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Journey Orchestration Enables Real-Time Decision Making In Times Of Crisis And Recovery

Journey Orchestration Tools Help Respond To Changing Customer Behavior

by Joana de Quintanilha
August 27, 2020

Why Read This Report

When uncertainty is rampant and customers are having to relearn how to interact with brands — at home on digital channels, in stores redesigned around new health and safety rules, and on the phone with agents working remotely — being able to make decisions in the moment is a game changer. Our research for customer experience (CX) pros shows that journey orchestration — which enables real-time decisioning across channels — is critical to crisis preparedness and recovery.

Key Takeaways

Real-Time Decision Making Is More Vital Than Ever For CX And Employee Experience (EX)
Journey orchestration can help your firm now to understand new customer behaviors as they happen, focus on retaining existing customers, and direct customers to happier paths. It can also help employees working from home nurture new customer relationships.

Journey Orchestration Helps Pause, Accelerate, And Launch Journeys
Journey orchestration can help you understand and move through the different phases of the COVID-19 pandemic by helping to pause nonessential journeys, accelerate digital journeys, and launch affordability and health and safety journeys.

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Real-Time Decision Making Has Never Been More Vital For CX And EX

Journey orchestration — which enables real-time decisioning across channels — is critical to crisis preparedness and recovery. Forrester defines journey orchestration as:

> *The use of real-time data at the individual customer level to analyze current behavior, predict future behavior, and adjust the journey in the moment for increased customer lifetime value, operational efficiency, and business results.*[1]

Journey Orchestration Helps Firms Respond To Changing Customer Behavior In Real Time

As customers embrace new, never-before-seen behaviors, journey orchestration can help your firm now to:

› **Understand new customer behaviors as they happen.** The explosion in online activities will change how consumers communicate and interact with brands. In relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, 55% of UK, 63% of French, and 69% of Italian online adults are spending more time online than before; they're also doing things online for the first time, such as purchasing groceries, taking exercise classes, and paying bills.[2] Journey orchestration platform Thunderhead helped a European bank trigger emails to customers who were most at risk of payment default by flagging customers who searched for terms such as "cancel direct debit" or "deferred payments." It then cross-referenced that behavior with a risk score the brand had configured, in order to present individualized payment options.[3]

› **Focus on retaining existing customers by meeting immediate needs.** Anxious about the current situation, customers are reassessing what they value, actively saving money if they can, and engaging in proximity buying.[4] They are also more demanding for efficiency, speed, and information. Brands like ScottishPower and Bouygues Telecom are using journey orchestration tools like Alterian and Roojoom to meet customer expectations for protection, support, and the

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continuation of critical services. Bouygues Telecom optimized self-care journeys after the number of customers trying to self-service doubled in just a few weeks. Journey orchestration has also enabled Bouygues Telecom and Comcast Xfinity to optimize self-install journeys, including analyzing real-time data to improve interactive voice response (IVR) menus, set up chatbots, and optimize onboarding journeys to guide customers through the self-installation of new services (see Figure 1).[5]

› **Direct customers to happier paths by detecting struggles in their journeys.** Using Thunderhead to connect journeys across the IVR system, website, and call center, a utilities company was able to fast-track calls from vulnerable customers stuck at home, who they predicted would not even attempt to complete tasks online. It was also able to identify and prioritize calls from customers whose self-service journeys failed. Low-risk customers who had not shown any self-service activity received a recording highlighting the self-service tools available to them. Thunderhead has helped customers conduct journey audits to prioritize the journeys with the most negative results — like password reset journeys — which stop customers from self-servicing.[6]

› **Transition customers to new, unfamiliar touchpoints.** With sporting events canceled, professional teams have struggled to engage fans and maintain sponsorship relationships. An English Premiership team and a US NBA team are both using Thunderhead's ONE platform to connect with fans by driving traffic to digital touchpoints and analyzing online behaviors to surface highly relevant content.[7] Healio.com, a provider of news, information, and education for healthcare professionals, uses journey orchestration platform Pointillist to identify healthcare professionals interested in COVID-19-related articles. Healio.com then orchestrates journeys through a website pop-up that encourages customers to visit a new COVID-19 resource center that offers timely and relevant information.[8]

› **Design emotionally attuned journeys.** Journey orchestration is also being used to adjust tone-deaf or problematic messaging around COVID-19. Journey orchestration vendor NICE shared that its financial services clients identified a 728% increase in coronavirus mentions in customer conversations throughout the month of March. Journey orchestration tools help uncover areas that require urgent action, such as customer representatives making bold statements about COVID-19 and, in some cases, sharing a political opinion.[9] Firms can pinpoint and immediately correct such issues.

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FIGURE 1 Bouygues Telecom Creates Self-Service Journeys
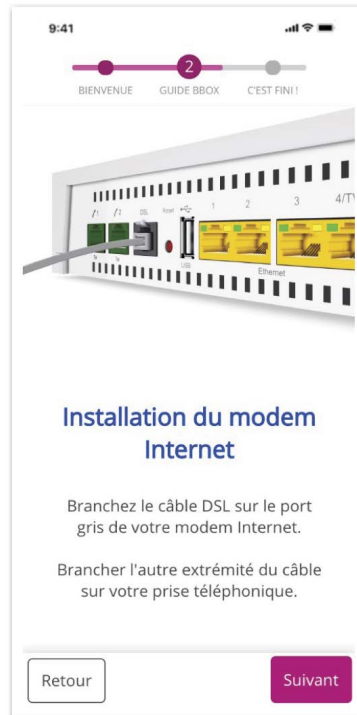
Source: Roojoom

Journey Orchestration Helps Employees Work Remotely

As employees learn to serve customers on digital channels while also adopting to their own work-from-home reality, journey orchestration helps employees:

› **Connect with customers virtually to nurture new relationships.** A large insurance provider is using journey orchestration platform Kitewheel to help insurance agents meet with and support new customers virtually. Kitewheel will track both customer and agent behavior online (on the website and in virtual sales pitches) and trigger follow-up emails and text messages to agents and customers to nurture the sales process. Analyzing journey data will help the insurance providers understand what the window of reaction is for these new virtual sales interactions so they can nudge agents and help them be effective.[10]

› **Access vital corporate services remotely.** A provider of security software and services to enterprises and governments used journey orchestration platform Coveo to visualize customer journey challenges and provide the right support. The firm was seeing a 700% increase in usage of

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secure connections between its clients' networks and all of its employees' devices as it connected dozens of applications for key internal agents, partners, and customers' employees working from home — many for the first time.[11]
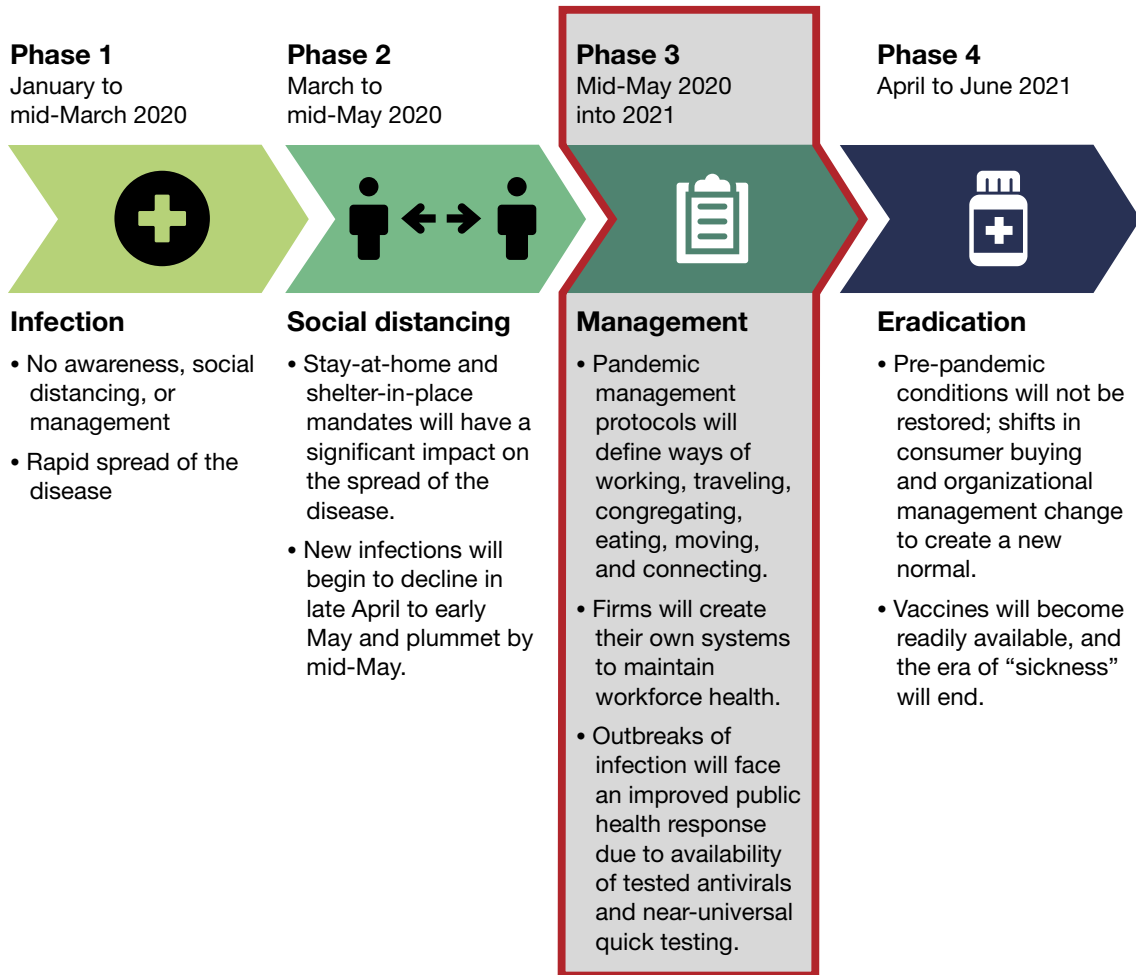
Use Journey Orchestration To Pause, Accelerate, And Launch Journeys

Unlike extreme weather events or sudden IT failures, pandemics do not abruptly end and allow you to recover back to normal operations. Journey orchestration can help you understand and move through the different phases of the pandemic by helping you establish a new baseline for key journeys and look for anomalies that indicate you are moving into a new phase (see Figure 2).[12] Firms using journey analytics and orchestration should ask themselves three questions:

1. Which journeys need to be paused because they are nonessential or hard to uphold in times of social distancing?

2. Which journeys need to be accelerated to highlight digital options and maintain service levels?

3. Which journeys need to be launched to deal with new pressures around affordability and health and safety?

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FIGURE 2 Firms Can Use Journey Orchestration To Understand And Move Through The Phases Of The Pandemic

COVID-19 timeline: US and Europe

Phase 1
January to
mid-March 2020

Phase 2
March to
mid-May 2020

Phase 3
Mid-May 2020
into 2021

Phase 4
April to June 2021

Infection
- No awareness, social distancing, or management
- Rapid spread of the disease

Social distancing
- Stay-at-home and shelter-in-place mandates will have a significant impact on the spread of the disease.
- New infections will begin to decline in late April to early May and plummet by mid-May.

Management
- Pandemic management protocols will define ways of working, traveling, congregating, eating, moving, and connecting.
- Firms will create their own systems to maintain workforce health.
- Outbreaks of infection will face an improved public health response due to availability of tested antivirals and near-universal quick testing.

Eradication
- Pre-pandemic conditions will not be restored; shifts in consumer buying and organizational management change to create a new normal.
- Vaccines will become readily available, and the era of "sickness" will end.

Mini Case Study: ScottishPower Pauses, Accelerates, And Launches New Journeys

UK utilities firm ScottishPower saw its retail business change overnight because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Philippa Christie, chief digital product owner, said the company had to reassess customer touchpoints like call center agents, telesales teams, door-to-door sales, pop-up events, and engineers conducting meter installations, readings, boiler services, and repairs.[13] To adapt to this new reality, the CX and data science teams at ScottishPower used insights sourced from journey analytics and orchestration tool Alterian to segment customers by journey and zoom in on specific interactions within journeys to:

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› **Pause noncritical journeys.** Using Alterian, ScottishPower identified thousands of customers (and subcontractors) with appointments for a smart meter installation. In the first week, it sent 2,527 personalized communications regarding changes to installations — temporarily pausing the journey and giving customers the ability to resume the journey once social distancing measures are eased.

› **Accelerate specific digital journeys.** Journey analytics helped the firm identify customers struggling to submit their meter reading. ScottishPower educated them on how to do this online, freeing up time for call center agents to tackle more complex questions. To continuously optimize and build trust, the firm is using the journey orchestration tool to test everything from email subject lines to entire end-to-end journeys. The utilities company hopes to continue to empower customers to do more online during and after the crisis.

› **Launch a new affordability journey.** Analysis of digital customer journeys showed that most customers had pressing questions about bill payments because of job loss or financial pressure. ScottishPower used Alterian to orchestrate a new affordability journey for 1.4 million customers looking for information about bills or how to make changes to direct debit installments. The firm guided them through a survey to assess changes in their financial situation and pointed them to new functionality to pause payments for up to two months or reduce monthly energy payments.

› **Prioritize journey enhancements as the firm moves into recovery mode.** ScottishPower will use data to reinstate paused journeys, like the smart meter installation, and introduce new journeys focusing on the health and safety of employees (engineers) and customers after social distancing measures have been eased.

Recommendations

Jump-Start Using Journey Orchestration Now

As companies look to redefine themselves and move through the stages of recovery during the COVID-19 pandemic, journey orchestration will be a game changer for CX pros who want to build connections and empathetic engagement with customers. Even if you don't have a journey orchestration tool, you can start to adopt a "journey" way of thinking. You can connect data across key touchpoints to help you pause, accelerate, and launch journeys and think about all the cogs and wheels that need to be set in motion to deliver time-sensitive and emotionally attuned journeys. To get started:

› **Use a journey atlas to prioritize journeys to pause, accelerate, and launch.** Even if you do not have a journey orchestration platform, you can still get started. Chances are you have mapped some key journeys. Start there and create a journey atlas — a catalog of the customer (and employee) journeys your firm could focus on. It's OK if it's simply a hypothetical situation at first. Based on what you know about your customers (e.g., what they're searching for on the website, why they're calling your call center), build your hypothesis by answering three questions: Which journeys need to be paused because they are nonessential or hard to uphold in times of social

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distancing? Which journeys need to be accelerated to highlight digital options and maintain service levels? Which journeys need to be launched to deal with new pressures around affordability and health and safety?

› **Work with data experts on prioritized journeys.** Identify the owners of your main sources for customer interaction data. Then ask them what types of data the records in those various sources contain and whether the sources all use the same set of customer identifiers. Next, ask these owners whether your firm has tools that can join all that data together (like journey analytics tools) and whether you have enough data to make using those tools possible. If you lack data or unique identifiers, look for manual ways to baseline your key journeys. If you have a journey mapping tool, start layering data onto your journey map.

› **Tailor your experiences to the emotional needs of your customers.** To understand where real customer interactions happen and avoid tone-deaf experiences, companies like Delta Dental of California are using journey mapping tools like SuiteCX to integrate voice-of-the-customer data, survey results, and verbatims to bring the journey to life and inform cross-functional decisions across CX, marketing, web, and customer service.[14]

› **Take a use-case-by-use-case approach to journey orchestration.** Start by connecting key touchpoints (manually or automatically). Connect your website and IVR system to your call center or your live chat to call-center agent phone interactions. Stitch that data together manually if you must, but connect those conversations your customers are having across key channels. Don't just put content about COVID-19 on your website and forget about what that means for the call center (i.e., agent scripts, training materials). Ensure you have an FAQ, content, and guidelines so reps can answer questions on social media.

› **Use a cross-functional team to keep building your journey orchestration capabilities.** Get your COVID-19 team together — including customer service, legal, marketing, digital, operations, and IT — and adopt a "journey" way of thinking. Keep going back to your journey atlas of paused, accelerated, and launched journeys. Use the data to check for anomalies to the baseline and for behavioral indicators that certain behaviors are bouncing back, sticking, or perhaps changing forever.

› **Consider investing in a journey orchestration or journey mapping tool.** In our Forrester Wave™ evaluation of journey orchestration providers, we identified the 11 most significant ones — Alterian, BryterCX, Coveo, Engage Hub, inQuba, Kitewheel, NICE, Pointillist, Roojoom, Thunderhead, and Usermind — and researched, analyzed, and scored them against 28 criteria to show how each provider measures up and help CX pros select the right one for their needs.[15] If you are not ready for journey orchestration, consider investing in a journey mapping platform that scores high on data integration.[16] For many companies, journey orchestration starts pragmatically. While some companies jump straight into journey orchestration, others start with traditional journey mapping and then advance to a more data-driven approach to mapping and orchestrating journeys.

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Supplemental Material

Survey Methodology

The Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics® COVID-19 Survey (Wave 1) was fielded from April 10 to 15, 2020. This online survey included 1,118 respondents ages 16 or older in the UK; 1,116 respondents in France; and 1,137 respondents in Italy. For results based on a randomly chosen sample of this size, there is 95% confidence that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 2.9%.

Forrester weighted the data by age and gender. The survey sample size, when weighted, was 1,118 in the UK; 1,116 in France; and 1,137 in Italy. (Note: Weighted sample sizes can be different from the actual number of respondents to account for individuals generally underrepresented in online panels.) The programming language herein reflects the survey respondent base for each question. Bases for specific questions have been changed in published data for increased clarity. Therefore, the base in published data may not match the base language in this document. Dynata fielded this survey on behalf of Forrester. Survey respondent incentives included points redeemable for gift certificates.

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Additional Resources

Journey Mapping And Real-Time Journey Orchestration Are Critical To Crisis Preparedness And Recovery

Understanding Customer Journey Mapping And Orchestration Tools

Related Research Documents

The Forrester Wave™: Journey Orchestration Platforms, Q2 2020

Virtual Journey Mapping For Effective Remote Collaboration In Times Of Crisis And Recovery

Endnotes

[1] See the Forrester report "Now Tech: Journey Management, Q4 2018."

[2] Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics COVID-19 Survey (Wave 1) and "COVID-19 Europe Outlook: Consumers Are Forging New, Lasting Behaviors," Forrester (https://www.forrester.com/fn/4hhTKZ7mIFFuwNlxADenZZ).

[3] Source: Email interview with Lucy Cooper, marketing director of brand and communications at Thunderhead, April 2020.

[4] Values relating to family, proximity, cohesion, authenticity, transparency, and frugality will grow in importance. Before the crisis, 62% of French online adults agreed that it is important that companies operate in a socially responsible manner: When we asked which specific aspects of social responsibility they found most important, 45% cited environmental protection and 39% chose privacy. Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics European Retail And Travel Topic Insights 2 Survey, 2019. See the Forrester report "How The COVID-19 Crisis Is Affecting Consumer Behaviors In France."

[5] Source: Email interview with Lior Katz, vice president of marketing and strategy at Roojoom, April 2020.

[6] Source: Email interview with Lucy Cooper, marketing director of brand and communications at Thunderhead, April 2020.

[7] Source: Email interview with Lucy Cooper, marketing director of brand and communications at Thunderhead, April 2020.

[8] Source: Email interview with Steve Offsey, vice president of marketing at Pointillist, April 2020.

[9] Source: Email interview with Matt Reading, vice president of customer success at NICE, April 2020.

[10] Source: Interview with a CX professional at a large insurance provider, April 2020.

[11] Source: Email interview with Mark Floisand, senior vice president of product marketing at Coveo, April 2020.

[12] See the Forrester report "Returning To Work: How To Prepare For Pandemic Recovery."

[13] Source: Interview with Philippa Christie, chief digital product owner at ScottishPower, April 2020.

[14] See the Forrester report "Virtual Journey Mapping For Effective Remote Collaboration In Times Of Crisis And Recovery."

[15] See the Forrester report "The Forrester Wave™: Journey Orchestration Platforms, Q2 2020."

[16] See the Forrester report "The Forrester Wave™: Journey Mapping Platforms, Q2 2020."

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