



Making moments from content

Research into delivering continuous customer journeys

Contents

Executive summary 3

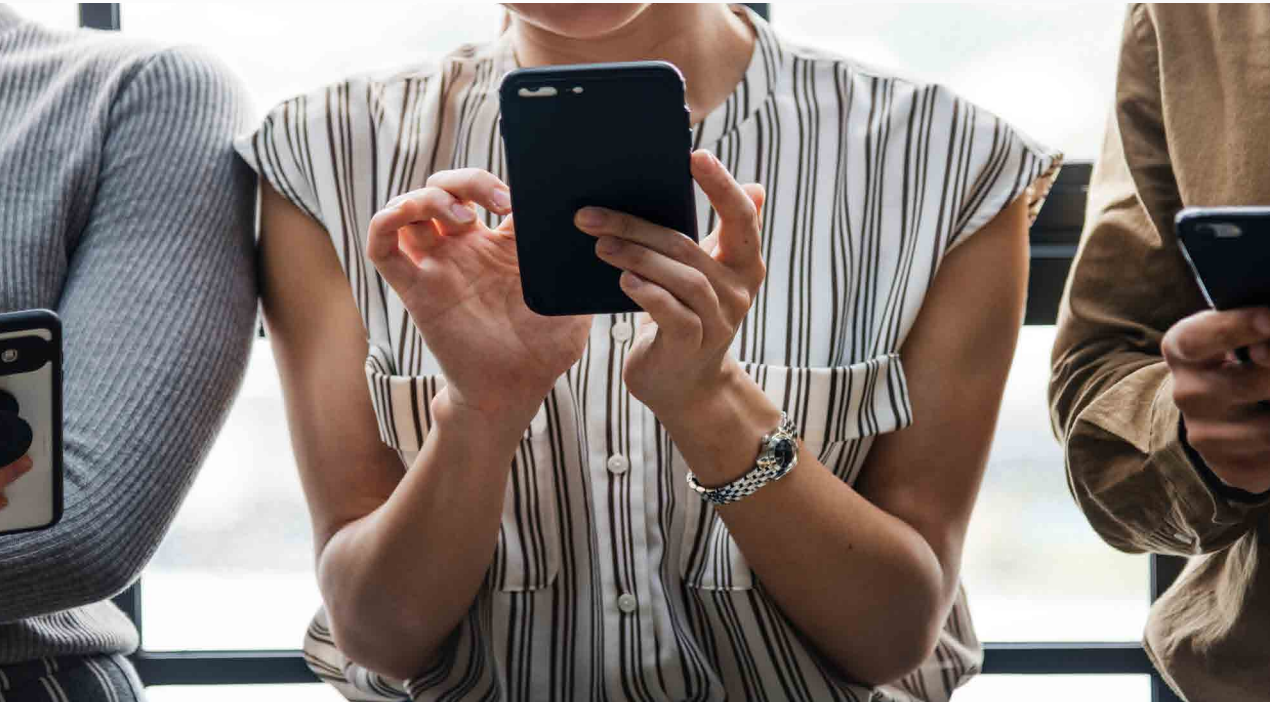
The cost of failure is high..... 5

Customer expectations 6

Elements of a great customer journey 7

So where do things go wrong? 8

It's a multi-channel complex content world..... 10



Executive summary

It has been over 30 years since the internet was first opened to commercial use. In 2021, over 2.14 billion people worldwide are expected to buy goods and services online, up from 1.66 billion global digital buyers in 2016.

Purchasing goods and services online is now a standard convenience made easier by simplified financial transactions and the ability to search across brands, products and price. Customers and prospects have high expectations across the customer journey – from assessment to selection and from purchase to support. Research shows that it takes only one bad experience to lose a customer, and up to 36% of customers shop elsewhere following a single poor experience.

Content drives every stage of this journey. But ultimately content drives moments. The moment a customer sees an advertisement, the moment they search, the moment they look for more information...

According to Google, today's customers experience an average of 150 of these moments every day: purchase moments, research moments, discovery moments, support moments. These moments are guided by many possible channels and delivery mechanisms: websites, emails, social posts, product documentation, knowledge base articles... the list goes on.

All of this content is created by a wide variety of departments and is often delivered across many different channels, and may suffer from a lack of resources, a deficit of time, constant shifts in the competitive landscape, and minimal collaboration between vital stakeholders.

When a customer journey comprises of moments, how can today's organizations make every moment matter to create a continuous customer journey? One in which a customer's journey is not broken by a split-second of failure?



The customer journey is made of moments

This research paper

We took a look the results of two pieces of research, recently commissioned by RWS (formerly SDL).

The first research was customer facing. More than 2,500 customers completed a survey about their recent online purchases. We wanted to discover:

- What content do customers use as they move from awareness to evaluation and through to purchase and post-purchase product use?
- What do they expect?
- Where are their expectations not fulfilled?
- And what is the cost of failure?

In the second piece of research, 'Today's content supply prevents continuous customer journeys,' Forrester Consulting looks at the challenges organizations face in light of rising customer expectations. It examines the intensified demand for seamless customer experiences and the need for companies to invest in the processes and technology that support them.

Infographic



The cost of failure is high

From a customer perspective...

Given that customer experience is made of moments, impressions and interactions with content created from many departments and business units, 'getting it right' remains a challenge.

Our survey results show that the cost of 'missing the mark' and not fulfilling a customer's micro-moment expectations comes at a high cost.

- 45% search for other brands or competing products.
- 42% defer their purchase decision
- 31% go from mobile to a desktop version of the website in the hopes of a better experience
- 27% simply stop their purchase
- 26% raise a complaint
- 23% turn to a marketplace instead of using the brand website
- 22% share their bad experience on social media
- 21% abandon their online purchase and purchase in an offline store
- 21% might try again next time

The cost of failure is high.

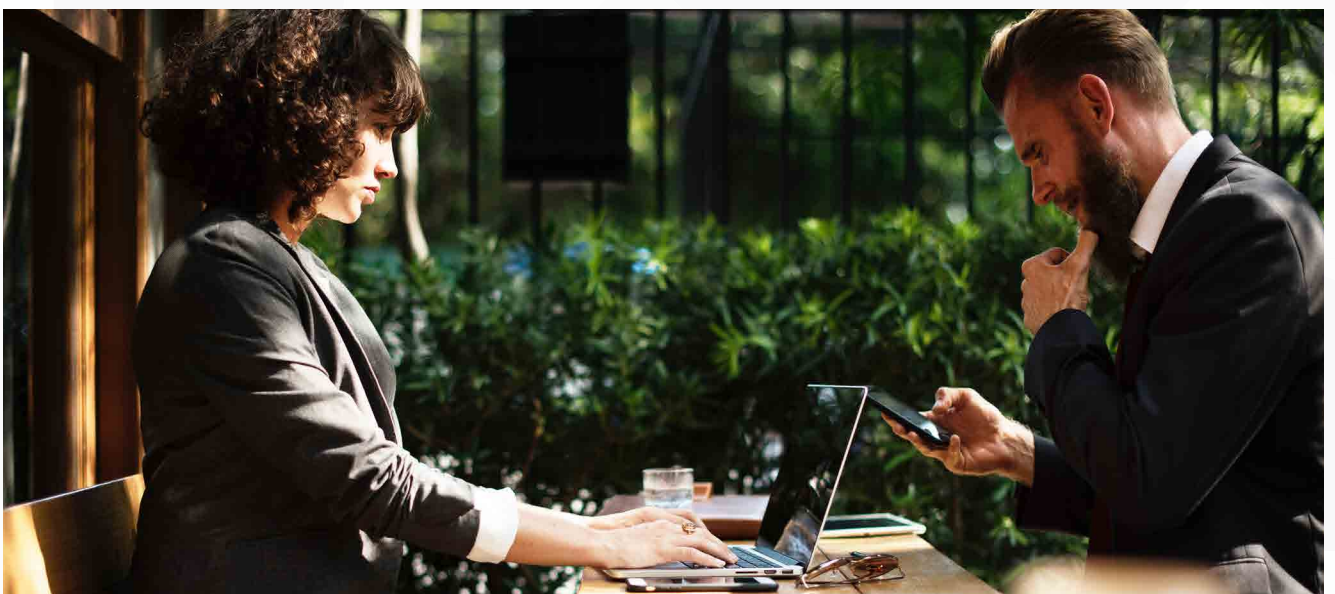
For today's online business this means...

To address this, to prevent loss of business due to 'broken moments', organizations need to unify the way they create, translate and deliver content across their entire business.

The goal is to create a customer-focused content supply chain that addresses each moment of the customer journey. It means adopting a holistic view of the customer experience that spans every stage of the customer journey from awareness through to evaluation, purchase and support.

“80% of companies believe content supply chain challenges impede their ability to deliver on top business objectives.”

Forrester



Customer expectations

From a customer perspective...

With customer expectations set by brands that deliver the best digital experiences, today's online consumer expects easy access to information, a wide variety of content types, content in their own language, and access to user generated content. And all of this content needs to be provided in your target audiences' languages.

In our survey, 74% say that brands need to meet up with the expectations set by the best digital experiences the customer has ever had.

The survey results show that:

- 82% of customers expect brands to be available whenever needed
- 80% expect brands to provide website content, product information and user reviews in their own language
- 66% expect brands to provide relevant and personalized product/service recommendations

For today's online business this means...

Organizations need to make the necessary investments in systems that simplify content processes, management and delivery. This involves both how a company structures and shares content across teams, as well as how this content can be adapted for new channels and formats to support future growth.

“

74% say that brands need to meet up with the expectations set by the best digital experiences the customer has ever had.

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Elements of a great customer journey

From a customer perspective...

Given that the path to purchase is based on so many discrete moments... and that customer loyalty is so sensitive to 'things going wrong' and moments of frustration, any moment can adversely affect loyalty.

When asked to specify their best digital experiences with brands, our respondents pointed to the following features:

- Multilingual access
- Logical categorization
- Clear and accurate product information
- Customer reviews
- Product comparisons
- Extensive customer support and service post-purchase

Product information is important pre-purchase

User manuals and guides are typically thought of as post-purchase only, however our survey results show that pre-purchase:

- 57% read product/service specifications online
- 39% read product/service documentation (PDF or paper manuals)

Despite this importance, 28% find it difficult to locate all product information from a single page, and 66% have abandoned purchase due to insufficient product information.

For today's online business this means...

Organizations need to overcome the typical divisions between content types – sales, marketing, product information and support content.

The goal is to create a unified customer experience that brings these various types of information together.

To join up the many moments that make up a continuous customer journey, organizations need a broader operational approach and supporting technology to span internal silos. This way they can address content findability, language requirements and content quality issues.

And in a multi-channel world, they need to do this in multiple formats appropriate for that specific customer moment. According to Forrester, "Volume and emerging formats will threaten future customer experience. We found that one-third of firms aren't sure that customers can find the content they want in the right format today."

“66% have abandoned purchase due to insufficient product information.”

So where do things go wrong?

From a customer perspective...

In our survey, customers say they experience discontinuity in the following phases:

60% Consideration

62% Evaluation

67% Purchase

32% Post-Purchase

More than 70% of consumers have experienced the following issues:

- Inability to find the content they are looking for
- Language barriers and lack of content in their own language
- Lack of customer customization
- Unsatisfying customer support and self-service
- Lack of integration between channels
- User interface or website issues

You could argue that as long as a customer is purchasing these issues are not grave, however, more than 20% of consumers stop their purchase or leave a website when they experienced issues.

This is not just issues at the shopping cart (lack of stock 37% or failed transactions 32%) but it included lack of translated content (24%) and reviews (22%), lack of support (28%), and inconsistent content across touchpoints (18%).

Describing their worst experiences with brands, those surveyed noted:

- Difficult product search or irrelevant results
- Lack of information where they expected
- Inaccurate product information
- Monolingual content or poor translations
- Lack of customization for local product availability
- Poor customer support post-purchase, including badly translated FAQs

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More than 20% of consumers stop their purchase or leave a website when they experienced issues.

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For today's online business this means...

According to the Forrester study, "Companies struggle to deliver continuous customer journeys due to disorganized global processes, legacy tool sets and increasing customer expectations."

The same research shows that most companies struggle with:



Content creation

- Keeping up with the appetite for content
- Ability to keep up with new content formats and types
- Lack of automation/mostly manual processes



Content translation

- Lack of definition around the content translation processes
- Overly complex workflows
- Lack of automation/manual processes



Content delivery

- Lack of automation/manual processes
- Delivery not coordinated across teams/business units
- Inability to keep up with the volume and complexity of delivery

These challenges all prevent organizations from delivering on that elusive 'omni-channel' vision that aligns with customers' expectations.

It's a multi-channel complex content world

From a customer perspective...

Today's online buyer is a multi-channel marvel. Our research shows that today's shopper uses a wide variety of channels and content sources at each stage of the customer journey.

During the following purchase stages, respondents found content in the following areas to be most critical per stage:

The company website is a consistently important source of content at every stage. But more significantly, customers use a broad variety of content sources.

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Awareness	Evaluation	Purchase	Post-Purchase
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marketplace – 65%• Advertising – 51%• News/articles – 44%• Company website – 43%• Product reviews/social media – 42%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marketplace – 58%• Product reviews – 51%• Company website – 45%• Product/FAQ web pages – 43%• Discussion forums – 40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shipping information – 45%• Company website – 43%• Return policies – 38%• Product reviews – 29%• Product/FAQ webpages – 24%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Product manuals – 44%• Company website – 38%• Online tutorials – 36%• Product/FAQ web pages – 33%• Return policies – 27%

Source: RWS (formerly SDL)

For today's online business this means...

According to Forrester, companies need to be able to, "Anticipate the rise in customer expectations and invest in automation and processes that will scale and adapt."

Marketplaces, websites, reviews and FAQs... the options seems to be endless. In many organizations the processes, technology and responsibility areas for these crucial areas in supporting customers are often varied and inconsistent.

"As a result of the repetitive and uncoordinated creation and delivery of content, only 30% of companies believe their customers always experience content as a connected, intuitive and non-siloed experience – otherwise known as a continuous customer journey." (Forrester, 2018).

For global companies, this necessarily entails embracing a way unify content creation, translation and delivery through a global content operation model (GCOM). While content is frequently siloed within departments and delivery channels, the risk is that companies ignore the fact that, to a customer, a company is a company, a brand is a brand and a product is a product.

Forrester says, "Since many firms lack a coherent GCOM, the increase in volume will be difficult to manage at scale. Companies that lack automation will be hindered by their ability to be agile, organized, and deliver more granular forms of content. As a result, the customers' experience will likely become further disjointed."

Customers don't care who produces what, only that in the moment they look for information, or interact with a company online, they want to find the information or action point they are looking for.

It's essential that you understand the customer experience. Ultimately, revenue is made up of moments and providing the seamless customer journey today's customers have come to expect.

Source: "Today's content supply chains prevent continuous customer journeys" November 2018, Forrester Consulting thought leadership paper commissioned by RWS.

Learn more about global content operating models, visit
[rws.com/tridion](https://www.rws.com/tridion)

About RWS

RWS Holdings plc is the world's leading provider of technology-enabled language, content management and intellectual property services. We help our customers to connect with and bring new ideas to people globally by communicating business critical content at scale and enabling the protection and realization of their innovations.

Our vision is to help organizations interact effectively with people anywhere in the world by solving their language, content and market access challenges through our collective global intelligence, deep expertise and smart technology.

Customers include 90 of the globe's top 100 brands, the top 10 pharmaceutical companies and approximately half of the top 20 patent filers worldwide. Our client base spans Europe, Asia Pacific, and North and South America across the technology, pharmaceutical, medical, legal, chemical, automotive, government and telecommunications sectors, which we serve from offices across five continents.

Founded in 1958, RWS is headquartered in the UK and publicly listed on AIM, the London Stock Exchange regulated market (RWS.L).

For further information, please visit: www.rws.com

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