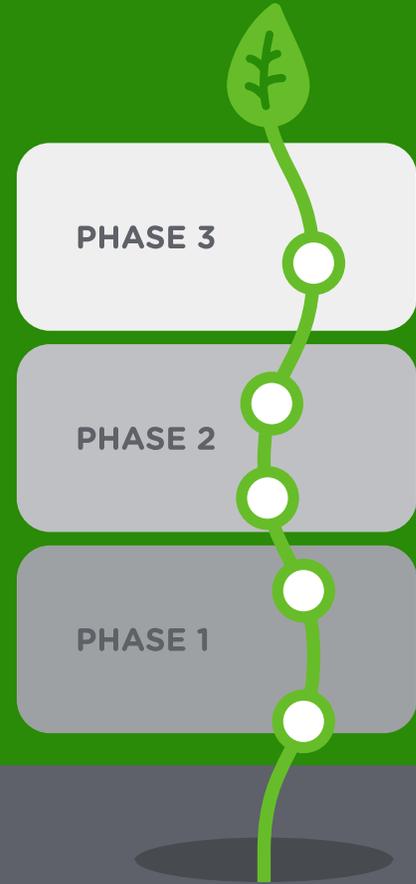
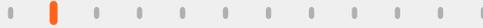


EBOOK

Customer Journey Mapping in the New Normal





INTRODUCTION

The pandemic has changed consumer behavior forever. As we prepare for this new normal, businesses must realize that their tactics must change to keep pace. And while many core customer experience principles will stay the same, the way to effectively engage with customers may introduce new and unfamiliar practices in order to keep customer satisfaction high.

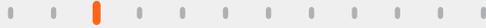
In order to evaluate the current and future state of business, it's important to understand every touchpoint that your customer encounters on their journey with your brand. This is also known as customer journey mapping, a practice where brands use a series of data-backed behaviors of target personas to show insights and gaps in the customer experience.

New to customer journey mapping?



Check out our complete guide for the basics.



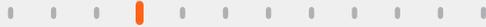


Due to the drastic differences in consumer behavior since the pandemic and it's ever changing nature due to the new normal, we recommend revisiting the customer journey mapping exercise every few months in order to cohesively understand how to best support your customers and their experience. This market research will not only give you an insight to what is happening with your customers, but will also show you the direction in which your customers are moving so you can be ahead of the curve with introducing new or refining existing customer touchpoints.



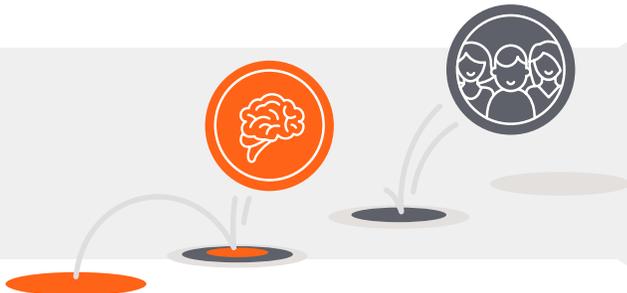
WHAT IS CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAPPING?

If you have a business, then you have customers. Those customers are what keeps your business growing, so it's essential to understand what they want, so they can continue to give you what you want—their business. Customer Journey Mapping is a way to break down your customer's interaction with your company—from the very start of the transaction to the very end—in order to understand how customers are perceiving your company at each step along the way. This openly identifies the pain points that your customers are experiencing, and opportunities that you have to create more consistency and an overall more positive customer experience.

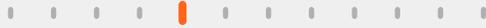


WHY CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAPPING WORKS

Customer journey mapping is a way to make sense of big data to better understand customer trends. Whether you decide to use data-backed fictional personas or real customers, you will be able to pull actionable insights to make important changes to your customer journey. You can learn more about the basics of customer journey mapping [here](#). Read on to learn our 3 top tips for customer journey mapping with the new normal in mind.



According to Forbes, brands with superior customer experience bring in [5.7 times more revenue](#) than competitors that lag in customer experience. So getting customer experience right is not just important, it's essential to the success of your brand.

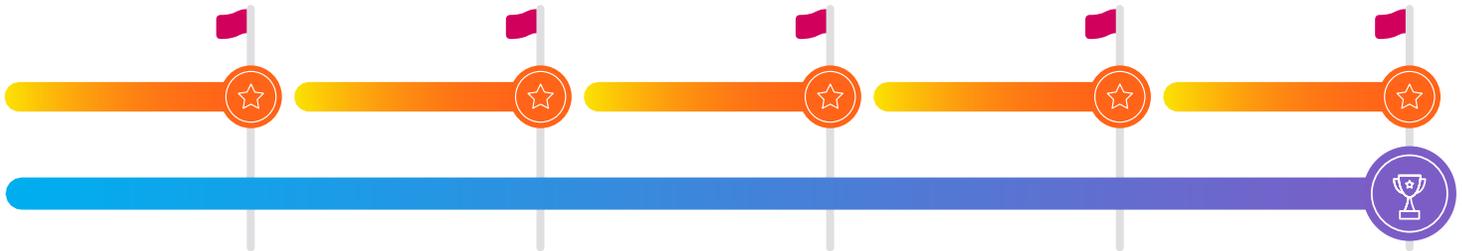


Tips for Customer Journey maps in the new normal

1. Know your short-term and big picture goals

Having a goal is key to customer journey mapping, but with the frequently changing behavior caused by the new normal, it's important to know your big picture and short-term objectives. Your big picture goal is set more in line with internal company goals, (such as improving customer experience), while the short-term objectives are more influenced by external factors (such as offering more self-service channels to eliminate wait times).

In other words, the big picture goal is what you start the customer journey map trying to achieve, while the short-term objectives are the actionable takeaways that you found from completing the map. Short-term objectives may change due to changes in customer behavior, but those big picture goals remain steady throughout the fluctuations.





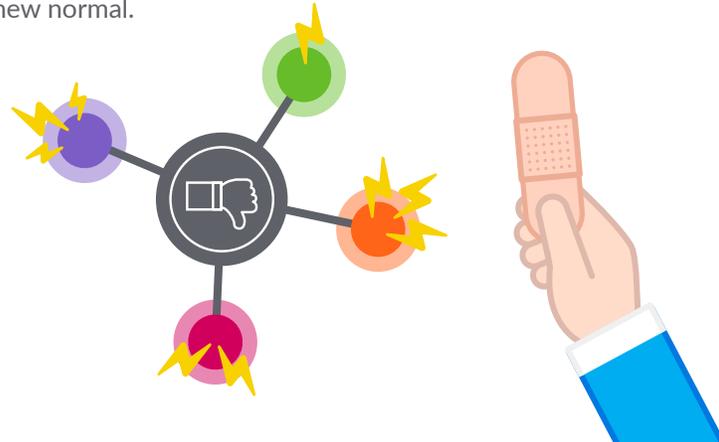
2. Not every change is needed

As you complete your customer journey map, chances are you will find a lot of customer pain points that need to be addressed, especially due to the new normal. Due to limited time and resources, it's important to understand that not every pain point should be at the top of your list.

Instead, consider first focusing on the pain points that will alleviate the most friction across all personas. Also, consider if multiple pain points can be helped with a single change. For example, virtual assistants powered by Conversational AI can help eliminate wait times, increase self-service, and integrate with backend systems to offer the most relevant customer data for quick resolutions. If these are three areas that are causing frustration among customers, then it's probably a good place to start.

3. Look beyond who is making purchases

It's easy to make the mistake of only evaluating customers that complete the buyer's journey to purchase. Especially due to changing consumer behavior, be sure to include personas that drop off before purchase in the buyers' journey as well to see the pain points that are causing an immediate impact on your revenue. This will ensure customer loyalty remains strong through the new normal.

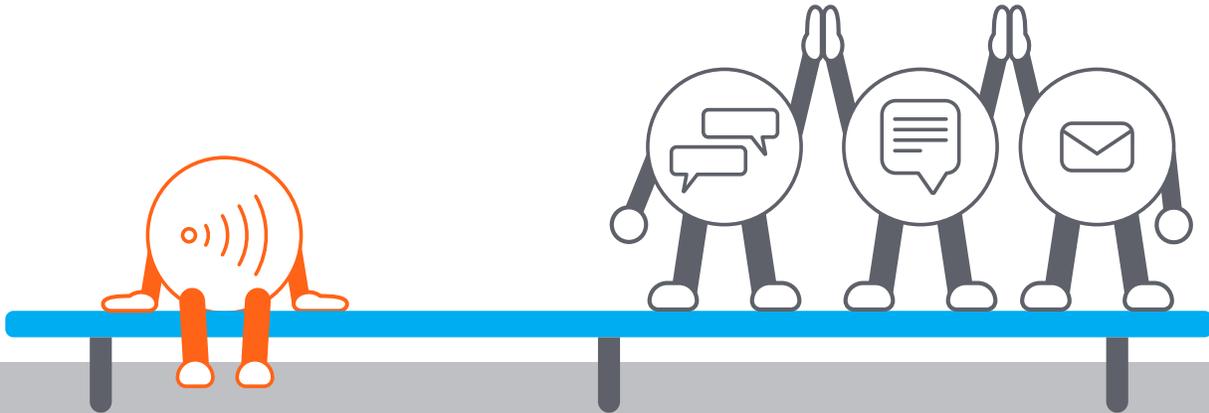


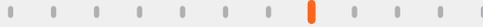


CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Increasing customer engagement by offering more channel choice has been a hot topic over the past few years. As more customers become comfortable using self-service through online chat and over the phone, companies are scrambling to offer more convenient methods for contact. But instead of just looking to offer more channels, it's also important to optimize the channels that you currently have available.

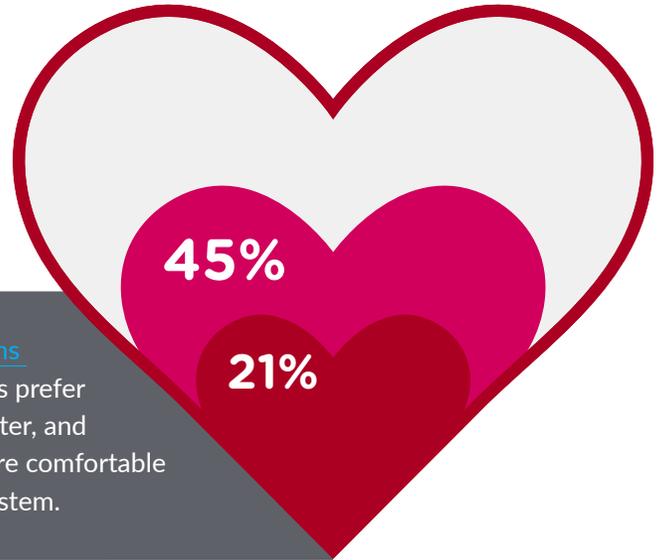
Voice is commonly left behind in digital transformation initiatives. Often mistaking it as an outdated contact method, companies push for website chats and other digital channels without realizing that an optimized voice platform can completely transform their customer experience. **Voice channels are only as outdated as the technology is.**

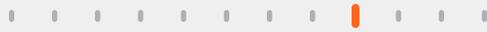




In fact, many customers prefer to use voice channels when contacting a brand because if offered with the right technology, it is the most efficient form of contact. **People can talk 3 times as fast as they can type.** If your technology can eliminate wait times and use customer data to solve the query quickly, that means minimal customer time and effort will be used, resulting in happier customers.

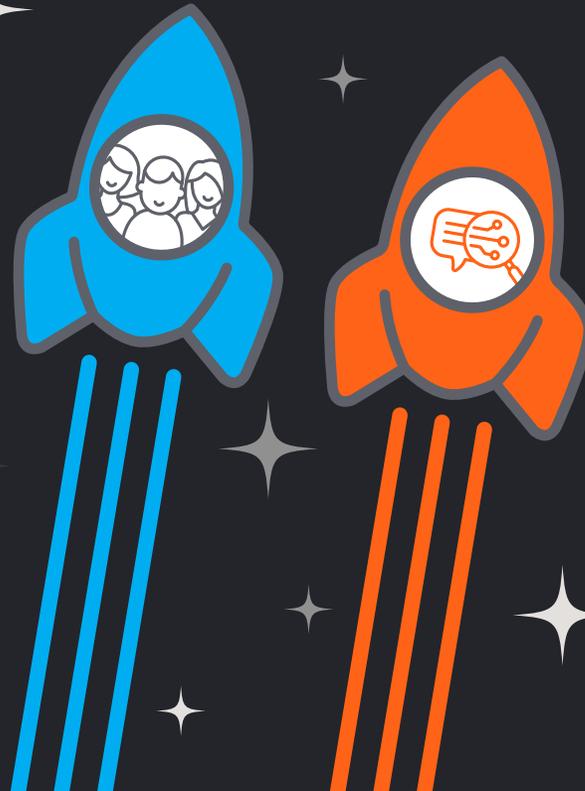
Consumer Behavior is changing. In a recent [Interactions survey of over 1000 US consumers](#), 45% of consumers prefer to have their inquiry handled by an AI system if it's faster, and more than a fifth (21%) indicate that they are now more comfortable with having a full conversation with an AI-powered system.

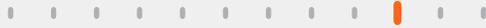




TIMES ARE CHANGING...QUICKLY

Incorporating flexible solutions is key to being able to address the findings of your customer journey map quickly and efficiently. Especially when implementing large technologies or projects, consider solutions that are able to keep pace with your customers' changing behaviors. For example, if your customer journey map points you in the direction of a contact center technology to help alleviate repetitive customer tasks with self-service, look for solutions that can easily expand to other channels if need be. The ability to grow and change with your customers is key to surviving these unprecedented times.

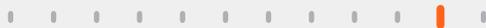




CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS ARE DIFFERENT, BUT THE WAY TO APPROACH CX IS NOT

Customers are now more comfortable using self-service methods and expecting faster service. But this is nothing new. For years, the focus of improving CX has been to make customer engagements more efficient and effortless. Instead of starting from scratch, optimize what is already working and use it to build a customer journey that delights. Remember too, customers want the experience to feel familiar and aligned with your brand. Too many changes too quickly can do more harm than good. Approach CX in a way that feels authentic and cohesive across your brand.





About Interactions

Interactions provides Intelligent Virtual Assistants that seamlessly assimilate Conversational AI and human understanding to enable businesses to engage with their customers in highly productive and satisfying conversations. With flexible products and solutions designed to meet the growing demand for unified, omnichannel customer care, Interactions is delivering unprecedented improvements in the customer experience and significant cost savings for some of the largest brands in the world. Founded in 2004, Interactions is headquartered in Franklin, Massachusetts with additional offices worldwide.

For more information about Interactions, contact us:

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