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Tool 5.2 Circular Customer Journey

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Circular Solutions for Furniture
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Tool 5.2 – Circular Customer Journey

Phase 5 – Design & Development

Circular Customer Journey Touchpoint Map

Designed for: _____ Designed by: _____ Date: _____ Version: _____

The diagram illustrates a customer journey path through six stages, each represented by a colored arrow pointing right. Above and below the path are various touchpoints represented by colored boxes (green, blue, orange, purple, red, grey) connected to the path by lines. The stages are: Awareness (green), Consideration (blue), Purchase or Participate (orange), Circular Retention (purple), Circular Advocacy (red), and Recycling (grey).

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Circular Customer Journey Canvas

Designed for: _____ Designed by: _____ Date: _____ Version: _____

Stage	Awareness <i>How does the customer become aware of us?</i>	Consideration <i>What is the customer's motivation for buying?</i>	Purchase or Participate <i>How do we trigger action?</i>	Circular Retention <i>How do we stay in contact with the customer?</i>	Circular Advocacy <i>What opportunities for engagement are we creating?</i>	Recycling <i>How do we motivate customers to participate in circularity?</i>
TOUCH POINT	☐ Media visibility ☐ Websites, socials ☐ Search engine visibility ☐ Sustainable collectives	☐ Product reviews, testimonials ☐ Sustainable comparison guides ☐ Background research	☐ Website checkout ☐ In-store experience ☐ External retailers ☐ Online support	☐ Repair services/ instructions ☐ Refurbishing services/ instructions	☐ Referral programs ☐ User generated content ☐ Reselling platforms or incentives	☐ Company recollection schemes ☐ Recycling partners ☐ Municipal waste management
ACTION	☐ Sustainable or conventional option? ☐ Understanding circular offerings	☐ New, refurbished, or recycled? ☐ Assess sustainability statements	☐ Ownership or service? ☐ Complete purchase ☐ Receive confirmation	☐ Repair at home or take to service ☐ Look up upcycling/refurbishing	☐ Leave reviews and share experiences ☐ Reselling existing or upcycled products	☐ Contact company for recollection ☐ Recycle through appropriate provider
EMOTION	What is the customer feeling at this stage?					
PAIN POINTS	☐ Unclear circular benefits ☐ Attitudes towards circularity: positive or negative?	☐ Price complexity compared to linear products ☐ Negative emotions towards recycling	☐ Disengagement from the service ☐ Unclear policies ☐ Lack of understanding ☐ Valuing ownership	☐ Poor support ☐ Education on repair ☐ Keeping contact with the customer	☐ No recognition ☐ Unappreciated loyalty ☐ Disengagement	☐ Education on recycling ☐ Reselling platforms or incentives
OPPORTUNITIES	☐ Addressing customer's job-to-be-done? ☐ Education on circular benefits	☐ Multifaceted circular benefits ☐ Strong story derived from circularity	☐ Simplify checkout ☐ Ensure continued contact ☐ Satisfaction guarantee ☐ Circular variety of ownership	☐ Additional value created through repair services ☐ Personalization through upcycling	☐ Create ambassador programs ☐ Encourage user generated content	☐ Continuing the customer relation ☐ Take-back schemes ☐ Incentives to create motivation

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Objective of the Tool

The Circular Customer Journey (CCJ) helps companies to understand customer experience through circular lens and translates these findings into actionable outcomes in design and business model development. Good customer experience in B2B (business-to-business) or B2C (business-to-consumer) is critical for differentiation from competition, ensuring customer loyalty and continuous partnership, and enabling reuse behaviours for circular economy. In a nutshell, customer journey is a visualization method for understanding how customers interact with specific offerings, identifying gaps through a perspective shift, and creating a link between value creation and customer experience.

CCJ operates as a tool to preliminary outline assumed customer perspective towards product/service and modelling this through touchpoints, pain points, emotions, and motivations. CCJ can be utilized in several stages of development, from preliminary design or business model mapping, or improving customer experience for established products. It is important to note that customer experiences and modelling them through tools such as CCJ should always be based on existing data about real customers, or it should be explicitly understood if the data is based on subjective assumptions.

What the Tool Is

The CCJ includes a customer journey touchpoint map for identifying interactions with the product/service throughout the lifecycle, as well as canvas used for structuring the different customer-oriented lifecycle phases through the touchpoints, pain points, emotions, and opportunities.

This enables understanding the product/service from simultaneously customer-oriented and circular perspective, identifying possible blind spots or gaps in keeping the customer engaged throughout the lifecycle to ensure optimal end-of-life outcomes, and discovering potential process steps to implement education or additional value-creation mechanisms.

The outcome is a map describing the journey customers go through when interacting with a product/service, as well as pointers on possible barriers and opportunities for development.

When to Use the Tool

The CCJ can be utilized in several stages of development, from preliminary design or business model mapping, or improving customer experience for established products. It is critical to note that for creating preliminary understanding of the customer perspective, subjective assumptions or AI assisted personas can be used, but for robust application customer research and data about the actual customers is demanded.

How to Use the Tool

Step 1 – Collect Critical Data: Utilizing previous customer research, conducting new segmentation studies, or opting for data-driven AI-personas.

Step 2 – Map Customer Journey Touchpoints: Identify the different ways customer engages with the product/service throughout the lifecycle.

Step 3 – Describe actions, pain points, emotions, and opportunities: Analyse from the data what different actions are connected to the touchpoints, what kind of pain points there are or might be, what the customer is feeling, and what opportunities the company could offer/create for each lifecycle phase.

Step 4 – Identify Barriers and Critical Factors: Where are the biggest pain points? What are the negative or unsure emotions connected to? Are there knowledge gaps?

Step 5 – Update Map based on Supporting Evidence: Enrich with additional information.

Step 6 – Re-evaluate, Implement and Restart: Estimate updates, implement findings to the product/service lifecycle, and continually evaluate possible changes or blind spots.

Expected Output

Circular Customer Journey Touchpoint Map and Canvas describe:

- Customer interactions with the product/service
- Customer actions at each circular lifecycle phase
- Emotions experienced at each circular lifecycle phase
- Possible pain points connected to the experience at each circular lifecycle phase
- Opportunities to improve customer experience or create new offerings at each circular lifecycle phase

This helps businesses in developing their circular business model, identify pain points, improve customer experience, and boost retention by understanding customer emotions and behaviours at each touchpoint related to circular practices.

Key Dimensions of the Circular Customer Journey

1. Awareness

Understanding how the customer understands the service/product exists, what kind of drivers are operating their choices, and how those can be leveraged.

Touchpoint Examples:

- Media visibility
- Websites, socials
- Search engine visibility
- Sustainable collectives

Action Examples:

- Sustainable or conventional option?
- Understanding circular offerings
- Considering value and benefit

Experience: What is the customer feeling at this stage? Confusion, excitement?

Pain Point Examples:

- Lack of awareness
- Unclear circular benefits
- Market competition
- Attitudes towards circularity: positive or negative?

Opportunity Examples:

- Addressing customer's 'job-to-be-done'
- Education on circular benefits
- Education on transformation of consumption

Guiding question:

How does the customer become aware of us?

2. Consideration

Helps understand how the customer is making their choice between the different offerings, and how to create critical visibility at this stage.

Touchpoint Examples:

- Product reviews, testimonials
- Influencers
- Sustainable comparison guides
- Background research

Action Examples:

- New, refurbished, or recycled?
- Read reviews
- Assess sustainability statements

Experience: What is the customer feeling at this stage? Happiness, exhaustion?

Pain Point Examples:

- Price complexity compared to linear products
- Negative emotions towards recycling
- Greenwashing concerns
- Emotions connected to consumption

Opportunity Examples:

- Multifaceted circular benefits
- Strong story derived from circularity
- Building trust through transparency, accessibility, reporting, and assessments

Guiding question:

What is the customer's motivation for buying? Why would the customer choose our company?

3. Purchase or Participate

Defines how does the customer becomes an actual customer through ownership or participation in service.

Touchpoint Examples:

- Website checkout
- In-store experience
- External retailers
- Online support

Action Examples:

- Ownership or service?
- Complete purchase
- Receive confirmation

Experience: What is the customer feeling at this stage? Confusion, relief?

Pain Point Examples:

- Payment issues
- Disengagement from the service
- Unclear policies
- Lack of understanding
- Valuing ownership

Opportunity Examples:

- Simplify checkout
- Ensure continued contact
- Satisfaction guarantee
- Circular variety of ownership

Guiding question:

How are we helping the customer understand what our product or service is about? How do we trigger action?

4. Circular Retention

Defines how the product/service is used, and material value is retained throughout the use cycle.

Touchpoint Examples:

- Customer service
- Repair services/instructions
- Refurbishing services/instructions

Action Examples:

- Use product
- Repair at home or take to service
- Look up upcycling/refurbishing

Experience: What is the customer feeling at this stage? Happy, surprised?

Pain Point Examples:

- Poor support
- Education on repair
- Keeping contact with the customer

Opportunity Examples:

- Additional value created through repair services
- Personalization through upcycling
- Reward loyalty

This stage is critical for **ensuring material and value recovery**.

Guiding question:

How do we stay in contact with the customer? How do we communicate the additional circular services? How do we ensure safe use of the product?

5. Circular Advocacy

How the customer connects with the company/brand, and what kind of external circular product pathways might be created.

Touchpoint Examples:

- Referral programs
- User generated content
- Reselling platforms or incentives

Action Examples:

- Recommend brand
- Leave reviews and share experiences
- Reselling existing or upcycled products

Experience: What is the customer feeling at this stage? Happy, joyful?

Pain Point Examples:

- No recognition
- Unappreciated loyalty
- Disengagement

Opportunity Examples:

- Create ambassador programs
- Encourage user generated content
- Deepen loyalty through engagement, participation, incentives

Guiding question:

What opportunities for engagement are we creating?

6. Recycling

Defines the facilities and capabilities required to manage reverse flows. Defines how does the product return to the cycle or the service is renewed.

Touchpoint Examples:

- Company recollection schemes
- Recycling partners
- Municipal waste management

Action Examples:

- Contact company for recollection
- Refer to recycling guides
- Recycle through appropriate provider

Experience: What is the customer feeling at this stage? Confused, disengaged?

Pain Point Examples:

- Education on recycling
- Motivation to recycle
- Retaining value

Opportunity Examples:

- Continuing the customer relation
- Take-back schemes
- Incentives to create motivation

This stage is critical for **ensuring material recovery and completing the loop**.

Guiding question:

How do we motivate customers to participate in circularity?



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