BIZCOMMUNITY

User journeys are broken

By Mike Saunders

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Fifty digital enthusiasts tucked themselves into a trendy venue in Durban to discuss 'Design Thinking' and 'User Experience' at our latest edition of Digital Swarm.

During the evening we discussed the importance of the digital journey. We found that the journey isn't about point A and point B – the bit between points A and B was where we needed to focus. Now, this isn't rocket science but it starts to get a lot more complicated when we acknowledge that if point B is our chosen end point for a customer, then there are many different Point A's to consider. We also need to acknowledge that most businesses have multiple point B's that will help them successfully reach their goals.

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For example: Jon might travel blissfully from point A to B exactly the way you planned – he made the purchase and even shared that he bought your product with his community. However, Thandi clicks on Jon's link and arrives at your site halfway between point A and B. She doesn't have all the information she needs, she is excited about the product, but doesn't know how to get the information she needs to execute her purchase.

As marketers we very often spend hours and hours planning for Jon's journey and get excited when the stats show us we are getting many people joining Jon's walk with your brand. However, we don't often consider Thandi, she becomes lost in the stats, telling us what went wrong, she joins our bounce rate clan and hides among our drop off rates. Instead of considering Thandi's plight, we focus our energy on refining Jon's journey.

There has to be a better way:

I think we need to acknowledge that customers don't reach us on a collection of straight highways. We need to accept that customers find us through a complex network of connections that don't follow process; they follow the emotional state, the patience, the heart and the desire of the consumer. If I don't feel like clicking your link tonight I won't, but if I see Jon clicked it three days later then I get very interested in what you're selling.

So I prefer to look at it like this: develop great brand touch-points, not journeys. Touch-points focus our attention on a single point that customers connect with. Customers arrive at the touch-point from various angles but are always given a choice of where they want to end up next. In other words, the touch-point encourages people to experience the brand and then make a decision about where they want to go next. Do they want to leave, buy, enquire, sell, share or simply stand in awe? Either way, the touch-point has a specific design that is not specific to a user journey, but rather focuses on delivering the best customer experience aimed at building brand ROI in the process. Then, the customer moves on to the next touch-point that they choose.

Designing touch-points are more difficult because it involves dissecting the customer journey in greater detail, but it goes a long way to helping Thandi and Jon both experience your brand as it should be experienced.

In short, customers change their own path to your door. Shouldn't you spend time thinking about what they might come across on their path, and decide how you would like to influence their world with that touch-point? Then move onto the next touch-point… and the next one.

ABOUT MIKE SAUNDERS

Mike Saunders, CEO of Digitlab, is a renowned Digital Business and CRM Consulting expert acclaimed for his unique ability to blend technological expertise with insightful business strategy. His leadership in digital consulting, combined with his roles as an international keynote speaker and author, has solidified his reputation as a visionary in the digital realm.

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