

Where Customer Journeys and Content Strategies Collide







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Hello, I'm Holly

- Audio engineer by education but marketer by trade
- Worked to support brands like Motorola, ViewSonic, Avangrid, Xerox, Coopervision, and tech startups
- Adjunct Professor @ St. John Fisher University
- Manage NextCorps' brand family of programs & services



Non-profit helping technology companies launch & grow

					
Incubator	Accelerator	Studio + Accelerator	Studio + Accelerator	Accelerator	Consulting Services
Tech / High-Growth	Optics, Photonics, Imaging	B2B SaaS for non-technical founders (no-code)	Clean tech / Climate tech	Clean tech / Climate tech	Manufacturing
Concept Pre-Seed Seed Early Growth Mature	Concept Pre-Seed Seed Early Growth Mature	Concept Pre-Seed Seed Early Growth Mature	Concept Pre-Seed Seed Early Growth Mature	Concept Pre-Seed Seed Early Growth Mature	Concept Pre-Seed Seed Early Growth Mature
>60 clients	10 teams / year	30 participants / year	10 teams / year	8-10 teams / year	100 clients / year

Agenda

1. Framework for customer journey mapping
2. Documenting the journey
3. Where opportunities exist
4. Leveraging a content strategy

The Reality of Manufacturing Marketing Today

5%

Amount of customer's time with reps during B2B sales journey

2/3

Amount of customer's time learning from info *they find*

70%

Customers will choose company that offers individualized experience

**Sales Reps are
just *one* channel
to customers**

**Balance offline and
online activities**

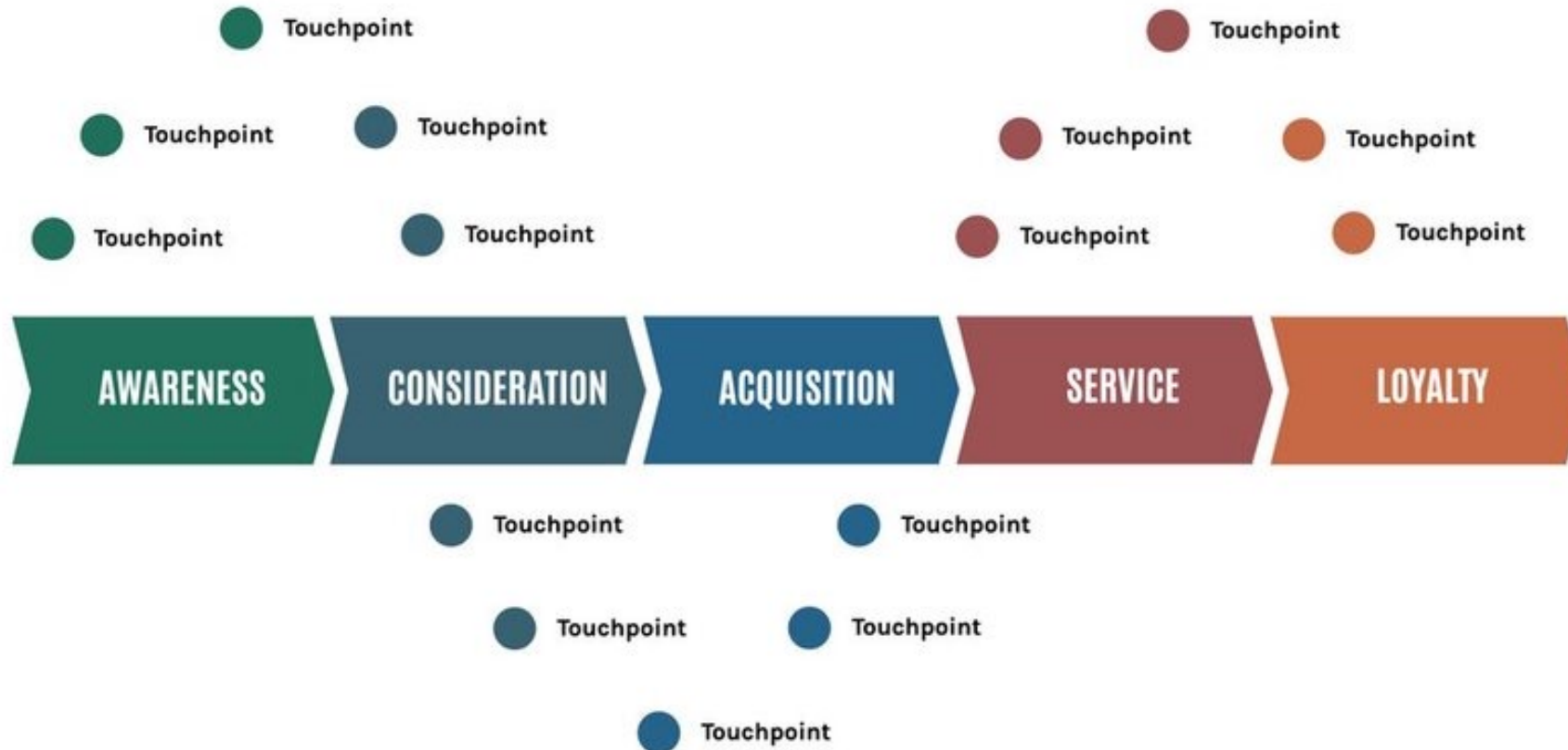
**High integration
between marketing
and sales
throughout process**



How do you know ...

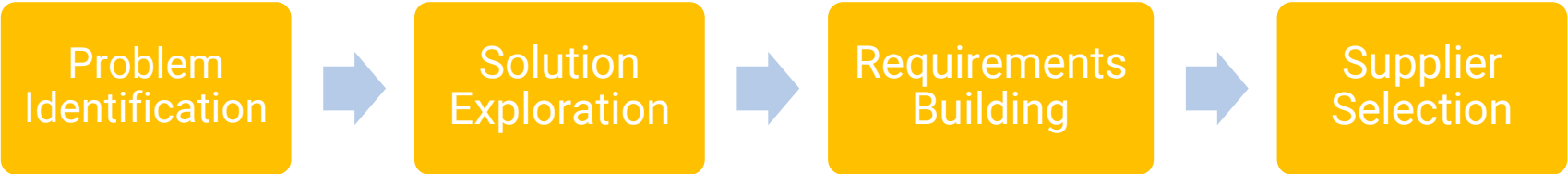
- where to reach prospects?
- what to say?
- how to say it?
- in what format?
- when?

And, do it cost effectively?



A roadmap of how customers interact with your brand through the decision-making process

Industrial or B2B buying cycle



Tip: Address the rational & irrational



MEP CUSTOMER JOURNEY

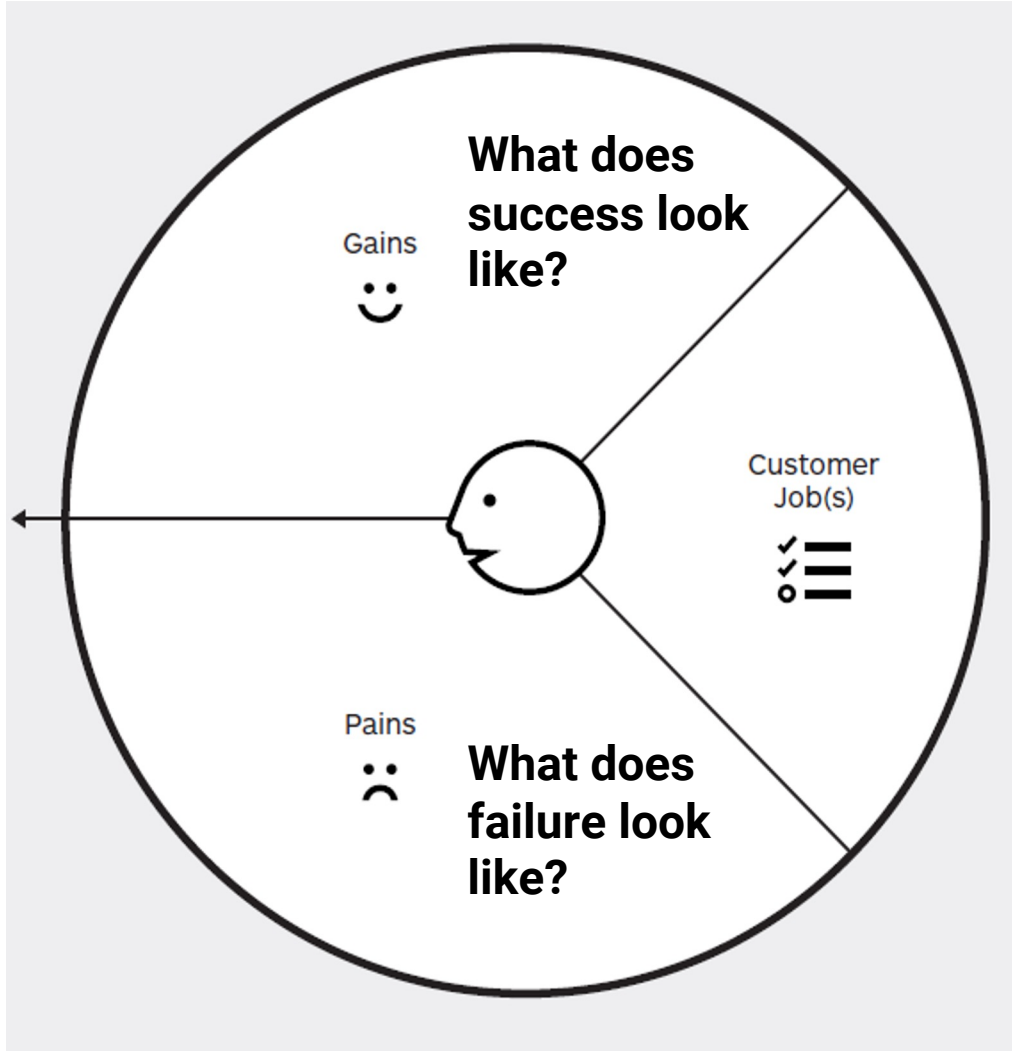
Stages	No Awareness	Awareness (Know but don't act)	Warm (Know but want to know more)	Conversion (Know enough to sign)	Exit (Happy or unhappy)
Prospect Objective					
Doing					
Thinking					
Feeling					
Barriers					
Opportunities					
Media & Marketing					

NEXTCORPS GROWTH SERVICES CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Stages	No Awareness	Awareness (Know but don't act)	Warm (Know but want to know more)	Conversion (Know enough to sign)	Exit (Happy or unhappy)
Prospect Objective	Run company well: Meet projections, maintain profitability and grow	Run company well: Meet projections, maintain profitability and grow	Find the right partner: Provide quality execution and success	Select the right partner and funder for my business; minimize risk	Take advantage of beneficial, proven partnerships
Doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying a project and using same resources Working their network to see who can help Making calls to state entities to find support Postponing projects because of lack of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reaching out to consultants for help Engaging staff to research support Making calls to friend to ask about MEP and other support Nothing: Hesitating, postponing project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with consultant on proposal, and they engage NextCorps Working directly with NextCorps to find funding and vet providers Asking colleagues if they've heard of NextCorps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing and signing paperwork Choosing consultant from bids Filling out financial agreements Setting up internal process Notifying employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tackling another priority Collecting data to measure success Making final payments
Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There's nothing available to help me with this project I don't know who to trust I can't afford external help Why are my competitors growing and I'm not? How do they get resources? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I've heard of it but not sure how it works What does the funder get in return for helping? What if it's a scam? I don't have time to look into unknowns Sounds complicated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are you paid? Sounds too good to be true Other programs might be better This could be what I need What do I need to do to qualify? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What a relief, it's in motion Why is the funding flow slower than anticipated Who do I call if something's not right? I know I'm late on paying the invoice, don't bother me I hope it's good choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need to do more like this The project team prepared us for success I'm glad that's over Why didn't I know about this sooner
Feeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doing business as usual Protective Anxious/Overwhelmed Unsure "Sold to" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skeptical Unsure/Cautious Pressured Fear – what if it doesn't work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This could be good for us Hopeful Anxious - what don't I know that I need to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grateful, excited Smart for taking advantage of opp Buyer's remorse Energized – what can I do next? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pride Relief I don't like taking surveys I got what I needed, I'm out
Barriers	Time, talent, potential recession, shrinking market share / slow growth	Time, talent, potential recession, shrinking market share / slow growth	Didn't qualify for funding, emotional impact of switching resources, internal resistance	Internal resistance, workload, cash flow, timing	Not choosing to do another project, not willing to refer, cash flow, timing
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sales calls Advertising – Digital PPC Articles in association newsletters Networking Tabling at Events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check-in calls Advertising – Digital PPC Articles in association newsletters Networking Tabling at Events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial process Meeting Relatable case study Panel event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Random touches – once a year follow up Direct outreach – Welcome kit, regular check-ins, "what to expect" guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional projects Referrals Exit debrief to understand perceptions / improve
Media & Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website Manufacturing meetings / events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match Makers Solution Forums MedTech Chamber of Commerce RTMA Lunch & Learns on project areas (e.g.: compliance) Personalized follow up after event (not consistent) Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead gen magnet (article, e-book, case study) Direct mail Digital advertising Newspaper articles at town and regional level Social media with project specific support messages Classroom educational events WOM & referral Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website Reciprocal lead generation activities – COMIDA, RTMA Reference – CEO to CEO Newspaper articles Build association with manufacturing communities (e.g.: Wayne county) Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flyers accompanying Invoice Direct mail – focused on next project Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting / call – debrief, lessons learned Surveys (can be more automated) Case study Panel participant News article Referral card Social media Website spotlight (Go back to nurturing cadence)

Documenting the Journey

Start with the customer profile



Who is involved in making the decision?

What gets in the way of success?

Where do you get trusted information?

How do you prefer to get information?

Helps you populate thinking, feeling, doing and barriers

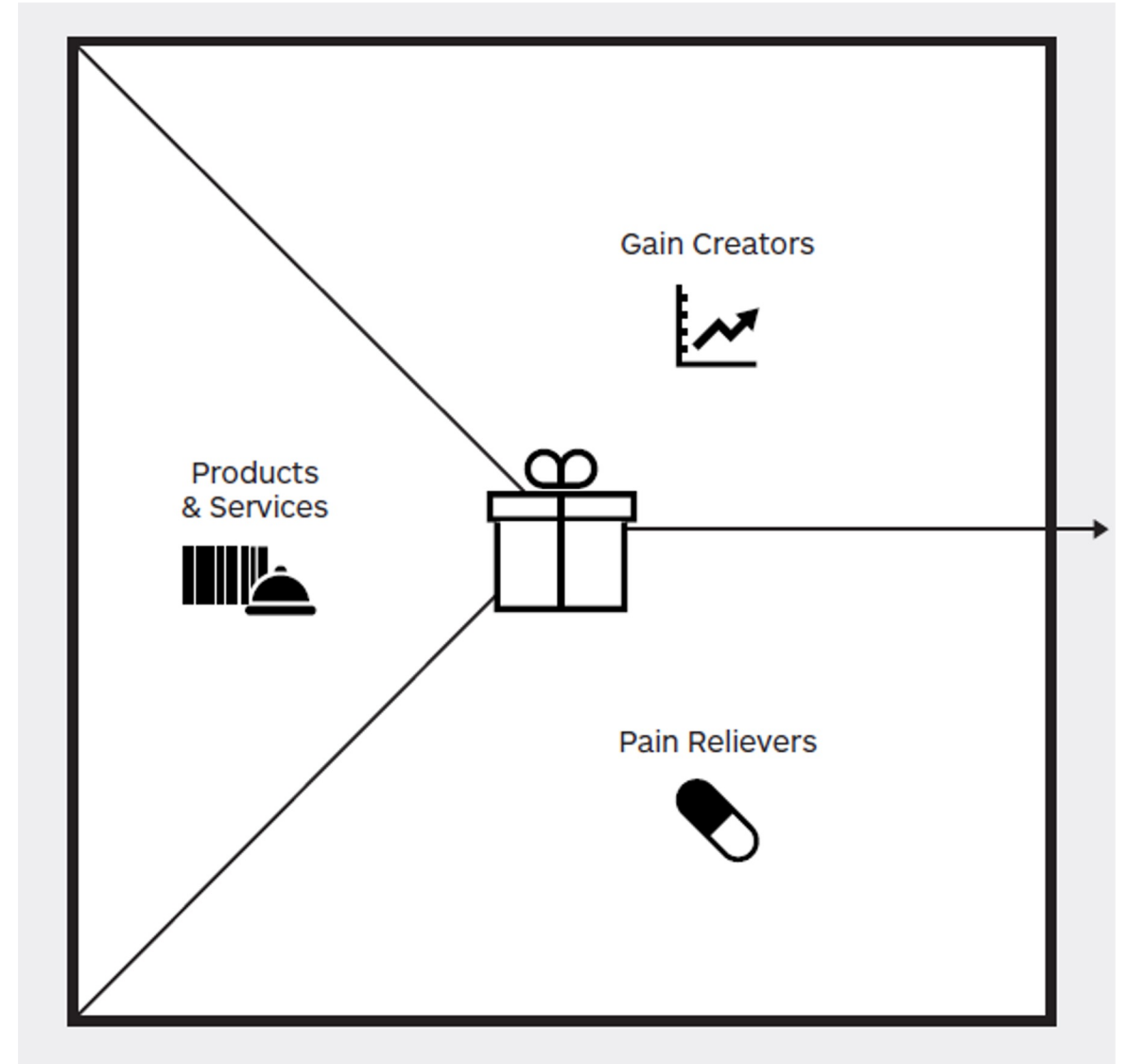
Connect to your value

What benefits do customers receive in using your product or service (beyond price)?

What will they accomplish (Gain Creators)?

What risks or losses will they avoid (Pain Relievers)?

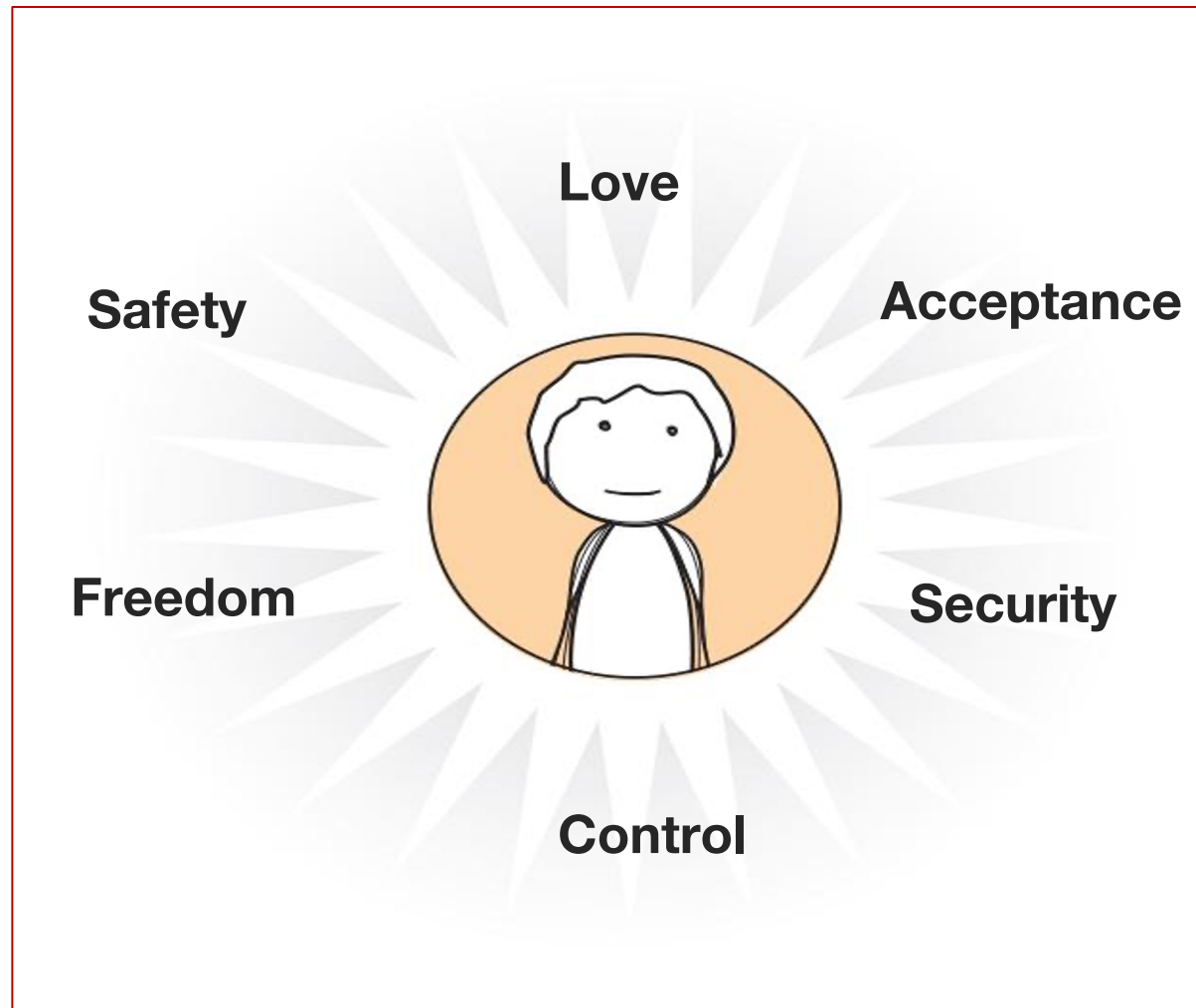
Helps you populate marketing opportunities and messaging



Brainstorm “the experience”

By a factor of three,
what you **DO** is not nearly as important as
how it makes people **FEEL**.

Common needs help with “decisions by committee”



Connect with prospects through

Autonomy

Self-direction, real control

Mastery

Progress, **attainable** growth and learning

Purpose

Connecting to a cause **larger than yourself**

**Where the
opportunities
are**

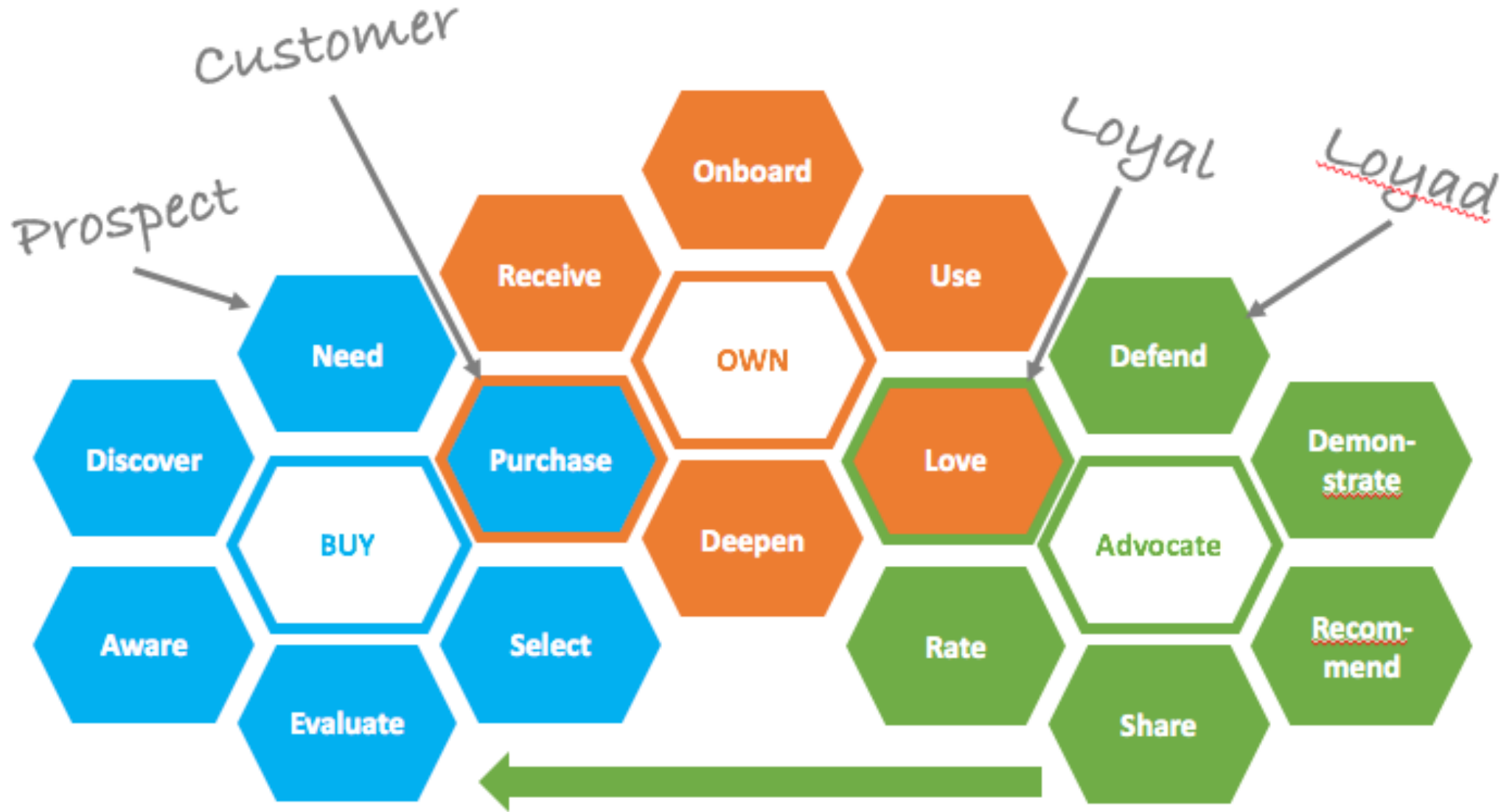
**For every
\$92
acquiring
customers,
only \$1
is converting
them.**



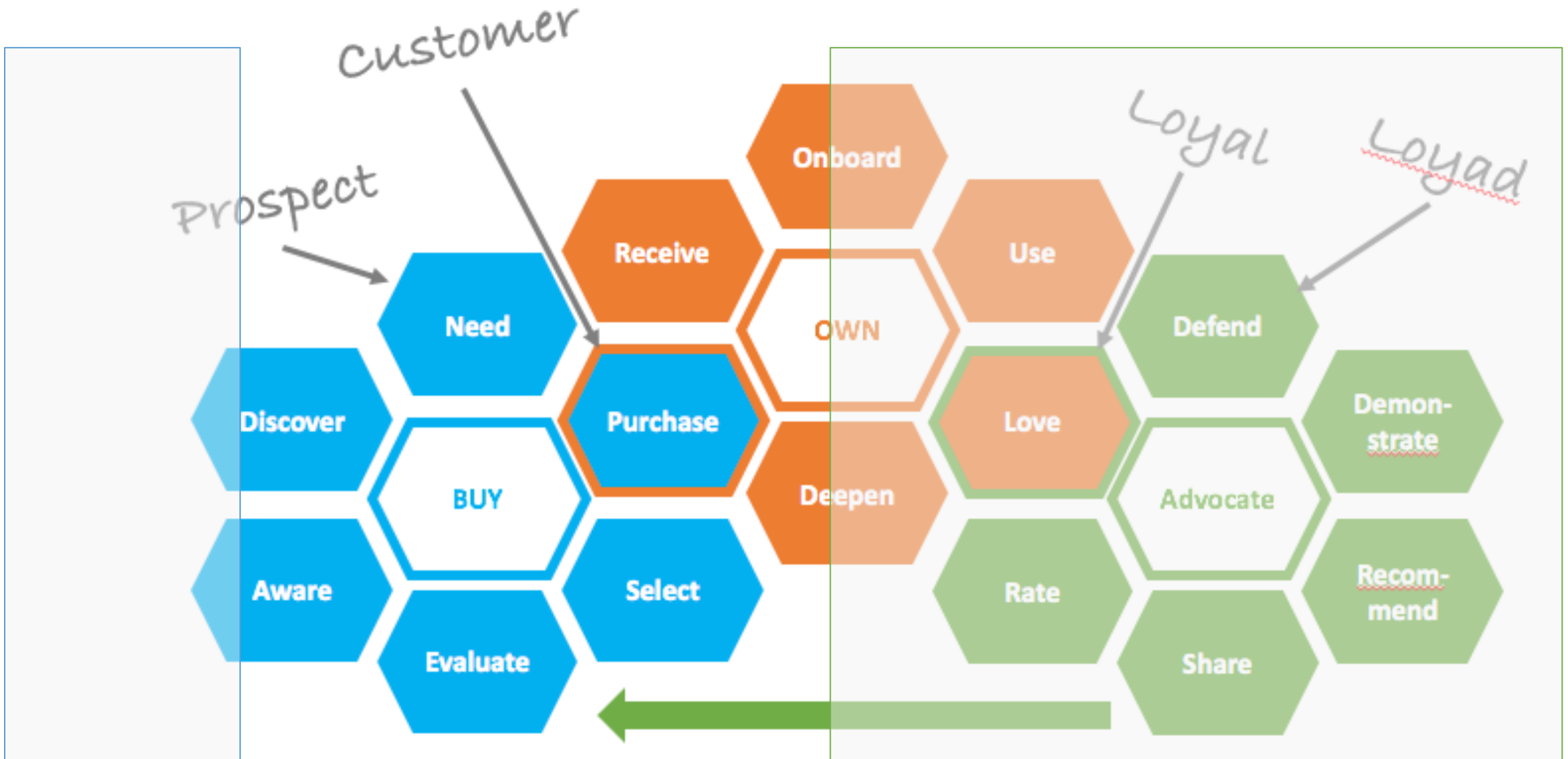
**Repeat
customers
spend **67%**
more than
new ones.**

**Loyalty programs
cause **54%** of a
company's customer
base to increase
spending.**

Gartner's customer journey



Opportunities



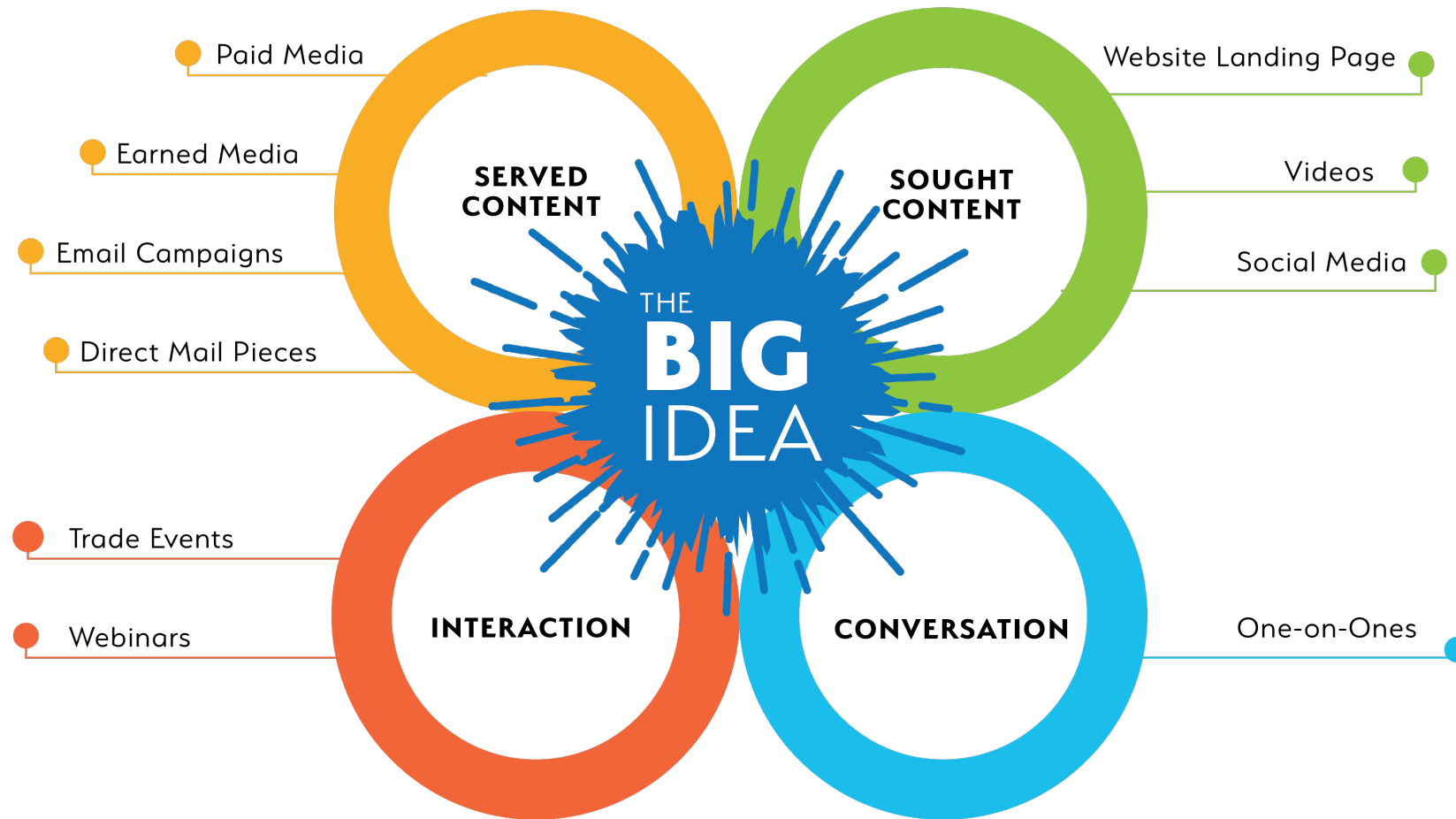
TIP: Use customer retention / growth tactics



Source: Image from P2P

**Content
strategies can
stretch your
dollars**

Create once, use many for higher ROI



One big idea: Help prospects find you

Optimize content for search and answer

“Can you do what I need you to do?”

- Be detailed on your website – specs, pricing, lead time, stock levels, quality assurance, etc.
- Tap into free directories – local (Apple Maps, Google My Business), LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, Yellow Book, Associations/Trade Groups
- Use online sourcing platforms (Thomasnet.com)
- Integrate keywords in website headlines
- Make sure your MEP Center and partners know your strengths
- Share new capabilities / update listings



Another big idea: Be a resource



Help customers learn/solve their problems

- Use gated content to get leads - whitepapers or e-book like "7 Tips for Selecting the Right Supplier", "7 Costly Mistakes When Selecting Suppliers", "Don't Overlook Hidden Costs"
- Repurpose content into native ad / buy
- Share tips for problems outside of sales cycle in blogs and social
- Provide existing customers the content as a check-in, make it easy for them to share (referral)
- Give a webinar

Final tips

- Journey's aren't linear – map multiple paths to ensure you're augmenting not confusing customers
- Be patient, measure and adjust
- It can be fun to be memorable



Thank You!

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