a business</b>	<b>07</b>
• What are customer touchpoints	07
• Pre-purchase touchpoints	07
• Purchase touchpoints	08
• Post-purchase touchpoints	08
• Importance of customer touchpoints	08
<b>4) Mapping a customer journey</b>	<b>09</b>
• Benefits of customer journey mapping	09
• Types of customer journey maps	10
• Elements of a customer journey map	11
<b>5) Integrating the customer journey and SEO strategies</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>6) Conclusion</b>	<b>13</b>

## Executive Summary

Have you ever wondered how you can improve your customer experience and gain more clients? The answer lies in understanding the nuances of a customer journey, which will help you develop an optimal approach by providing exactly what is expected from your business.

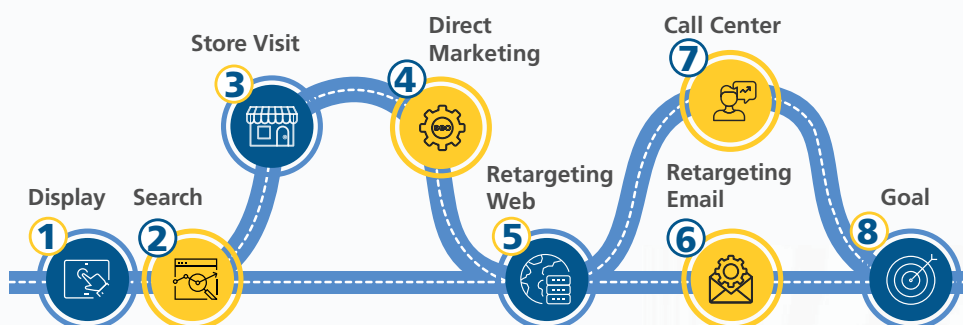
In this whitepaper, we will introduce you to the importance of a customer journey and how it can be integrated with the SEO strategy to gain more customers.

Also, the document explains the phases of a customer journey and how they can impact a business. It also elaborates on the benefits of identifying how the customer interacts with the brand and building a strategy to improve their experience with the help of the journey mapping tool. This will allow brands to understand the gaps in their business and helps them develop customer-centric goals. At LTIMindtree, we give impetus to developing a comprehensive customer journey strategy to help brands provide a satisfying experience and ensure loyalty.

## What is a Customer Journey

Essentially, it is a set of interactions that a customer has with a brand in the process of buying a product or service and considers the whole interaction roadmap - from discovering a brand to purchasing the product and writing a review. In a customer journey, the focus is not on the transaction but about how one feels about the brand after every interaction. A customer journey encompasses all interactions across mediums, channels, devices, and touchpoints throughout every stage of the lifecycle – from awareness to loyalty.

The main objective of a customer journey is to evaluate and measure how you are taking care of your customer and in which way you can bring further delight to their experience with the brand. This process can be as short as a few minutes in case of purchasing low-cost products like apparel, groceries, and food. The buying process may also last long for months or years when buying things like cars.



A typical purchase in the digital era.

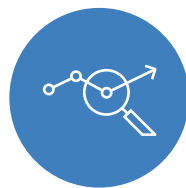
An intuitive website, excellent products, and an on-call dedicated customer service team may seem like the best mix to capture prospective customers. In case you are unable to fulfill customer demands and if they feel something isn't right in terms of your communication, they are more likely to visit your competitors. If one follows the customer journey guidelines correctly, it builds a loyal fan base. A satisfied customer will always choose your brand over your competitors.

## Phases of a Customer Journey

Most customer journeys have five stages



**Awareness /  
Connection**



**Consideration**



**Conversion /  
Purchase**



**Retention**



**Advocacy**

### 1. Awareness/Connection

Spreading general information about products and services to the target audience is called awareness. Users in this group find a business through various sources like:

- Social media
- Online Ads
- Word-of-mouth
- Billboards
- Search engine ads

During this stage of the journey, customers search for their requirements and encounter products and brands. While conducting research, the customer reads blog posts and news articles, and browses related online forums, while looking at reviews and ratings.

At this stage, the buyers do not know anything about your product - it's your responsibility to let them know everything about your brand. The prerogative should be to build more interest in your products and show buyers how you can help them in terms of the value offered to gain their attention and trust. Succinctly put, it is imperative to create a connection between brands and buyers.

## 2. Consideration

This is the most challenging stage in a customer journey. During this phase, one needs to convince potential buyers to be a part of their options.

In this stage, the brand focuses on promotion, and this is where buyers begin to look for alternatives to past purchases. The buyer compares the product to other solutions in the market by scrutinizing prices, reading product reviews, and going through additional details about the product or service.

Here, it is essential to create a good impression on customers - You need to stay connected with your buyers till the day they decide to buy or not. In this stage, businesses want their customers to stick around given that they are directly interacting with their brands

Most new businesses struggle at this stage because the approach they decide to take is not good enough to attract customers. Sometimes, they use business tactics that do not align with their strengths. They end up spending a lot of money, time, and resources on marketing tactics that do not work at all.

Crucial aspects such as making sure the product name and description are clear, images are visible, and CTA buttons are working properly do an excellent job when buyers consider you against your competitors.

## 3. Conversion/Purchase

This is the stage where businesses make money, and a prospect finally becomes a customer. Here, visitors take a particular action such as purchasing a product, signing up for a service, downloading content, or subscribing to a mailing list. This is the time to do whatever you have promised in the previous stages.

The prospective buyer has done all the research and made up their mind on which company's product/ solution will best suit their needs. By the time customers are in the decision-making phase, it is not just about the product details, specifications, or shopping experience; they also consider factors like customer service responsiveness, company policies, and price vs. value. Customers normally support brands that they think can provide a quality solution to their problems without hassles.

To retain your customer in this stage, make sure your return and refund policies are easy to find and customer friendly. You need to train your customer support team to answer important decision-making questions.

Low-quality products and inconsistent service will destroy all the credibility you have gained in previous steps. To get rid of this mistake, make sure your sales, marketing, advertising, and service processes are aligned. If you manage to do this properly, many of your customers will become advocates by telling everyone they know about you, and this could build your brand for free.

## 4. Retention

This is the next stage in the customer journey after conversion. At this point, you already have a new customer, but this is not the time to sit back and relax. This is the stage where you must follow up with the customer to collect their feedback on their purchase and experience. A loyal and satisfied customer brings consistent business to a brand.

Reselling your products to a current customer is easier than finding a new one. It is four to five times more expensive to acquire a new customer than it is to maintain an existing one, so this is one of the most important stages that must not be ignored once the customer makes the purchase. Stay connected with your buyer without any hesitation.

Feedback and surveys are valuable resources that will help you stay current. Whatever information you get from your customer will help you understand how their lives are changing over time. It will provide you with new opportunities to solve recent problems your customers are facing.

## 5. Advocacy

Once you successfully complete the above phases of the customer journey, the last phase will be advocacy. If a customer becomes a fan of your brand, it will provide the best marketing you can get. Most brands acknowledge the benefits of word-of-mouth advertising. Along with this, a few organizations commit to a plan to boost customer advocacy.

Motivating customers to share ratings, reviews, opinions, and their overall buying experience is also an effective way to boost your brands. At this point, rewards and recommendations help improve sales. Affiliate and referral schemes mean that customers have already been recommended your product.

A short customer experience survey can be an effective way to let them know that you care about their feedback. The details and information you receive will help you understand the shopping behavior of your customers, which will provide you with new opportunities to sell your products..



# Importance of a customer journey in a business

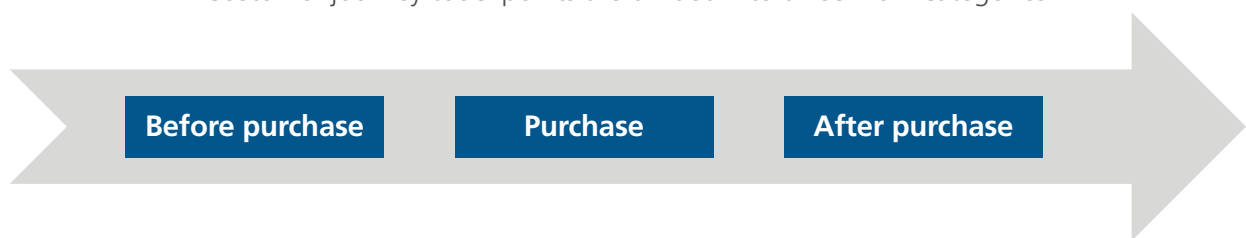
When a customer visits your site and buys a product or service, it includes various steps before they reach the buying stage. When the website gives a pleasant experience to the user, it helps convert them to a customer. Therefore, to get more customers, you need to analyze every stage they go through in your website and make corrections, if any.

When you understand these interactions that a customer has with your website and work towards enhancing the overall journey, it will lead to a positive business outcome and eventual growth. For this, it is important that the customer touchpoints are identified, and the overall experience is tracked.

## What are customer touchpoints?

A customer touchpoint is when a customer encounters your brand. Customer touchpoints can be before, during or after the purchase of a brand's product or service. Identifying the touchpoints is important to provide quality customer journeys and gain more customers.

Customer journey touchpoints are divided into three main categories-



## Before purchase /Pre-purchase touchpoints

Pre-purchase touchpoints refer to those that the customer experiences before engaging with a business. These include ads, direct mails, landing pages, testimonials, seminars, product reviews or social media activities.

## Purchase touchpoints

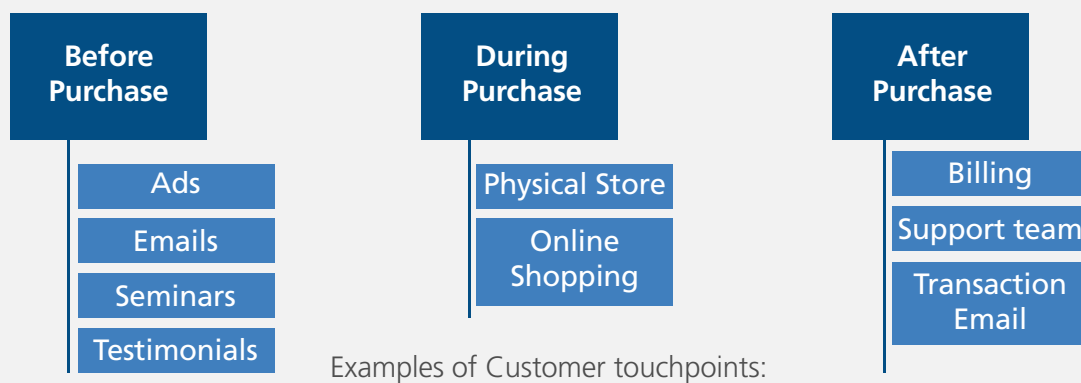
This stage is especially important given that the actual sale happens here. Therefore, the touchpoints will define the interactions a customer has had with a business while purchasing the product or service.

To purchase a product or service, a customer could have directly visited a physical store or an online shopping website. In other cases, a customer could have indirectly visited through a reseller or a sales representative etc.

The examples of purchase touchpoints are physical locations, online shopping on a website, retailers, social sites for shopping etc.

## After purchase/ Post-purchase touchpoints

Post purchase touchpoints play a vital role since it is essential for customers to return and purchase again. Examples include transaction emails, billing, returns, newsletters, support team or service team etc.



## Importance of customer touchpoints

It is not possible to provide a better customer experience without understanding the instances that the customer is going through in their journey. These instances i.e., touchpoints, indicate how a customer interacts with your brand, and their experience.

- The customer touchpoints form a journey together.
- With customer touchpoints, one can focus on improving a particular area which requires attention instead of having to spend time on the entire journey, thus ensuring a tailored approach.
- By optimizing customer touchpoints, one can enhance the experience of existing customers and gain new ones as well.



# Mapping the customer journey

A journey map is the visual representation of a customer's journey, which can help understand the various interactions with a brand. It helps understand customers' perceptions and cater to their needs, given that all the touchpoints are mapped out. For example, how a customer came across about your brand and then all the interactions they have had during pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase.

**Social media => Online store=>reads reviews => purchases a product**

## Benefits of Customer journey mapping:

The primary reason for creating a customer journey map is to identify and understand the sources customers take to reach your product. By understanding this, it is possible to predict the channels and the path customers will take in the future.

Journey mapping is a powerful tool that helps take a strategic approach towards customers' needs and optimize their experience with your brand. You can gain more customers only by understanding their needs and providing what they are looking for from you.

## The key benefits of mapping the customer journey are:



## Types of customer journey maps:

There are four types of customer journey maps with their own benefits. You can design a map that meets the specific requirement of your business goal and vision.

1

### Current state map -

This customer journey map is the most used. It shows what customers are experiencing currently by interacting with your brand. It helps you in improving the customer journey.

2

### Future state map -

This will help you understand how your customer interactions are in the future. If you are working on making changes in your business, the future state map is the best to set customer-centric goals.

3

### Day in my life map -

This map provides insights on users' daily behaviour and how they interact with a product. This helps visualize their issues, which can be eliminated before a user experiences them.

4

### Service Blueprint -

The service blueprint has the simpler picture of any of the above customer journey maps and then the required factors are added to help drive the journey such as process, technologies, and policies. With the help of the blueprint, you could identify how the current customer journey is working and what will make the future customer journey better.



## What are the elements of a customer journey map?

Though there are several types of customer journey maps, they all include these essential components or elements.

### User Persona

User Persona is referred to as Actors. This component is very important as it helps in understanding the the customer behavior and the interactions they have had with the product. It provides insights on how relevant your product is for customers

### Emotions

The customer journey map helps in understanding what and how the customers are feeling through their experience. By researching the behavior of the customers, their emotions can be mapped out for each phase, which will help your brand focus on potential areas to improve and succeed

### Customer Touchpoints

The journey map should include customer touchpoints in each phase of their journey. For instance, a customer may reach out to the service team and raise a request.

### Customer Journey phases

The most important part in customer journey map are the phases. It is essential information to build a journey map. The different phases or stages of a customer journey are Awareness, Consideration, Conversion, Retention, Advocacy.

### Customer Action

Customer action indicates what the customer is doing at every touchpoint. This will help you understand what the customer is attempting to do with your product or service.

For example, a customer reading the reviews and clicking on the track package.

# Integrating the Customer Journey and SEO Strategies

Customers, when making a purchase, often use search engines. The buyer's journey is one of the most important aspects of search engine optimization because sites like Google, Bing, and Yahoo want to help customers find what they are looking for.

The customer journey has changed a lot because of digital marketing and search engines. Customers interact with search engines at multiple points on their way down the sales funnel. Therefore, SEO is important to make your brand more visible so you can be found where buyers are looking for the services and products you offer.

Integrating the customer journey and SEO strategies is important to reach the right audience at the right time and place. You do not want to just drive website traffic without a sale. You want to make sure you are driving the right visitors to your website.

Below are common mistakes while creating the optimization strategy-

- Choosing needless phrases as a topic
- Lack of proper landing page optimization
- Inaccurate keyword research
- Not focusing on qualitative and quantitative research simultaneously

If you are not integrating your SEO strategy with your customer journey strategy, your expected customers will not be able to find your brand. A common mistake here is that, in most cases, SEO strategies are keyword-focused and not buyer-centric. So, make sure the keywords that you are optimizing for are the same topics that your target audience care about in their buying phase. You should focus on matching SEO keywords with customer intent.

The SEO-driven landing page should have keywords related to the services you are offering to the customers. The content should tell customers your business' value proposition and how your products could be a good fit for them.

Search engines have become smarter with time, providing high-quality content. Keyword stuffing, outdated backlink strategies, and other old SEO techniques may not work now. Search engines give priority to websites that have relevant and high-quality content for user queries.



The following are some of the most important and common touchpoints in your customer journey-



## How to ascertain if your SEO strategy is working or not?

There are many ways to track the performance of your SEO experiments. You can track and monitor progress with the help of analytical tools provided by search engines.

Mapping the customer journey and developing keywords around it will have a positive outcome for your business. The entire team needs to be committed and focused to create a strong SEO strategy throughout the customer journey. This will boost your website ranking and allow you to craft content that addresses the questions and pain points of your customers at different, meaningful touchpoints throughout your sales funnel.

## Conclusion

To understand your customers, knowing their journey is very crucial for every business. Brands should prioritize the process of understanding and noting the interactions customers have, from the time they engage with the business till the time they purchase a product or a service. This gives insights on what customers are looking for and helps deliver the best and make more conversions.

Creating a strong SEO strategy is very important in the era of the internet where most buyers use search engines before making any purchase. With the integration of customer journey and SEO strategy, businesses have more chances to reach their targeted audiences, leading to improved sales.

## References

1. <https://blog.hubspot.com/service/seo-analytics-customer-journey>
2. <https://www.netigate.net/articles/customer-satisfaction/why-the-customer-journey-plays-a-significant-role-for-your-business/>
3. <https://www.freepik.com/>
4. <https://blog.searchmetrics.com/us/how-to-integrate-your-customer-journey-strategy-and-seo-strategy/>

# Authors



## Gyanendra Kumar

Module Lead

Passionate digital Marketer with over 8 years of experience in multiple domains like E-commerce, Travel, Health etc. Helped clients to grow their business using SEO, Web Analytics, and other digital marketing techniques. In my spare time, I love reading blogs, traveling, and playing cricket.



## Rashmi RK

Software Engineer

Digital Marketer having 2 years of experience in SEO. Worked on multiple E-commerce sites providing advanced SEO strategy. Certified in Advanced SEO, Google Analytics and Content Marketing. Avid traveler and Vlogger.

## About LTIMindtree

LTIMindtree is a global technology consulting and digital solutions company that enables enterprises across industries to reimagine business models, accelerate innovation, and maximize growth by harnessing digital technologies. As a digital transformation partner to more than 750 clients, LTIMindtree brings extensive domain and technology expertise to help drive superior competitive differentiation, customer experiences, and business outcomes in a converging world. Powered by nearly 90,000 talented and entrepreneurial professionals across more than 30 countries, LTIMindtree — a Larsen & Toubro Group company — combines the industry-acclaimed strengths of erstwhile Larsen and Toubro Infotech and Mindtree in solving the most complex business challenges and delivering transformation at scale. For more information, please visit [www.ltimindtree.com](http://www.ltimindtree.com).