

Customer Journeys in NL: Last-Minute Backpacking or an Organized Trip

Experiences of UX Managers

Barbara Werdmuller and Susanne van Mulken
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Before Departure

In the world of marketing and design, customer journeys currently receive a lot of international attention. Googling 'customer journey' will provide some hundred thousand results, varying from full-grown articles, instructions and manuals to names of specialized service providers and job offers. But what do customer journeys mean here in the Netherlands? Is it indeed more than just a hype, and does customer journey mapping as a method serve a purpose in daily practice? And if so, how often are customer journeys actually used within Dutch organizations, big and small? Which challenges are at stake? Because we were curious, we consulted our UX management circle. This survey includes the highlights of interviews with twelve UX managers. It comprises a short introduction, the most important findings, followed by real-life cases and quotes and tips from UX managers. The findings are clustered by theme: use and application, surplus value, embedding and methodology, organizational challenges, approach and continuation. The survey ends with the main conclusions and our own view on customer journeys.

Enjoy the journey!



Travel plan

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Customer Journeys as a Basis for (Digital) Innovation

For organizations, their relevance in a digital world implies the ability to adapt quickly. For the development of digital services and business models takes place incredibly fast. Clear priorities are necessary to offer a good basis for this development. What does the customer really need? What is needed to assist the customer even better?

Customer journeys are increasingly regarded as a prerequisite for successful renovation of a company's services. More and more organizations are starting to use them, even more so now omnichannel services appear to set the new standard. A customer journey can visualize the expectations, experiences and emotions of a customer or employee during the purchase or use of a certain service or product. Important in this respect are the so-called 'moments of truth': moments that can make the difference for customers. Moments when they are pleasantly surprised, or moments when they lose interest.



During the 'journey', the customer experiences various kinds of communication of your organization, varying from commercials, the website, the mobile app, to the support of call-center employees. These contact instances generated by the customer are often called 'touchpoints'. A customer's experience at one touchpoint is of influence on his expectations and experiences at another touchpoint. So it is important to have a clear view on the combined action of the touchpoints.

A customer's perceptions are recorded in a structured way in a so-called 'customer journey map'. Journey maps have many visual appearances. They are applied to describe the current situation (in German: 'Ist' (as is)), or the future situation ('Soll' (will)). When the perception at a certain point in the map is less positive, it may be a reason to carefully analyze the cause behind that perception. And to look for solutions. But, of course, also positive highlights in the emotional curve are interesting: they could be used to fortify your brand value.

A black and white photograph of a person with dark hair, wearing a dark sweater and a black smartwatch, working on a large sheet of paper. They are using a black pen to write on a sticky note. The paper is covered with many other sticky notes, some with handwritten text and some with small drawings of people. The person's left hand is resting on the paper near the bottom center. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

1. Use and Application

How often are customer journeys applied, and for which purpose?

A black and white photograph of a person with dark hair, wearing a dark sweater and a black smartwatch, working on a large sheet of paper. They are using a black pen to write on a sticky note. The paper is covered with many other sticky notes, some with handwritten text like 'prognose installatie', 'R&R Prognose', 'Wat is', 'Rooker proces', 'In Voldoen', and 'Van dit'. There are also small drawings of people on some sticky notes. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

1. Use and Application

How often are customer journeys applied, and for which purpose?

Variety in Use, Increase in Interest

Well-Known Method

Customer journeys are hot. Within the UX management circle, customer journey mapping is a well-known method, although the ways of application differ more than one would suspect. For some, common sense will prevail: *“A customer journey map is useful, but not more than that. It’s not the only method.”* (Tijn Borms, SnappCar) Most UX managers indicate that the method is used by their own UX department, or by another department, like customer experience (CX). In most cases this is done on an ad hoc basis, describing the ‘Ist’ situation as the main goal, focusing specifically on problems with the current client or employee process.

Systematic Application in Larger Organizations

The number of developed customer journey maps within large companies are often few and far between. Exceptions are large financial organizations like ABN AMRO and Rabobank, where dozens of customer journeys have been developed over the years. Both banks apply a standard approach and use customer journeys to design future services ('Soll' situation) and to chart internal company processes (blueprints). *“We have been using customer journeys for ten years now, and since two years in a structured way.”* (Maurice Bölte, Rabobank.) In larger organizations it often takes between three weeks to three months to implement customer journeys.

Trend: Increase in Interest

Almost all UX managers indicate a growing interest in customer journeys within their organization. Jimmy van der Have, working for Exact: *“We want to have more insight in the routes customers follow before and after purchase of our products and services. Customer journeys do help to gain that insight.”*



Tip: *“Use customer journey maps as an aid for new employees when settling in to their job or project.”*
(Anneke van de LangKruis, Priva)

Often the need for an overall vision on and consistency between all channels is indicated as a reason to start using customer journey mapping. *“Given our omnichannel strategy, the need increases to look in a cross-channel way to customer experience.”* (Frank de Wit, ANWB.) One strengthening factor is the growing importance of UX in internal corporate processes: more and more, employees are regarded as customers. And a good employee experience adds to a good customer experience.

Shift Towards a Standard Approach

Furthermore, UX managers, especially in younger and/or fast-growing organizations, expect the application of customer journeys to increase insight as well as a standard operating procedure within the organization or team. *“I imagine we will work with customer journeys in due course. You need structure if you continually want to improve your service.”* (Tijn Borms, SnappCar.) IKEA is already applying journey mapping as part of a standard approach when designing customer-oriented services, and is planning to do so in the development of employee solutions.

Summarized

We see that the application of customer journey mapping is closely connected with the size and company culture of an organization. Large and formal organizations with a longer tradition in UX and CX, are structurally applying the method. Many medium, or fast-growing smaller organizations plan to do so on short term. An omnichannel approach and the need for overview and standardization are mentioned as the most important drives.



Tip: *“Apply customer journey mapping to gain a better view on what is necessary besides screen interaction, like notifications and other triggers.”*
(Jennie Huijboom, ABN AMRO)

In Practice

Customer Journey Mapping at Priva

A Means of Analysis and Roadmap in One

Anneke van de Langkruis: “Customer journey mapping is regularly applied at Priva, both for analysis of the ‘Ist’ (for example the current company processes or thinking process of the customer), and for the ‘Soll’ (for example the development of the introduction process of a new product). Priva has also developed an overall customer journey map of the customer process, based on the input of some twenty stakeholders, gradually complemented with new insights. The visualizations are often used within the company, during workshops, meetings with partners, or during the introduction period of new employees. After all, a customer journey map is more accessible than a process description in, for instance, Mavim.”



2. Surplus Value

What do UX managers see as the distinguishing power of customer journey mapping?



The Power: Insight and Overview

UX managers come up with various aspects when asked what the power of customer journey mapping is.

Breaking Down Silos


Top of the list is the 'crowbar function'. Customer journey mapping facilitates better cooperation between departments, and brings to light all the customer experiences in all touchpoints: internet, telephone, shop, et cetera. This means a lot, especially for larger organizations with separated units, so-called silos, and for organizations that feel strongly for omnichannel strategy, like IKEA: *"Customer journey mapping serves as a stepping stone to go omnichannel."* (Marcel Kouwenberg)

Through the Eyes of the Customer

According to many, the method also promotes an 'outside-in' way of thinking: so, viewed from the position of the customer instead of from the organization or products. This provides a better insight in what often is a poor connection between customer experience and company processes, or, as Jimmy van der Have (Exact) summarizes: *"Customer journey maps show you where the process runs less smoothly."*

The Entire Journey Mapped Out

Another strong feature of customer journey mapping is that it provides an overview of the entire customer journey, so before, during and after the customer's visits to the website. Stakeholders are presented with a clear view of the steps involved, the strengths and weaknesses of the process, as well as the 'moments of truth' for customers.



Tip: *"Use customer journey mapping as an instrument to create more coherence or coordination between smaller business assignments."*
(Pia Mitchell, UNV)

Insight in Responsibilities

One can also apply the method to clarify which project teams are working on which projects, to determine which further actions are necessary, or to coordinate changes. The journeys themselves can even add to innovative organizational ideas. Rob Paauw en Margot Nuijten (PostNL): *“With journeys you can restructure your organization. For example, someone does not belong to the marketing department, but to the service ‘Mail reception’.”* Interdisciplinary ownership of a certain journey may well lead to an improved quality of the service.

Data Integration


Organizations with a lot of available data stress the fact that customer journeys come in very handy as a ‘plotting’ instrument for quantitative and qualitative customer data. *“In times of ‘data obesity’, a customer journey helps you to process your data in a goal-oriented way.”* (Maurice Bölte, Rabobank)

Accessible

That customer journey maps are generally considered to be accessible is to be considered a bonus. *“Stakeholders inform me that the visualizations of customer journeys are well understood.”* (Jennie Huijboom, ABN AMRO)

Summarizing

The strength of customer journeys mainly lies in its ability to act as a crowbar, combined with its overall overview, which both are conditions for an omnichannel strategy. The method is pre-eminently suitable to chart the customer journey, but is also suitable to plot data and determine which actions are needed. Finally, customer journey maps can be made easily accessible to various stakeholders within an organization.



Tip: *“Use customer journey maps to clarify who does what within the organization en to identify possible overlaps.”*
(Jimmy van der Have, Exact)



In Practice

The Surplus Value of Customer Journeys According to SnappCar

Customer Journey Mapping Is No Holy Grail

Tijn Borms: “A customer journey map is useful as an approach, but not more than that. It’s not the only method. A customer journey map can serve as a stepping stone, especially to structure qualitative feedback of customers. Within SnappCar there is no direct need for that, because the method does not link up very well with our current work methods (iterative, with short link to Support). In my opinion the method will be worth more to large silo organizations, with separated departments that do not cooperate very well. Customer journey mapping can then function as a crowbar. It is, however, better to look at other ways of restructuring an organization (adding multidisciplinary teams, agile approach, holacratic models), recruitment and selection (with a focus on customer-oriented employees), and a well-organized distribution of responsibilities (involving a strong position for employees with customer contact).”

3. Embedding and Methodology

Who is owner of the customer journeys and what is the approach?



The Way to Standardization

Pioneers in Small Organizations

In smaller and young organizations, customer journey mapping will often not have been structurally embedded. It is often up to a few enthusiastic employees (whether or not from the UX department) to initiate the method and keep it going. UX managers expect that to change. Anneke van de Langkruis (Priva) explains: *“Within our company, customer journey mapping has as yet not been formally embedded. As soon as more data becomes available, we will have to make agreements about maintenance”* Bart Wouters sees the rapid growth of his company as a determining factor: *“At Coolblue more and more people are working on our customer journey. This implies the need for an overall vision, to make clear which steps we make, when, and in which direction.”*

Formally Embedded In Larger Organizations

Within larger organizations, the responsibility for the method is more often officially assigned, for instance to the Marketing or Design department. Sometimes even to more than one department: to CX (the omnichannel journey) as well as UX (the digital journey).

Teamwork

Customer journey mapping is teamwork. In practice, employees from different departments are involved. In smaller and more informal organizations, the arrangement of the team differs per project. Larger organizations often have core teams, with more permanent staff. Usually, such a team consists of a UX designer or service designer, a marketer, a business analyst as well as employees with customer contacts. Beside these, data analysts and users can be part of the team.



Tip: "Make (in cooperation with other departments) an overview of each product or service and all of its bottlenecks and customer experiences, and use these when developing customer journeys."
(Anneke van de Langkruis, Priva)

Travel Guides and Tooling

Particularly larger organizations are currently involved in either setting up a standardized mode of operation, or to perfect it. Examples are the development of scenarios, templates and other tools for organizing workshops. A point of particular interest that is often mentioned is which tooling is suitable. Often, tools are used that have not been especially designed for customer journey mapping, like Axure (see example on page 27), PowerPoint and Illustrator. Jimmy van der Have (Exact): *“As far as tooling is concerned I have found few that are really suitable. Much work is done by hand and with Illustrator.”* In practice, developing customer journey maps can therefore be time-consuming.

Necessary Training

Much is needed for customer journey mapping: investigation, data analysis, setting up workshops, making visualizations. According to UX managers this can be quite demanding for employees. Knowledge and experience often have to be hired and/or shared via internal and on-the-job training. Edwin Lieftink (CZ): *“We secure knowledge by working with fixed methods and by transferring the knowledge and experience via internal training.”*

Summarizing

Many UX managers are considering an improved embedding of customer journeys and standardized operating procedures due to a growing organization and the need to work with customer data. Larger organizations are already taking up standardization, but the tooling to match it is often lacking. Forwarding knowledge takes place internally by on-the-job training or by (temporary) hiring external expertise.



Tip: *“Make sure all stakeholders in the business and ICT know which customer journey maps and accompanying insights are already there, so the wheel is not reinvented.”*
(Maurice Bölte, Rabobank)



In Practice

The Team Approach by Rabobank

A Tandem Gets You Further

Maurice Bölte: *“At Rabobank we work with tandems consisting of customer journey managers and service designers. The customer journey manager is in the lead and responsible for the process: keeping in touch with stakeholders and coordinating the activities. The service designer is responsible for the implementation: preparing sessions and processing the results. The tandem works in close cooperation with other members of the core team, involving data analysts, web managers, micro campaigners. Beside these there is a so-called challenge team, consisting of stakeholders from the call center as well as other employees with direct customer contact.*

The mode of operation is recorded in a customer journey mapping schedule. Also, we have developed internal training sessions for customer journey management, with the help of external consultants. Colleagues that are going to be involved in developing customer journeys will have to follow this course first.”

4. Challenges: Organization

How to get your organization involved?



A Method that Is Supported

No Basis, No Success

As with most methods, support within the organization is a prerequisite for successful customer journey mapping. So support will have to be broader than just from one's own UX department. The involvement of disciplines normally divided over several departments is crucial. The customer journey should be the starting point, and not the company structure. This requires a different focus. Pia Mitchell (UWV): *"You have to convince people it really makes more sense to look at the coherence between the different service components instead of short-term problem solving and solutions."*

Mandate needed

Customer journey mapping requires cooperation and mandate that go beyond the touchpoints in the journey. *"Solutions can be found crossing several divisions"*, says Edwin Lieftink (CZ), *"so you must try to have everyone rowing in the same direction."* Especially in organizations with a silo mentality it can be difficult to set up multidisciplinary teams. A steering committee can be helpful to enforce the necessary mandate.

Everybody Heading towards the Same Goal

Given the need for multidisciplinary cooperation, vision and target require extra attention. Are all participants heading towards the same goal? Maurice Bölte (Rabobank): *"A shared vision is an important success factor. Will we go for conversion or experience?"* A UX roadmap can clarify things in such a case.

Tip: *"See to it that departments are well-represented in the team and assign a steering group, to ensure authority and a common view."*
(Edwin Lieftink, CZ)

Basis in Figures Necessary

The results of the method may not be directly apparent, which is contrary to many marketing tools: think for instance of the number of clicks on an ad. A decent support in figures, like Return on Investment (ROI) or Net Promoter Score (NPS) can be necessary to gain trust and the will to invest in the method.

Flexibility and Tact Required

Customer journey mapping may lead to surprising new insights. This in itself is exciting, but also forms a challenge, for it requires the stakeholders to be open and receptive to these findings. Frank de Wit (ANWB): *“A customer journey project may result in findings that do not meet the expectations, or do not connect to other routes. You have to be flexible enough to adapt your opinion or strategy.”* Sometimes discretion is required, due to certain sensitivities within the organization. Marcel Kouwenberg (IKEA): *“Customer insights can be confronting to some departments. For the way people work is picked to pieces. This requires a clever approach, for instance by presenting research results and have stakeholders themselves draw conclusions.”*

Summarized

Mandate for the method is an important success factor. Getting this mandate from all corners of the organization involving many different stakeholders makes it more complex. A UX roadmap and a steering group may bring relief. Tact and flexibility are necessary if journeys lead to unexpected findings.

Tip: *“Record the vision and targets in a roadmap which is used as a basis by all teams.”*
(Sonja Radenkovic, TomTom)

In Practice

Creating Mandate at IKEA

What One Should Arrange before Departure

Marcel Kouwenberg: *“The acceptance of customer journey mapping is an important prerequisite for success. It’s not just a one person’s treat, but a method for the organization to keep up with changes in technology and society. The big challenge is to get the process going within the organization at the right moment and in the right way. Early involvement by stakeholders from all departments is crucial in this respect. At IKEA we use several tools for this purpose varying from a roadshow and presentation to a coffee get-together.*

Colleagues with an ability to put themselves in another colleague’s position in the customer journeys have been selected to give the presentations, so as to ensure good interplay.”



A black and white photograph of a person climbing a steep rock face. The climber is silhouetted against a bright, cloudy sky. The rock face is rugged and vertical, with the climber positioned on the right side of the frame. The climber's body is angled upwards, with one arm reaching up to grip a rock ledge and the other leg extended downwards. The sky is filled with large, dramatic clouds, and a bright light source, likely the sun, is visible near the bottom center, creating a strong backlight effect.

5. Challenges: Approach

How to make the most of the method?

A Clever Method, With a Few Pitfalls

Not a Purpose in Itself

UX managers see customer journey mapping as a useful, but also comprehensive method. The risk is that one loses oneself completely in the method. Tijn Borms (SnappCar): *“Customer journey mapping should not be a purpose in itself. Customers will not have a better user experience due to a nicely developed customer journey.”*

Journeys and Agile Sprints

One trap often mentioned is loss of efficiency: having to link the method to an agile environment with short sprints. Bart Wouters (Coolblue): *“A customer journey map is a good way to improve the customer experience in a structured manner as viewed from any specialization. Deciding what you show in the journey is a challenge, but what to leave out is a challenge even more.”* Jennie Huijboom (ABN AMRO) believes in a fusion between customer journey mapping and an agile approach, *“...certainly if you have a design sprint preceded by a development sprint. You could then look upon a customer journey map as one long sprint.”* Another important factor is tooling. Sonja Radenkovic (TomTom): *“The speed with which you can draw a customer journey remains crucial.”*

Qualitative as Well as Quantitative

Figure-based approach is another issue. In smaller organizations, the gathering of data and interpreting them is often something that's scarcely out of the egg. At the same time UX managers indicate that within their organizations more and more value is attributed to a 'fact-based' approach. This is primarily the case at the start of the project in order to obtain budget.

Tip: *“Prioritize on the basis of official figures. Ask questions like: how many people are involved, with how many percent will conversion increase if we take up this new division?”* (Pia Mitchell, UNW)

With regard to the design process itself, it is to be expected that customer data will be leading, instead of assumptions and 'gut feeling'. Anneke van de Langkruis (Priva): *"The application of customer data is important for determining design principles, and provide arguments of a solid basis, especially when actions or investments are required."* Also, as Frank de Wit (ANWB) indicates, you want to be able to show what the effect of the improvements will be. *"The process of measuring data is important within ANWB. For instance, you must be able to show proof that the NPS increases."*

Prioritization is Politics

UX managers of larger organizations see it as a challenge to define and prioritize customer journeys. A process that may be hampered by differing interests of those involved. Edwin Liefink (CZ): *"Prioritizing can prove tricky because of the differences in views. Each department wants to secure its own goals or customer journey."* This is less often the case within smaller or medium-sized organizations, when a quick check with colleagues is sufficient.

Summarized

As with any method, the idea of customer journey mapping should be that the benefits exceed the costs. Speed and efficiency are always at stake. 'Validated learning', used as an approach method at ABN AMRO (see the 'In practice' on the next page) may promote the connections with agile operation. A 'fact-based' approach may add to the acceptance of the method, and to obtaining authority and budget for projects to improve it.

Tip: *"Data are of course important, but try to prevent that people with much (Knowledge of) data are unevenly represented within the team."* (Tijn Borms, SnappCar)

In Practice

Customer Journeys and Validated Learning at ABN AMRO

How to Quickly Find Out if You're on the Right Track

Jennie Huijboom: “You have to be able to demonstrate that customer journey mapping will be profitable. For it takes time to start an analysis for a number of weeks, time that is not spent directly on agile designing and checking the result with the customer. At ABN AMRO we apply ‘validated learning’ for this purpose, which is comparable to the ‘fact-based’ approach, but differs in the fact that it makes use of assumptions. These have to be explicitly stated and tested in an early stage. Our menu shows which test methods are available, together with the circumstances to which they apply. For example, when you want to develop a new investment feature for your mobile app, you make the assumption that customers will indeed use this function when they make investments via the app. You can have the assumption checked by, for instance, a client panel. Validated learning helps you to quickly find out whether or not you are on the right track.”



6. Challenges: Follow-Up

How to follow up and take care of implementation?



From Inventory to Action!

No Capacity, No Budget


Customer journey mapping often leads to new insights and ideas for improvement, which subsequently have to be implemented. Many UX managers see the follow-up as a challenge. Obstacles mentioned are lack of capacity and budget for improvements. Edwin Liefink (CZ): *“Developing a customer journey will only be really meaningful when capacity is available for improvements.”*

Mandate Covering Several Touchpoints

Because customer journey mapping goes beyond channels, solutions covering several touchpoints will have to be implemented. This requires mandate covering several touchpoints, something many organizations are not yet ready for. According to Jennie Huijboom (ABN AMRO), this does not have to be an impediment: *“If you treat customer journey courses as a program from the start, and directly claim capacity and budget from different departments, I don’t see a problem.”*

KPIs on the Journey as a Whole

In order to be able to monitor the effect of improvements, measuring instruments and KPIs have to be adjusted. Edwin Liefink (CZ): *“The transfer of individual touchpoint KPIs to customer journey KPIs is a prerequisite: without this approach the method devaluates.”*



Tip: *“Before you start, determine which customer journeys are most important, and how many improvement projects the organization can perform.”*
(Edwin Liefink, CZ)

Continuity and Ownership Needed


Like any other method, customer journey mapping requires continuity. Tijn Borms (SnappCar): *“You should not describe a customer journey and then let it rest for a year. Then it becomes an artefact with no practical meaning.”* Just because customer journeys have no official status in many organizations, many UX managers worry about that continuity. Pia Mitchell (UWV): *“Building up knowledge is difficult in an environment where there’s a lack of internal ownership and that it is put into practice only incidentally.”* Ownership is crucial for keeping customer journeys dynamic. Owners can secure the method, knowledge, skills and tooling and process new insights.

Sharing Insights Within the Organization

Of course, results should be shared within the organization. Sharing knowledge takes place smoothly, even ‘by itself’ in smaller, flat organizations, like Priva. Anneke van de Langkruis: *“Guaranteeing a follow-up and implementation is relatively easy, because we are a small company.”* In larger organizations, a decent infrastructure (like a knowledge platform or a customer journey library) adds to successful sharing of results.

Summarized

For the follow-up process, challenges that are often mentioned involve claiming both capacity and budget that are needed for realizing improvements, overall mandate, and continuity. Organizations overcome drawbacks with proper organization of the customer journey program, clearly defined ownership, and a good infrastructure with regard to knowledge sharing.



Tip: *“Share your customer journeys. Share them online and hang them on the wall.”*
(Anneke van de Langkruis, Priva)

In Practice

Rabobank's Customer Journey Library

Documenting and Sharing All Travel Experiences

Maurice Bölte: *"Until now at Rabobank we have mapped about thirty journeys. On a micro level we have estimated a number of around a thousand potential journeys. We have developed a customer journey library using Axure, a tool to manage and share the journeys with the rest of the organization. This has its advantages: the library convinces stakeholders of the usefulness of the method, and it prevents work overlap. Also, it shows the impact minor changes have in certain journeys. Finally, it helps to standardize things. We have created a so-called fishbone diagram (Ishikawa diagram), which is used by stakeholders to obtain an overview of the customer journeys that have been developed."*



7. Conclusions & Travel Tips

1. Our inventory shows that the popularity of customer journeys among Dutch UX managers is growing, but that the ways how journeys are applied vary strongly. That is rather remarkable, as many organizations consider themselves operating on a strategic level with 'omnichannel'. Especially customer journeys can make the difference in this respect, because they provide insight in the customer experience that covers all touchpoints.

2. We distinguish two different approaches. First, there is a structured, more extensive approach (the 'organized trip'), which is mostly used when dealing with quantitative data. The second line of approach can be called informal, ad hoc (so called 'backpacking'), and covers the more qualitative data or even the assumptions one has regarding customer experience.

3. Many UX managers are still in the process of finding their way when it comes to getting as much value as possible from customer journeys. The main challenges they face are:

- Creating authority.
- Mandate covering all touchpoints, needed for the implementation of improvements.
- Ensuring continuity regarding ownership.

Tips for a Pleasant Journey

From the experiences of UX managers, we have derived a number of tips.

Before Departure

- Involve stakeholders of various departments at an early stage.
- Use qualitative and quantitative data to create support.
- Consider a programmatic approach and claim budget for the improvement course.
- Assign a steering committee or a customer journey manager in order to secure a mandate. Document the vision and targets in a shared roadmap.
- Invest in training courses or in hands-on training for employees that are going to work with the method.

During the Journey

- Carefully divide roles within the core team: divide responsibilities for both process and implementation.
- Use tact when dealing with delicate customer insights and sharing these.
- Check your bearings as early as possible. Are you on the right track? Try validated learning as a technique.
- Prioritize on basis of data. It adds objectivity to the project.

Follow-Up Process

- Ensure clearly-defined ownership with regard to customer journeys, so as to guarantee topicality and continuity.
- Promote knowledge sharing by distributing the customer journeys online and on paper, use the journeys during program introductions and workshops.
- Document all journeys in one, central place on the network (digital library).

8. Informaat & Customer Journeys

Informaat truly promotes the use of customer journeys and has been applying the method for eight years, both as part of service design projects, and as a design method in its own right. The method has been used for optimizing existing services, but also on a tactical and strategic level for the development of completely new services. In our view, customer journeys form the best-suited method to:

- Shape your omnichannel strategy.
- Promote customer-oriented development rather than organizational-driven development.
- Better focus on prioritization and effective budget spending.
- Obtain surprising insights with respect to your service.

Pitfalls

Apart from many advantages, we also see a number of pitfalls. If there's not enough insight in who the customers are, a customer journey approach is not going to help you to make better decisions. If your journeys or blueprints are too complicated, they run the risk of ending up in some drawer.

If you apply customer journeys without any relationship with other methods or processes, or without the necessary expertise, it will be hard to find support for the improvements you propose.

And the Future?

In our view, customer journeys as a method might well set the standard in the years to come when it comes to development of new (omnichannel) services. We also expect that content strategists will apply the method for content development, to determine which content serves which channel, and in which form. Customer journeys tend to lead to innovative ideas for better or new services. We therefore anticipate a growing interest for service blueprints supporting a structured briefing and coordination of implementation parties. In conclusion, we expect the demand for suitable tooling for designing and maintaining customer journeys to increase. UX would do well to familiarize themselves with the method. The more people within an organization are familiar with customer journey mapping, the quicker they will come to offer really good service to their customers.

Which approach suits your organization best: last-minute backpacking or an organized trip?

Interviewed UX Management Circle Participants

Jennie Huijboom



Sonja Radenkovic



Jimmy van der Have



Frank de Wit



Nils Vergeer/Edwin Liefink



Anneke van de Langkruis



Bart Wouters



Marcel Kouwenberg



Rob Paauw/Margot Nuijten



Pia Mitchell



Maurice Bölte



Tijn Borms



The UX Management Circle: an Informaat Initiative

The growing importance of digital product services is reason for many organizations to decide to put more effort in structuring and formalizing their research, design, and development activities towards user experience. Managed and specialized teams, groups and departments are formed, resulting in a new role, with dedicated tasks, responsibilities, and competences: the UX manager.

UX managers are faced with several challenges, and it is to be expected that they will respond successfully. However, this UX role is a recent one, and there are not yet many sources available to draw inspiration from.

Therefore, Informaat took the initiative in organizing meetings for UX managers and teams. These meetings aim at giving a group of participants the opportunity to share their challenges and reactions, thereby learning from and inspiring each other.

The meetings are practice-based and deal with themes that are relevant to UX managers. Examples are internal 'evangelization', professional development of team skills, setting up the design and development process, and cooperation with marketing departments, technical teams, and product management.

More About Customer Journeys

Our Own Blog Posts (BiRDS)

[A guide to experience mapping](#)

[Best practices for customer journey mapping](#)

[Customer journey mapping, in brief](#)

[Customer journey maps and blueprints](#)

Other Blog Posts and Articles

Battista, Ronnie: [Journey maps: Not the end of the story](#)

Bodine, Kerry: [10 Ways to use customer journey maps](#)

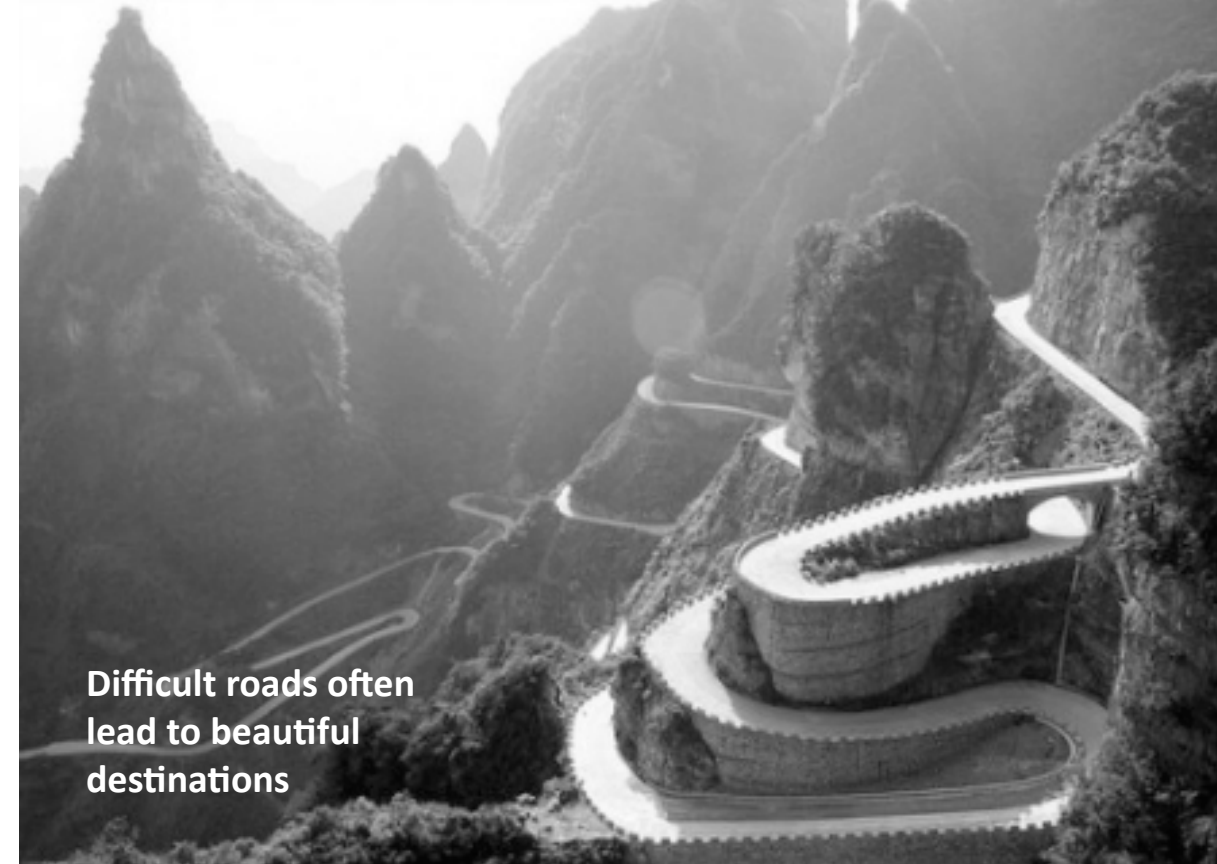
Bodine, Kerry: [Journey mapping Q&A: Required research for customer journey maps](#)

Kramp, Jennifer: [Journey Mapping Principles that Influence Business Strategy & Tactics](#)

Rampen, Wim: [Five things to remember when mapping the customer journey](#)

Temkin, Bruce: [Seven Steps for Developing Customer Journey Maps](#)

Tincher, Jim: [Customer Journey Maps – the Top 10 Requirements \(Revisited\)](#)



More Information

Contact

Susanne van Mulken: susanne.van.mulken@informaat.com

Barbara Werdmuller: barbara.werdmuller@informaat.com

Rob van der Haar: rob.van.der.haar@informaat.com

Peter Bogaards: peter.bogaards@informaat.com

See also

LinkedIn group* UX Management Roundtable

[<http://linkd.in/1Egk2fz>]

*Invite-only

BiRDS: category 'Customer Journey'

[<http://informaat.com/blog/customer-journey>]

UX Management Circle: Challenges 2015

[<http://informaat.com/en/what-we-do/ux-mgt-report/>]





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info@informaat.com



+31 35 543 1222



Jacob van Lennepleaan 57 3743 AP Baarn (NL)



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