



THE CARIBBEAN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION INSTITUTE

Empower your journey



Digital Transformation Series

Communication and Sales Channels

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PART ONE: COURSE OVERVIEW

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course will introduce the concept of a customer journey map, give an overview of digital marketing, and discuss social media practices for businesses.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this workshop, participants should be able to:

- Understand the concept of a customer journey map and be able to create a basic one
- Name some types of digital marketing
- List best practices for businesses using social media to engage with customers

Learning Objectives

PART TWO: CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAPPING

Customers are arguably the most important part of any business. Understanding them is key to attracting them and keeping them loyal to a company.

This session explains what a customer journey map is, and how it can help a business.

UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

A company's digital transformation starts with identifying priorities, and one way to begin that process is to map out the customer journey. Once a business can identify what its customers and stakeholders want and need, it can set its own goals and see where digital products and processes can be added to reach the destination.

A customer journey map explores every interaction a customer, employee, or stakeholder has with a product, service, or retail experience.

In a business journal from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Wharton marketing professor Patti Williams notes that the map can assist companies in understanding how their customers make decisions. "It reveals the types of information, sources, emotions and other factors that can influence them and their choices."

The Wharton School suggests simplistic maps likely will not go far enough. Assuming each customer or stakeholder is interacting with a product or service for the same reason and in the same ways will not give businesses the full picture needed to move forward.

One of the benefits of mapping out the journey is it gathers a deeper understanding of what the consumer is thinking and feeling at each touch point, allowing the business to address any issues that may arise.

Salesforce UK says the process of determining the journey helps SMEs make each interaction feel personal for the consumer, and that human-centric approach is something customers value.

IDENTIFYING TOUCH POINTS THROUGHOUT THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

The Wharton article says the map is often created through research derived from interviews, focus groups, a business' databases, surveys, social media, and other sources.

The Harvard Business Review suggests a few questions to ask when looking at the customer journey.

1. What actions are customers taking at each step?
2. What are their motivations to keep moving forward?
3. What questions do they have, and what is holding them back?
4. What are the barriers (cost, process, etc.)?

Survey software company Qualtrics lists five main areas of the customer journey:

1. Awareness
2. Consideration
3. Purchase
4. Experience
5. Loyalty

Qualtrics starts the journey mapping process by looking at the “online sales funnel,” which is the process during which a potential customer becomes an actual purchaser.

“Use this as a guideline to define how many touchpoints your customers have, and how each interaction funnels into the next.”

They suggest walking through the entire process of engaging with a business' product or service while playing the role of a customer – from the initial contact (perhaps on social media where someone may become aware of a company) to the end stage of making the purchase.

Include all touch points on the journey and consider how to personalize them: advertising; social media content; responses to reviews on various platforms; purchasing process; the support a company offers after a purchase; and loyalty rewards.

This could mean creating different consumer personas with various demographics to explore how each customer interacts with the business.

Qualtrics notes there is software that can do all of this.

“AI-enabled software will flag any touchpoint where customers are struggling and highlight any places where they drop out. Not only can you jump in and fix the problems, you can also measure the impact that improving the customer experience at those points has on the company’s bottom line.”

As with many digital processes, buy-in from the team, especially management, is going to play a role in its effectiveness, the Wharton paper says. It also adds that maps should be updated often.

MAPPING THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Consider a recent significant purchase you have made, and map out your journey, to the best of your memory, from start to finish.

Here is an example of a recent purchase of new headphones. That journey could look like this:

- Seeing an advertisement on social media about a sale on electronics.
- Clicking on that advertisement, and scrolling through the options.
- Adding headphones to their cart, but not completing the purchase.
- Receiving an automated email regarding the item they left behind, and an offer for an additional discount.
- Clicking on that email, and following through on the purchase.
- Receiving an email that the order has shipped (with tracking information).
- The product arrives and they test it out.
- They leave a positive review.
- The company responds, and offers a small discount for their next purchase.
- Loyalty is established, which leads to another purchase for the business in the future.

PART THREE: DIGITAL MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

In order for a business to have customers, it must find ways to reach them.

In this session, some of the types of digital marketing and things to consider when creating a digital marketing strategy will be discussed.

DIGITAL MARKETING OVERVIEW

Digital marketing is the use of the internet and other digital platforms to inform customers about a business.

The American Marketing Association (AMA) lists a few common examples:

- **Search engine optimization (SEO):** This means tailoring a website and online content to try to make it rank high in search engine results. One of the ways this is achieved is through using key words in the content.
- **Social media:** There are multiple platforms and ways to leverage social media as an advertising tool, but one quick example is for a business to create pages on Meta platforms such as Facebook and Instagram that include necessary company information (a physical location, links to where to purchase products, etc.) and engaging, regular content. (This will be discussed in more detail later in this session.)
- **Digital advertising:** This refers to ads on online platforms, including search engines or social media.
- **Email:** This is the practice of obtaining subscribers to a newsletter, or some other form of regular company content.
- **Pay-per-click:** This refers to a specific type of online advertisement that could appear on different platforms where businesses only pay when a potential customer clicks on the ad.

AMA notes three types of media that should be evaluated when creating a marketing strategy:

1. **Owned:** Any type of media that is owned and controlled by the company, such as its website, an app, their blog, or podcast.
2. **Paid:** Advertising displayed by a third party paid for by the company, such as a sponsored article on an established website, or influencer campaigns.
3. **Earned:** Content that is separate from the company, such as an independent and unsponsored review on a blog.

“A strong digital marketing strategy seeks to maximize the impact of owned, paid and earned media. These marketing strategies encompass multiple channels and approaches — spanning website content and blogs as well as online advertising, testimonials and reviews,” writes AMA.

Damian Ryan, author and corporate advisor, says in his book *Understanding Digital Marketing: Marketing Strategies for Engaging the Digital Generation* that he believes consumers have been forgotten as companies try to figure out new ways of reaching people and measuring that reach.

“Disrespecting privacy, irritating consumers and making the mistake of copying what you do online with what you do offline is dead,” Ryan writes in the fourth edition of his digital marketing book, adding that marketers need to be “more inclusive and emphatic towards the interests of consumers.”

He says it is important for businesses to engage with customers on their terms, while making it clear to the customer that you are listening and value them.

A company’s digital marketing strategy should consider who their customer is, and how to reach them. It should be built around the business’ goals.

Joe Pascarella, who works with small and mid-sized businesses for Dun and Bradstreet, wrote in *Forbes* that businesses can use digital tools to help find that target audience.

“As technology advances, artificial intelligence and machine learning are now being leveraged to understand what target audiences are doing online and how to turn their behaviors into insights that deploy messaging on sites ‘where they are.’ Such technology takes the guesswork out of choosing a social platform that your target audience is using and determining which websites they’re visiting.”

CASE STUDY: DULUX

Most products and services can be marketed in a digital format. Consider the case study offered in *Understanding Digital Marketing* for Dulux. The paint company enlisted the help of a design agency to create an app that would increase engagement with their products. Visit the link below and read pages 18 and 19. Encourage discussion regarding what the company did right.

<https://books.google.ca/books?id=4pZIDQAAQBAJ&lpg=PR1&pg=PA18#v=onepage&q&f=false>

What did the company do right?

PART FOUR: SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Humans crave social connection, and a lot of that takes place online. As people open up their social media to check in on their friends and families, businesses are there, too – trying to catch their attention.

In this section, how to develop a solid plan for social media content will be considered, as well as discussing what engagement looks like beyond that initial purchase.

DEVELOPING A SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT STRATEGY

As with any marketing strategy, a plan for social media engagement should keep the consumer at the forefront. Figuring out the best platforms to use to reach customers is dependent on who the target customer is, and the business.

Common platforms for businesses include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

A fashion brand that aims to reach a demographic of 20- and 30-year-olds may be best suited to utilize platforms such as TikTok and Instagram with influencer partnerships. Both of those platforms can work for multiple demographics, though it all depends on the types of products and the content a company creates.

“When you incorporate an effective social media presence into your small business marketing plan, you can reach customers and prospects where they are,” writes David Cotriss for Business News Daily.

When considering what kind of content to include, it may be helpful to look at competitors.

“Look for what they're doing, how often they post and what their posts look like. By reviewing their work, you'll be able to determine if you want to emulate them or branch out on your own,” wrote Murali Nethi for Entrepreneur.

After creating a plan, Cotriss stresses that businesses should post regularly without overdoing it, in order to avoid irritating the customer. Nethi suggests creating a calendar to map out daily tasks and goals for social media, and posting multiple times a week.

Live video, contests/giveaways, and collaborations with influencers and other businesses are great ways to encourage engagement and drive traffic, Nethi notes.

A business' social media should have a voice, and it should appeal to the customers it wants to reach. This means knowing the customers, and paying attention to analytics for demographic information and online behavior. It also means staying on top of trends, and paying attention to current events.

“Listen to your audience and find ways to relate to them without looking like you're trying too hard. Most importantly, don't be afraid to show a little personality. This helps present your business as adaptive, friendly and relevant,” Cotriss says.

MONITORING AND MANAGING ONLINE REPUTATION AND CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

Using social media for a business is not always about running a contest or posting about a deal.

It can be an important tool for gathering customer feedback and responding to it.

According to research from social media management software company Sprout Social, more than three quarters of customers expect to hear back from a brand within 24 hours after reaching out about an issue.

Marketing software company BrightLocal found in their 2022 survey of consumer habits that 98 per cent of people are reading reviews when searching for local businesses. Nearly 60 per cent of people in that same survey said they are unlikely to use a business that does not respond to any reviews, while 89 per cent said they would be very likely to visit a business that responds to all reviews.

Responding to positive reviews can be a helpful practice for showing a customer that taking the time to post is appreciated, as well as making it clear to others that the business is listening and engaging.

How a business reacts to negative reviews and issues can have a big impact on public perception of them also. Rarely does ignoring a problem make it go away.

It is not uncommon to see consumers post publicly about poor customer service experiences when a business fails to respond to an issue in a timely manner. Depending on how much reach that customer has, or where they post, a negative post can hurt a business beyond losing one angry follower.

That does not necessarily mean a business needs to hash out a solution in the public sphere. It could be helpful to ask publicly to move the conversation to a private message, so potential customers can see that the business does engage and respond quickly but then also offers privacy to the current customer and the business for the issue at hand.

CASE STUDY: PASTRY PASSIONS

Jamaican bakery Pastry Passions is an example of a Caribbean business effectively using social media to reach customers. The bakery has a significant reach on Instagram, with more than 20,000 followers, posting photos of custom cakes, consumer-created content, reviews, and behind-the-scenes videos.

Click the link below to review their content.

<https://www.instagram.com/pastrypassions/?hl=en>

What has been done well? Why is it impactful? What opportunities are there for more social media engagement?

ASSIGNMENT ANSWER KEY

PART THREE: DIGITAL MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

Case Study: Dulux

What did the company do right?

Possible answers:

- Doing research into their customers' wants and needs
- Ensuring the app would be easy to use and not irritating the customer
- Enlisting a third party to help
- Testing the app during the process to make sure it continued to be beneficial for the customer
- Thinking beyond a simple online advertisement, and meeting customers where they are

PART FOUR: SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Case Study: Pastry Passions

What has been done well? Why is it impactful? What opportunities are there for more social media engagement?

Possible answers:

- **What has been done well?** Reposting consumer content – shows they are paying attention to their customers and creates an engaging, authentic connection
- **Why is it impactful?** Behind the scenes videos – takes consumers into a place they do not usually see and makes it feel personal
- **What opportunities are there for more social engagement?** Paying attention to trends/current events – a series of posts regarding Valentine’s Day shows that they are tapped into their market

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