## WHAT IS A CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAP AND HOW DO YOU USE ONE?

Every company providing a good or service wants to create loyal relationships with their customers. In order to do so effectively, however, the company's employees at every professional level have to understand the psychology of their users, and understand it well. One of the best ways to achieve this level of understanding is with a **customer journey map**, or a visual representation of a user's literal and emotional journey as they interact with the brand.

Customer journey maps are essential to any business operating in the digital world, **as they provide employees and management with the tools to empathize with their users,** cater to their needs, and resolve any confusions that might exist on the company's online platform.

There are a few crucial elements to every customer journey map, as well as a number of intricate details that designers and marketers should include as they create the map. Take a look at our guide below to get a better understanding of this important UX tool.

### First, create your customer persona.

Before you can map your user journey, you have to identify who your users are. This step requires **in-depth research into the emotions and desires of your consumers, including surveys, in-person interviews, polls, and statistical analysis concerning your user retention rates, bounce rates, completed purchases, and more**. Once you have this information, you can identify the motivations and questions a "typical" user might have, and build a persona or characterization of someone who regularly uses your service or might use it in the future.

Remember, this persona should be specific, but it is an archetype. Try to pinpoint your average customer expectations and priorities, but make it broad enough that you can map a range of potential emotions and reactions as you illustrate the user journey.

### Next, write out a timeline.

Each business will perform this step slightly differently, depending on your model of service or product development process. Here, you'll want to draft various journeys that move from "user discovery" to "research and comparison" to "sales" to "retention" [1].

**This timeline should include the various touch points a customer might have with your brand**, including Google searches, social media references, the company blog, FAQ pages, prices, and account creation options, to name a few. You also must identify **typical questions a user has**, as well as their **emotions throughout the navigation process.**

### Next, focus on your channels.

At this point, your company journey mappers should ask themselves about the channels the business uses to reach customers. **On what devices do users interact with your brand? Where might they encounter problems, get frustrated, or become confused as they are navigating through your site or app?** These questions (and iterated run throughs) will allow your company to identify its own weaknesses and fix them before losing customers.

**Use your customer journey map to tell a story.**

Once you have spent the time needed to create your model, graphic illustration, or detailed grid, you should be able to "read" the story of your average users and how they engage with your brand. **The story should be simple but informative, providing your brand with context that employees on all levels can use to improve design, copywriting, management, and general marketing.** Ultimately, the customer journey map helps you fill gaps and adjust to meet the expectations of your users, keeping them at the center of your production process from beginning to end.

Sources: [1] https://boagworld.com/usability/customer-journey-mapping/
[2] https://www.sailthru.com/marketing-blog/written-customer-journey-mapping-need-to-know/