



Customer Journey Mapping Is a Strategic Imperative: What You Need to Know Now

As product and service categories have commoditized through universal access to capital, technology, talent, and rapid logistics, it's no surprise that many hold the customer experience as the last bastion of differentiation. Tiffani Bova, Gartner Vice President and Distinguished Analyst states that "Customer experience is the last source of sustainable differentiation and the new competitive battleground."

According to research by customer strategy think tank Thinkjar, 84% of companies are now embracing the notion of the customer experience. So it's no surprise that 63% of companies are mapping the customer journey in an attempt to design an improved customer experience.

— Customer Touchpoints vs. Impression Points

The basic concept of customer journey mapping is not new. This decades-old discipline has been a standard for professionals hoping to positively impact service quality and customer satisfaction. So what has changed? Today, customers have many more available options, channels through which they can express how they feel about various products and services. Are all customer touchpoints created equal? Not at all. Some, defined as impression points, contain emotional transactional content and can influence the customer experience in ways not previously understood. These moments are the most important to capture.

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- Tiffani Bova, Gartner Vice President

Doug Foster, former 7-Eleven Chief Marketing Officer and NovaLex Consulting principal, has seen the transformation of those companies who have been successful in singling out impression points from the larger pool of customer touchpoints. "It is important for marketing executives to know the difference between touchpoints and impression points," he explains. "As we have found at NovaLex, the measurement of impression points is critical to a successful customer journey mapping exercise. The guiding principle is that these points of consumer interaction have disproportionate leverage on customer satisfaction. When marketers identify these, their work becomes much easier as does the work of frontline employees who have fewer numbers of touchpoints to manage. They can focus on those processes which drive higher customer satisfaction."

Importantly, the NovaLex mapping work has led to an even more expansive application. For example, during the journey, pricing can be a source of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Pricing optimization, therefore, may be an essential element of experience design. Also unveiled are media and messaging insights—how the brand's promise is executed with the right tactic at the right time through the right channel. All in all, a broader and more scientifically measured customer experience will yield much more 'leveraged' results in support of the ultimate customer experience.



NovaLex, Latin for "new plan," is a strategy and marketing consultancy that positions companies for accelerated growth. NovaLex combines art and science—deep data analytics for targeting with data mining for powerful creative branding. Its strategic deployment of marketing technology, a method known as In-the-Moment Marketing®, insures clients' brands are in the final consideration set—even through the digital journey—to cost-efficiently generate more leads, conversions, and sales growth.

NovaLex team members have won multiple American Marketing Association EFFIE Awards for sales effectiveness and a Gold Lion at the Cannes Film Festival and have elevated the business of every client served.

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