

# HOW BRANDS COMMUNICATE THEIR PURPOSE



TO CONNECT  
WITH CUSTOMERS

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## INTRODUCTION

What forges the unbreakable bond between a brand and its customers? The answer is communication. However, not just any communication – it's the kind that radiates an unwavering commitment to the brand's core purpose at every turn of the customer journey. Purpose-driven communication not only fosters the strongest connections with customers but also cultivates long-term brand loyalty.

In this e-book, we'll explore how brands can harness communication to illuminate their purpose and allow it to take center stage over the course of the customer's journey.



## THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

The customer journey, often referred to as the marketing funnel, unveils the distinct stages customers navigate before and after their interaction with a product or service. Within these stages, organizations have the opportunity to infuse brand communication with their purpose. To effectively communicate, it's imperative that brands understand each stage prospective customers occupy and tailor their communication and content accordingly.

The customer journey typically consists of five distinct stages:

1. Awareness
2. Consideration
3. Decision
4. Retention
5. Loyalty



# COMMUNICATION THAT LEADS WITH PURPOSE

Let's explore how brands can use communication to convey their purpose and connect with customers effectively at each stage of the customer journey:

## **1. The Awareness Stage: Crafting Brand Introduction with Purpose**

In the Awareness Stage, the customer journey is set in motion with the largest audience in the journey. Prospective customers have identified a problem and are eager to explore potential solutions. In this first stage of the journey, prospective customers are on a quest for knowledge.

With this understanding, brands can set out to introduce themselves and their purpose in meaningful ways:



- Craft a concise and memorable brand narrative that answers the question, “What does your brand stand for?”.
- Attract and captivate prospective customers by weaving brand purpose into impactful storytelling.
- Humanize the brand by connecting its purpose to the customer's journey, making it relatable and impactful.
- Create widespread awareness and visibility for the brand through the sharing of core values and mission.
- Showcase expertise that aligns with the brand's purpose, building trust and authenticity.
- Establish authority and earn the trust of prospective customers right from the onset of their journey by openly sharing the brand's unwavering purpose.
- Assist in problem-solving and provide answers to questions, always underpinned by the brand's purpose.
- Position the brand to stand out among the competition by highlighting purpose and impact.

**TIP:** REMEMBER THAT PROSPECTIVE CUSTOMERS IN THIS STAGE ARE NOT READY TO PURCHASE. COMMUNICATION SHOULD FOCUS ON BEING EDUCATIONAL, AND THE COMMUNICATION TACTICS SHOULD BE FREE AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE, SERVING AS A GIFT OF BOTH KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION.



## 2. The Consideration Stage: Guiding Prospective Customers through Purposeful Engagement

As prospective customers transition into the consideration stage, they are in an evaluation mindset. Prospective customers are already familiar with a brand and its purpose and are starting to compare pricing, benefits, and features. Communication should guide them toward collecting more information, and brands can include calls to action that resonate with their purpose, ultimately taking the first step toward collecting leads and moving the prospective customer to the Decision Stage. When leading with purpose in communication during the Consideration Stage, a brand has the opportunity to:

- Build credibility with prospective customers by highlighting community impact.
- Serve as trusted advisors, offering solutions grounded in the brand's mission.
- Articulate a compelling value proposition, emphasizing how the brand's purpose aligns with the prospective customer's needs.
- Establish authority on a topic that resonates with the brand's purpose, creating a sense of expertise and leadership.
- Inspire trust and admiration by inviting customers to join them on a brand's purpose-driven journey.
- Educate and offer solutions in line with the brand's purpose, becoming a trusted advisor on the customer's journey.
- Create curiosity, not through gimmicks, but by revealing how the brand's purpose-driven approach is genuinely unique and impactful.



- Build rapport through engagement, showing that the brand isn't just a provider of products or services but a purposeful partner on the customer's journey.
- Address concerns while remaining true to the brand's purpose, demonstrating empathy and understanding.
- Counter messages from competitors with purpose-driven responses, showing resilience and commitment.

**TIP:** IN THIS STAGE, YOU CAN POSITION YOUR BRAND AS CREDIBLE AND TRUSTWORTHY THROUGH SHOWCASING CUSTOMER REVIEWS AND TESTIMONIALS, HIGHLIGHTING HOW THE BRAND'S PURPOSE HAS TRANSFORMED THE CUSTOMER'S JOURNEY. BRANDS ARE IN A STRONGER POSITION WHEN THEY ALLOW POSITIVE CUSTOMER REVIEWS OR TESTIMONIALS TO "SPEAK" FOR THE BRAND, REFLECTING THE BRAND'S IMPACT.

REMEMBER TO RESPOND TO REVIEWS, POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE, AS THIS ACTION IS ANOTHER CONNECTION POINT AND TRUST BUILDER WITH PROSPECTIVE CUSTOMERS AS WELL AS CURRENT CUSTOMERS.

### **3. The Decision Stage: Purposeful Choice and Confidence**

The Decision Stage marks the critical turning point in the customer journey. At this stage, prospective customers are ready to make their decision. During this stage, a brand's communications should continue to lead with purpose and focus on instilling confidence in the prospective customer to buy. Communication should:



- Nurture the transition from Consideration to Decision by showcasing how the brand's purpose aligns with the prospective customer's values and needs.
- Ensure prospective customers have absolute confidence in their choice, a choice made easier because they have been educated about the brand's purpose in the first two stages and feel an emotional connection to, and even a preference for, the brand and its purpose.
- Explain pricing in a transparent, clear manner that builds trust.
- Address questions and eliminate doubts, with empathy and in alignment with the brand's purpose, showing an unwavering commitment to the customer.
- Simplify the buying process to make it easy for customers to take action by creating a seamless and meaningful journey.

**TIP: REMEMBER THAT THE DECISION STAGE IS NOT THE TIME FOR HEAVY PROMOTION OR SALES-DRIVEN TACTICS. BE OPEN TO FIELDING FINAL QUESTIONS THAT MAY PREVENT THE PROSPECTIVE CUSTOMER FROM MAKING THE PURCHASE. BRANDS CAN BE THE HEROES IN THIS STAGE, GIVING THE PROSPECTIVE CUSTOMER THE ANSWERS AND CONFIDENCE THEY NEED TO MAKE A DECISION THAT ALIGNS WITH THE BRAND'S PURPOSE, CREATING AN UNBREAKABLE BOND.**





#### **4. The Retention Stage: Fostering Purposeful Customer Relationships**

As customers advance to the Retention Stage, they seek support and service. Brands prioritize keeping the customer and earning repeat purchases. In this stage, brands living their purpose will prioritize making each customer feel truly special, a practice that often leads to customer recommendations and referrals. When customer retention is the goal, communication efforts should focus on:

- Ensuring seamless onboarding or implementation.
- Keeping customers engaged with value-added and personalized content.
- Providing excellent customer service that mirrors the brand's unwavering commitment to its mission.
- Surprising and delighting customers in various forms, such as rewards, exclusive offers, or discounts, that reflect a brand's purpose and give-back mindset.
- Leaving a lasting impression that reflects the brand's purpose.
- Being open to feedback and learning, which shows commitment to improvement.
- Expressing gratitude and creating moments of appreciation.
- Responding promptly to customer inquiries or complaints with empathy and a solution-oriented approach that aligns with the brand's purpose, creating trust and resolution.



- Communicating changes to the brand or offer that may impact the customer, ensuring transparency and adherence to the brand's purpose, building lasting trust.

**TIP:** BUILDING TRUST IS NOT A ONE-TIME ENDEAVOR; IT'S AN ONGOING COMMITMENT DEEPLY ANCHORED IN THE BRAND'S PURPOSE. REMEMBER TO BE GUIDED BY THE BRAND'S VALUES, AS LONG-LASTING TRUST FORMS MORE EASILY BETWEEN A BRAND AND A CUSTOMER WHEN BRANDS LIVE THEIR VALUES, KEEP THEIR WORD, LISTEN TO LEARN, AND RAISE THE BAR IN PROVIDING SERVICE AND SUPPORT, ALL DRIVEN BY THE BRAND'S PURPOSE.

## 5. The Loyalty Stage: Purposeful Ambassadorship and Connection

In the final stage of the customer journey, customers are eager to share their experiences with a brand. Brands aspire to maintain this sharing mindset by ensuring that communications continue to reinforce purpose and a positive brand experience so that customers keep a deep connection with a brand and are less likely to buy from another. Additionally, communication should focus on:

- Continuing to share customer-centric content, provide unwavering excellence in customer service, remain open to feedback and improvement, and sustain a cycle of surprise and delight.
- Actively converting customers into enthusiastic brand ambassadors who wholeheartedly endorse the brand and actively encourage new prospective customers to buy from it.



- Maintaining regular communication to nurture customers and share updates on the brand's purpose and community impact.
- Offering deeper personalization and individualized experience to the customer.
- Listening with empathy and care to show willingness to learn and understand.
- Promoting customer engagement that creates a sense of community and shared values.

**TIP: BRANDS DEVELOPING CUSTOMER LOYALTY PROGRAMS SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THAT THE EFFORT PUT INTO RETAINING CUSTOMERS AND THEN BUILDING SUSTAINABLE LOYALTY IS LESS EXPENSIVE THAN ACQUIRING NEW CUSTOMERS, WHO WILL NEED TO START AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY. DEEPENING THE RELATIONSHIP WITH EXISTING CUSTOMERS IS A PURPOSEFUL, COST-EFFECTIVE STRATEGY THAT REFLECTS THE BRAND'S UNWAVERING COMMITMENT**



## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, leading with a brand's purpose when communicating with a prospect or customer is the driving force behind the connection forged between consumers and brands. Effective communication isn't merely about guiding consumers from awareness to loyalty; it's about doing so with a clear and profound purpose.

Brands that infuse their purpose into their communication strategies create a lasting impact on their customers, turning them into loyal advocates. It's not just about the product or service; it's about the purpose behind the brand, one that resonates deeply with the customers and forms a bond that transcends mere transactions. At every stage of the customer journey, purpose-driven communication is the beacon that lights the way to lasting and purposeful connections, and ultimately makes it a journey worth taking.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Laura Wessells is the co-founder of ShinePR, a PR agency focused creating transformative, purpose-driven brands through strategy, execution, and education. She has 20+ years of experience leading marketing and branding functions at Fortune 500 companies.

Laura is a purpose fanatic. She is a strong advocate for building purpose-driven brands and creating exceptional customer experiences by leveraging her background in industry insights, strategy development, partnership marketing, creative storytelling, brand activation, and analytics. She is guided by the belief that everyone—individuals and organizations alike—has a purpose, a story to share, that sets it apart and contributes to the greater good. Her objective is to illuminate that story for both nonprofit and for-profit organizations.

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