

Improving Campaign Conversion with Journey Maps

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Driving increased campaign conversion is the top priority for marketers across all industries and company size. Most marketers rely on campaign elements that performed well historically and input from peers. Campaign conversion improves when the buyer receives the right message and offer at the right time through the right channels. Journey Maps provide the necessary detailed framework to define **laser-focused, audience-centric campaigns**.

This How-To Guide has been designed to help you improve the conversion rate of marketing campaigns by aligning tactics and calls-to-action to customer journeys.

BENEFITS OF JOURNEY-BASED CAMPAIGNS

The benefits of using customer journey maps as guiding frameworks for your demand generation and nurture campaigns are three-fold:

- **100+% increase in opens and click-throughs** from adapting offers and subject lines to specific journey steps.
- **2X increase in pipeline velocity** by aligning content and calls-to-action to journey tollgates.
- **30% increase in revenue pipeline** attributable to marketing campaigns.



WHY TRADITIONAL CAMPAIGNS DON'T CONVERT

Journey maps are powerful tools to help marketers develop laser-focused, audience-tuned demand generation and nurture campaigns that drive conversion.

Today, most campaigns are designed from the “inside-out” based what has worked in the past, “gut feel”, and/or the path that marketers would like, or think, buyers take. Multiple teams have input into campaigns design based on their own perspective of the buyer, the buying and selling processes. The result is frequently one-size-fits-all campaigns that are then tailored for specific segments by including some key segment-specific phrases. It's no wonder that campaigns do not convert and produce leads that do not meet Sales' needs or expectations.

By developing your Campaigns from journey maps, Marketing can improve attract, engage and conversion rates and as well as build stronger brand preference. There are three hallmarks of journey-based campaigns, which are:

1. Sequence of integrated campaign elements across omni-channels mirror journey steps – increasing lead velocity.
2. Offers, Calls-to-Action and Content align to journey tollgates – increasing conversion.
3. Messaging, language and tone reflect the target segment and buyer role – increasing relevance.

DEVELOPING A JOURNEY MAP

Customer Journey Maps are detailed definitions of all the actions that buyers take and the interactions they have with the company -- from the initiating business problem trigger event through a completed purchase and beyond to solution adoption and expansion. The map identifies all the activities and content as well as the channels, physical and digital, buyers use at each step. Journey maps are frequently defined by industry, revenue tier (F100, F1000, SMB, SOHO, etc.), and geography. The latter is important because cultural differences will result in different journey maps for the same industry and buyer-personas; there is no one-size-fits-all global journey map. That being said, every company will have no more than four or five journey maps that address all their market segments.



While the actual format of Journey Maps varies based on the group developing them, there are three constants:

1. Maps should be created through the lens of the buyer, not the seller's.
2. Maps document, in detail, every action, decision and interaction the buyer takes across all touch points and channels over the relationship's lifetime.
3. Every piece of content, regardless of source (vendor, competitor, analyst, peer, etc.), the buyer sought at each step, is documented.

Each action, decision and interaction mapped should include, at a minimum, the following information:

- Description of the action
- A detailed definition of each piece of content sought
- Through which specific physical-virtual channel(s)
- The buyer's expectation(s) and feelings
- The desired outcome(s) of the action
- Who was involved in the action (Persona-roles)

The key is to develop actionable Journey Maps through the lens of the buyer. Meaning it should be vendor agnostic and include all the buyer's actions especially those that do not involve any vendor. The most expedient way to achieve this is through qualitative or ethnographic research. Quantitative tools, such as surveys, etc., cannot discover the 'why' behind buyer's actions, only ethnographic research can.

SIX STEPS TO CAMPAIGN PLANNING

To develop an integrated campaign from journeys detailed, complete segment-specific journey maps that cover the steps beginning with the Trigger Event through the actual purchase. A word of caution to those tempted (or advised) to short-cut the process by substituting generic or partial journey maps in lieu of conducting their own.

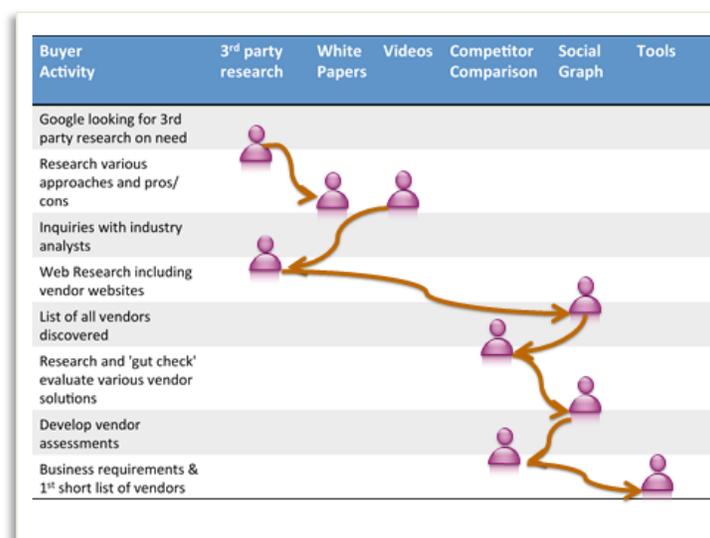


It shouldn't be a surprise that conversion rates for campaigns based on generic or fragmented maps do not achieve target or best-in-class benchmarks; there is no substitute for knowing your buyer.

There are 6 steps in planning a journey-based campaign:

1. Identify specific tollgates the buyer must address before they can proceed to the next step.
2. Conduct a gap analysis to identify where your current campaign strategy doesn't match the journey.
3. Define high value content, irrespective of source, the buyer seeks at each step.
4. Identify those journey steps where you can reach buyers with out- and/or in-bound marketing activities.
5. Define the integrated campaign elements and align them to the journey map.
6. Highlight where the interaction can hyper-personalized and assess data requirements.

Step 4 of the process is depicted in the example below. The visual depicts a snapshot of a journey and shows, at a high level, the specific journey steps where a buyer can be reached by marketing. This is a framework that is used to develop and align integrated campaigns.



Basing campaigns on journey maps is an ‘outside-in’ approach to meeting customer and prospect expectations. This method is more effective because it eliminates the guesswork that currently plagues most marketing departments as they make decisions and tradeoffs in their campaign plans. It also gives Marketing a clear roadmap of how to align activities and investments to meet and influence buyer’s expectations by delivering the right action, at the right time, through the right channel.

The next step, Step 5, defines the campaign elements across multiple channels and aligns them to the journey framework. The example below shows how a high level waterfall campaign aligned to the above journey framework. Done correctly early stage campaigns will more rapidly build brand awareness and preference which drives conversion in subsequent journey stages.

Buyers expect personalized marketing and sales interactions. Marketing’s opportunity is to develop an appropriate balance between automation and hyper-personalization. Journeys enable you to more quickly and relevantly understand a buyer’s action and know how to respond with a personalized experience. The example below marks which campaign elements should be personalized to meet buyer expectations.

Buyer Activity	3 rd party research	White Papers	Videos	Competitor Comparison	Social Graph	Tools
Google looking for 3rd party research on need	Targeted Advertising					
Research various approaches and pros/cons		3 rd Party Research Studies				
Inquiries with industry analysts		Partner Authored Best Practices				
Web Research including vendor websites			Personalized sites with Webinar & Video			
List of all vendors discovered				Blogger Infographic of Vendors in Buyers' industry		
Research and 'gut check' evaluate various vendor solutions				Targeted Vendor Comparisons		
Develop vendor assessments						
Business requirements & 1 st short list of vendors						Peer Customer Videos



BEST PRACTICES

A best practice is to focus on educating, helping and serving the buyers' needs instead of pushing products and services. It is the key success factor in breaking through the noise and reaching your target buyer. Hyper-personalization is a tactic that leverages the wealth of journey and internal data to deliver the right content, interaction and solution at the right time, to the right persona through the right channel. Journey maps are the decoder ring to hyper-personalized campaigns as it provides the context, the "why", and intent of buyer behavior.

Other best practices in journey-based campaign planning include:

- Develop offers for each tollgate that not only support your message but are audience specific in terms of content and format.
- Map your nurture model and messaging to focus on specific journey step sought-outcomes.
- Remove gates and add a single, non-invasive "profiling question" that augments your database and enables you to determine in which stage the buyer is in.
- Share profiling questions and all buyer/target account responses with sales to help them assess sales readiness and prioritize follow up.

ACTION PLAN

In order to create your Customer Journey-based Campaigns, follow these steps:

1. **Use our Customer Journey Map to identify the touch points with your company.** With a clear guideline of each buyer persona's experience with your organization, you can identify any weaknesses in your customer experience and prepare yourself to improve your content strategy.
2. **Read our Developing Content Strategy from Journey Maps to learn how to develop content strategy from Journey Maps that effectively engage and convert prospects.** This How-To Guide describes content strategy based on the information the potential buyer is actually seeking rather than what the marketing or sales organization thinks they should have.



3. Follow our **Content Marketing Plan Methodology** to create a results-oriented content marketing plan that provide a step-by-step guide on how to build a strategic process and a comprehensive content plan.

BOTTOM LINE

A focus on buyer behavior coupled with a deep understanding of their journeys not only enables marketers to execute campaigns that convert but also improves decision-making across the board. Studies have proven that high-performing companies consistently deliver contextually relevant and meaningful personalized experiences. The place to start is by knowing your buyer.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH ANALYST



Christine Crandell is a B2B strategy, marketing and transformation expert who helps CEOs, CMOs, CROs, COOs and investors accelerate revenue growth. She leads a team of seasoned marketing and sales professionals with deep experience in strategy development and operationalization, corporate marketing, go-to-market planning, organizational development and coaching, and customer experience transformation.

It is from her 20+ years of marketing and strategy experience that she developed the Sellers' Compass™ methodology for leading companies to become customer-aligned and accelerating revenue.

