

# A five point plan for joining-up the dots of the customer journey from Intelcom

Submitted by: PR Artistry Limited

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The Customer Journey – Where's it going?

Colin Hay, VP Sales, Intelcom UK offers a five point plan for joining-up the dots of the customer journey

We've all heard about the 'customer journey' but what does the term really mean and why is it so important in contact centres? Quite simply, the expression refers to the interactions a customer has with an organisation from beginning to end. That is from when they first decide they need a product or service to when they no longer use the product or, hopefully, return to become a repeat customer.

In an attempt to add clarity and structure to the customer journey (some might say it merely adds to the confusion), companies frequently use techniques such as 'empathy mapping' and 'touch point mapping', to establish how a customer feels at each stage of the journey (empathy mapping) and then list all the possible points of contact a potential or actual customer has with the business before, during or after purchase (touch point mapping).

All sounds very complicated and a little too scientific? The following five-point plan aims to simplify the concept of the customer journey and get you started on creating a suitable strategy for your own organisation.

1. Understanding your customers – sounds obvious, doesn't it? But, you'd be amazed at how few organisations spend time assessing why their customers contact them in the first place and what they actually want from a service perspective. Contact centre agents represent the shop window to your organisation – why not encourage them to speak directly to customers to gain first-hand insight into their needs and aspirations? Use the various tools at your disposal – simple, short, multiple choice-style surveys targeted at different customer groups and in real time - are effective mechanisms for gathering meaningful feedback.
2. Drink your own champagne - try out some mystery shopping on your own company – phone your helpline, initiate a web chat conversation and see for yourself what works and what doesn't. When was the last time you sampled your own IVR? It could be a revelation and even a wake-up call to kick-start different ways of working within your contact centre as well as how you train new agents.
3. Capturing the voice of the customer to add real business value – companies should develop high levels of 'social listening' across their organisation. Part of winning customers is truly understanding their needs and making the effort to speak their language and today's clever technology can turn the contact centre agent into a customer service ambassador as well as a source of powerful business intelligence.

Embedding speech analytics into the contact centre enables organisations to analyse and search 100% of recorded customer calls in real-time, helping them to identify competitive threats and opportunities and the root cause of customer dissatisfaction.

4. Creating an integrated sales cycle - organisations that consider their contact centre to be the start and finish of the overall sales cycle will always succeed. Having chosen to purchase your goods and services, customers will expect a fast, seamless and positive buying experience or go elsewhere. Once the first sale is closed, the next challenge is to keep customers close and encourage them to buy more.

Every contact point should embody excellence – from the way agents handle initial enquiries to the quality of information provided, and their willingness to allow customers to interact in the channel of their choice. Cloud based contact centre technology can link seamlessly with an organisation's CRM, ERP and other business critical systems to identify customers and their past purchases and so deliver a highly personalised service to encourage loyalty.

5. It's a continuous journey – the journey doesn't stop once someone has purchased something. Make customer mapping a regular occurrence and keep it fresh. Take advantage of user groups and customer forums to elicit and follow up on constructive ideas and make customers feel looked after and valued.

#### Closing thoughts

Transforming your contact centre to suit your customers rather than your internal processes is challenging but liberating at the same time. Joining up the dots to create a complete and positive end-to-end experience is the way to go. Make sure your strategy to support the customer journey is relevant then back it up with the latest cloud-based technology that is ready for today's mobile-first, omni-channel, social-enabled world.

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#### About Intelcom

Intelcom is a leading provider of cloud-based contact centre solutions. With approaching two decades of experience, Intelcom was one of the first to develop a cloud-based contact centre. Highly flexible and scalable, Intelcom can be adapted to accommodate one to several thousand concurrent agents using any device, in any location and integrates with multiple applications seamlessly.

Intelcom is one of the few contact centre solutions that is completely multi-channel. Intelcom agents can respond to Phone, Email, Chat, Social Media and SMS enquiries all within the one application.

For more information please visit INTELECOM (<http://www.intele.com>)

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