A guide to mastering customer touchpoints for retail success

By Isaac Akanni   13 Oct 2023

In recent years, retail and e-commerce businesses have adapted to the increasing influence of digitalisation. Customers now demand user-friendly digital interactions, with little tolerance for inconveniences. Surprisingly, 86% of customers are willing to abandon a brand after just two negative experiences.

Regardless of your product's success, the quality of customer interactions takes precedence. Each interaction contributes to a customer's perception of your brand and their overall shopping experience. Every touchpoint holds significance. The key is to identify and optimise them to meet digital era expectations, ultimately boosting conversions and improving your bottom line.

Defining customer touchpoints

A customer touchpoint is any interaction between a customer and your brand that shapes their perception of you. This could be seeing an advertisement, engaging with customer support, or downloading your app. These touchpoints are

strategically placed throughout the customer journey, offering insights into how customers engage with your business. Each touchpoint presents an opportunity to impress and satisfy customers, enhancing their overall shopping experience.

Examples of retail touchpoints

Touchpoints exist at every stage of the customer journey, from pre-purchase to post-purchase. It's essential to map out all interactions customers have with your brand to determine their value or if they've turned into pain points.

Here are some typical retail touchpoints:

Pre-purchase	During purchase	Post-purchase
Social media post	Making and account	Re-engagement campaigns
Advertisements	Website or app browsing	Promotions
Online reviews	Checkout process	Billing
Word-of-mouth	Customer support	Delivery
Blog	Targeted ads	Feedback
		Returns and exchanges

Identifying touchpoints involves putting yourself in the customer's shoes and pinpointing every point of contact with your brand. Utilising feedback surveys and reviews can help determine the emotions associated with each touchpoint and reveal hidden pain points.

Case Study: Petpetgo

Consider Petpetgo, an e-commerce retailer that discovered that Facebook ads and general email campaigns yielded a low return on advertising spend (ROAS). These touchpoints were detrimental to customer relationships, impacting their bottom line. By identifying these ineffective touchpoints, Petpetgo reduced advertising spending by 10% and doubled their purchasing frequency.

How did they achieve this transformation? They adopted a combination of personalisation and omnichannel solutions, delivering relevant content and promotions to the right customers at the right time.

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5 essential messaging techniques

Effective messaging is pivotal in turning touchpoints into seamless experiences, as demonstrated by Petpetgo's success. Here are five essential messaging techniques to maximise the impact of every interaction:

1. **Focus on omnichannel and timely communication**: Customers expect smooth, connected communication across various channels. Use customer data to determine optimal timing and channels for messages, ensuring convenience.
2. **Make your communication contextual and behaviour-based**: Tailor messages based on individual customer behaviour, offering personalised incentives and content to re-engage customers.
3. **Be conversational**: Incorporate chatbots, CRM systems, and messaging apps for instant, interactive interactions, enhancing customer satisfaction.
4. **Match the channel's style**: Align communication with platform norms, avoiding intrusiveness and using clickable buttons for easy responses.
5. **Always add value**: Provide helpful, tailored content aligned with customer interests and preferences.

Optimising retail touchpoints

Understanding where and how to apply these messaging essentials can significantly impact touchpoint optimisation. While some touchpoints, like word of mouth and customer reviews, may not be directly controllable, improving overall customer satisfaction can indirectly enhance these aspects.

- **Pre-purchase touchpoints**:
  Harness the fact that 87% of online shoppers actively use social media for product research. Ensure your social pages offer up-to-date, accessible information. Analyse metrics to identify posts driving conversions and craft a customer-centric strategy to leave a positive impression.

- **During purchase touchpoints**:
  Prioritise improving the user-friendliness of your website and app. Streamline the download process and enhance product browsing, offering a smoother experience and boosting conversion rates.

- **Post-purchase touchpoints**:

  Give priority to promptly delivering billing receipts. This not only ensures customers receive documentation swiftly but also fosters trust in your brand, contributing to a positive online shopping experience.

Creating customer-centric retail touchpoints

Touchpoints are scattered throughout the entire customer journey. By identifying and understanding customer expectations, you can optimise interactions and create exceptional experiences. Implement proactive outreach and follow the messaging tips outlined here to build painless touchpoints and strong customer relationships that encourage repeat business.

Optimising retail touchpoints is not just a strategy; it is essential for businesses in the digital age. Each interaction, from pre-purchase to post-purchase, shapes customer perceptions and influences loyalty. Identifying, refining, and personalising these touchpoints will be pivotal in ensuring long-lasting customer relationships and sustainable success in the competitive retail landscape.

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