



BRIEF

Customer Journey

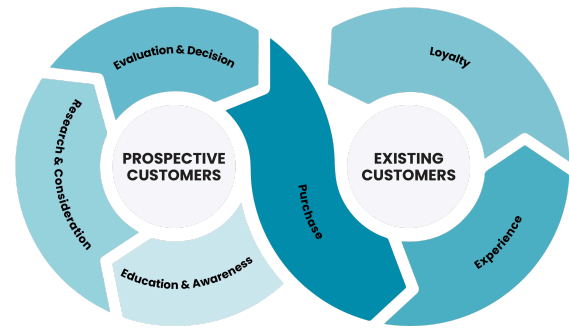
By [Tommy Mains](#)

Introduction

Great companies add value by offering a solution that improves their customers' lives. The customer journey includes all customer interactions with our brand, from initial awareness to post-purchase support. As our prospects move through the various stages of our customer journey map, their experience may not always be linear but rather have some twists and turns down the funnel.

One of our guiding principles at Ninety is a simple phrase — “we don’t sell; we serve.” Our goal goes beyond making a sale or earning a subscriber. We aim to attract and retain what we call our [Ideal](#)

Customers. We do this by constantly thinking about how to best turn our prospects into customers and customers into enthusiastic, referring fans of who we are and what we provide.



The traditional sales and marketing funnel of awareness, interest, desire, and action still holds fundamental truths about the customer journey. However, businesses with newer sales and marketing models, such as SaaS companies, are more inclined to guide potential customers into a loop of continued partnership. This loop keeps customers interested in our brand. For these strategies to be successful, customer journeys are becoming increasingly personalized.

Context

How prospects choose the companies with which they engage has evolved. Technology has empowered consumers with more information than ever, providing them with more options when selecting which company to purchase from.

In response, companies are enhancing their customer journeys by analyzing **data** to create proactive journey maps to lead prospects more effectively through the buying process. This level of focus and personalization generates positive customer experiences in the hope of building long-lasting, **high-trust relationships**.

A personalized customer journey begins with clearly defined personas of our Ideal Customers. We identify these customers because their geographic, demographic, and psychographic characteristics align with who we are, what we provide, and how we serve. Being crystal clear concerning these characteristics (who they are and who we are) informs our marketing strategy as we find and invite the right prospects to consider and evaluate our products and/or services.

The journey map is composed of several key **touchpoints** where the prospect and the organization interact. We can offer a behavioral cue at each touchpoint, such as a prompt to engage with an article, video, or product review.

At each touchpoint, the prospect has an emotional response. If it goes positively, they're likely to continue exploring our company. If it goes poorly, they'll likely search elsewhere for a solution to their problem. Our job is to recognize the importance of every opportunity to meet the prospect where they are by anticipating the questions they'll have at each step of the journey.

This level of attention can turn pain points into an opportunity. A **pain point** occurs when a prospect or customer experiences a problem. For example, if you notice a high exit rate on one of your web pages, you know the page needs to be redesigned to create a better user experience. The pain point for the customer emerges, and so too does its potential solution (or opportunity). Integrating our customer journey with our website design, social media strategies, and customer success playbooks raises engagement and improves the experience of the journey.

The attention to detail provided to potential customers should also be carried over to existing clients in what David C. Edelman of Harvard Business School calls a "loyalty loop." The level of care we put into obtaining new customers should be matched or exceeded by our efforts to maintain and serve our existing customers. Within this loyalty loop, we invest in our client's success, build high-trust relationships, and eventually reach a point where they become advocates for us in their networks.

Core Disciplines of a Great Customer Journey

1. Identify your Ideal Customer. Your Ideal Customer has a geographic, demographic, and psychographic profile. Additionally, most buyers are concerned with one of four

[Compelling Value Propositions](#) (CVPs):

- Lowest total cost
- Great customer service
- Helpful innovation
- Gained status

For instance, the "lowest price" value proposition won't resonate with a prospective Ferrari buyer.

2. Make the journey an integrated experience. The best storytellers show rather than tell. Show your potential buyer how their life would be better with your offered solution through product tours, product demos, and case studies. Many companies offer free trials to give prospective customers hands-on experience with their product/service.

3. Ideal Customers reduce the cost of customer service. Suppose your CVP centers around customer service, but you acquire a customer focused on innovation (the latest bells and whistles). They're not buying what you're selling and are likely to stress your Customer Service team constantly. The hours spent appeasing non-ideal customers are much better spent serving Ideal Customers

Hopefully Helpful Hints

The entire brand can strengthen pre-purchase touchpoints of the customer journey.

Before purchasing from you, prospects will compare your brand experience to that of other companies. Was your website a top result when they searched for answers to their problem? Do your social media channels answer prospects' potential questions? Do you offer live chat support while customers are engaged with your content? Do customer reviews on sites like TrustPilot, G2, and Capterra reinforce your CVP? The answers to these questions will inform how seamless and positive your customers' pre-purchase experience is.

Post-purchase support reinforces the loyalty loop. For us, post-purchase support usually starts with our Client Success team. These team members are the face of our company. Our customers remember when Christine solved an issue that was slowing them down or when Matthew showed them a new feature. We also support existing customers by taking our decades of experience working with entrepreneurs and small business leaders and turning them into easily digestible content (like this brief) to help your organization thrive. By continuing to provide post-purchase value, we build trust and loyalty with our Ideal Customers.

Takeaway

Our customers should learn and grow from their journey with our brand. After choosing to do business with us, their lives should improve. [Great companies](#) strive to create a positive,

seamless experience that turns pain points into opportunities for a continued partnership. We learn to let go of our non-ideal customers so we can have the time and resources to build high-trust relationships with our Ideal Customers.

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