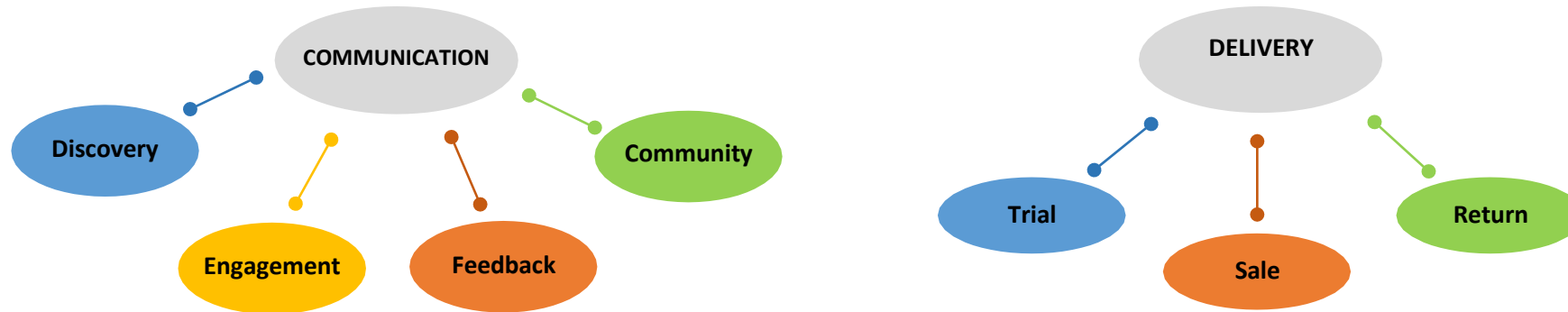


You learned that Channels are something that you start building and testing from Day 1, after you identify the problem and design your solution. Also recollect that we discussed **channels** to find initial prospects like cold calling, email, blogs, etc. We also covered other channels like Content Marketing, Advertisements, Referrals, etc.

In the video, **Introduction to Channels**, you learned that a channel can address any or both of these objectives:



While there are many channel options available, some channels may not be applicable to your venture, while others may be more viable during the later stages of your business. So, you must choose your channels meticulously to meet the two objectives, **communicating** to the customers and **delivering** your product to your customers.

You will find an exhaustive list of possible channels and the descriptions of each, in Section 1 of this handout.

For a larger outreach and to attain whopping sales numbers, it is important to use a mix of channels. Deciding which channel, or combination of channels to use, is not very easy. It depends on **what you want your channel to do for you**.

1. Do you want it to merely introduce your product or service?
2. Do you want it to increase awareness about your product and provide information?
3. Do you want to go one step ahead and want your channel to generate leads and induce sales?
4. Do you want to reach your Early Adopters and interact with them directly through the channel?
5. Do you want to enable the consumer to conduct transactions and be able to directly buy your product or service?

Activity

Selecting Your Channels

In other words, you need to map your objectives with the personality of each channel. Sometimes, choosing the same channel to fulfill more than one objective is a smart thing to do. The Amazon website is a great example where it fulfills both the objectives of **communicating to customers** and **delivering the product to customers**.


In this class activity, you will select the right channels. Follow the instructions given below:

Instructions:

1. First, state the objectives that you want to fulfill through your channels under "**My Objectives**" provided below. Refer to the two objectives discussed in this handout, i.e. communicating to the customers and delivering the product to the customers.
2. Next, complete the table **Selecting My Channels** provided in Page 3 as per the directions below:
 - a. Go through the exhaustive list of **Channels** in Column 2, and their respective **descriptions** in Column 3.
 - b. In Column 4, select the most appropriate channel/s and state how you will use these channel/s to get maximum benefits for your venture, keeping in mind the two objectives discussed above.



MY OBJECTIVES:

<div>  <h3>SELECTING MY CHANNELS</h3> </div>			
SL NO.	CHANNEL	DESCRIPTION	SELECT YOUR CHANNEL AND STATE HOW YOU WILL USE THIS CHANNEL
1	Public Relations (PR)	You can promote your brand by reaching out to a large mass via media coverage, e.g. newspapers, news outlets, Magazines, T.V.	
2	Search Engine Marketing (SEM)	Placing advertisements on search engines like Google and DuckDuckGo, where online marketers spend more than \$100 million each day.	
3	AdWords - Google/Facebook	AdWords is an online advertising service, where businesses pay search engines/websites like Google, to display brief advertising copy, product listings, and video content within their ad network to customers using their search engine. For example, Google AdWords' system is based partly on cookies and partly on keywords determined by advertising agencies or companies.	
4	Advertisements	<p>You can use various forms to advertise: Social ads are ads that we put up on social sites like the ones near Facebook or Twitter timelines.</p> <p>Display ads are like the banner ads which you see on websites all over the internet.</p> <p>Offline Ads can be done at any scale, from local campaigns to national or international ones. Competitors are less here since most of the startups use the online media for easy access, comparatively lower cost, and larger outreach. For example, T.V, Radio, Magazines, Newspapers, Yellow pages, Billboards, and Direct Mail.</p>	

Activity

Selecting Your Channels

5	Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is your answer to increase your ranking in search engines like Google so that your site gets more visibility than other sites when a user keys in a related product or service.	
6	Content Marketing	Content marketing is another marketing tool wherein businesses focus on creating and sharing high-quality online material to grab attention and generate leads. It may not be explicitly to promote your brand but to attract a target audience who may get interested in your product/service and ultimately end up being your customers. Content Marketing uses a combination of Content, SEO, and Social Media to work. It is not free and takes time to build. However, when it starts to work, Content Marketing turns from an expense into an asset. It could even become your "Unfair Advantage". For example, Company blogs like Moz, Unbounce, OkCupid, etc.	
7	E-mail Marketing	This is a powerful way of spreading a word. E-mails can be personalized and can be used to target prospects, making it more relevant through a one-on-one communication. It is professional and yet provides that personal touch.	
8	Blog	It is a website which acts as a journal or diary. A blog can be a great marketing tool wherein you can regularly post updates about your product/service. Blogs help drive traffic to your website. Every time you write a blog post, you are creating content that people can share on their social networks. This helps expose your business to a new groups of customers who may not know you yet.	

9	Sales Force	Deploying a highly dynamic sales force to churn out sales numbers is an age-old technique. It involves a dedicated team who would approach the customers directly, explain the product/service, and convert prospects to actual customers. Most companies use the sales funnel approach as a standard process. Mostly, direct selling can be done where you not only communicate to the customer about your product, but also make instant sales.	
10	Affiliate Marketing	This is also done extensively these days where you outsource your product marketing efforts by paying people or other companies to promote your product/service, get leads, or even make a sale. For example, Zappos, Amazon, EBay, Netflix use these channels to churn out a larger chunk of business.	
11	Trade Shows	Trade shows are a great way to showcase your product/service which gives an opportunity to meet your end customer in-person. In early stages, you could use this channel to generate interest. Later on, this channel can open doors for major deals or partnerships with high net-worth clients/customers.	
12	Offline Events/Sponsor groups	Conducting offline meet-ups and conferences, or sponsoring programs offer great networking opportunities to directly connect with potential customers and understand their pains. Such events are extremely important when customers do not respond to online advertisements. Getting them into a common place and meeting them in person can accelerate your selling process.	
13	Speaking Engagements	In this kind of channel, you can reach out to a large group of audience in a room. If you are able to pitch right, they will potentially be a great referral for your product/service. In such speaking gigs, you can use your outstanding presentation skills and grow your startup's profile. For example, conferences, seminars, TED talks, etc.	

Activity

Selecting Your Channels

14	Community Building	This involves investing in the connections among your customers, fostering relationships, and helping them bring more people into your venture's circle. For example, Wikipedia, Stack exchange.	
15	Distribution channels – Retailers/ Distributors/ Wholesalers	Wholesalers and Distributors are intermediaries which purchase from the brand owner or manufacturer and sell it to other downstream intermediaries like Retailers. Retailers ultimately sell the product to the customers. For example, Amazon.	
16	Agents/Brokers	Agents/Brokers take possession of products but do not actually own them. They usually make profits from commissions or fees paid to them for the services they provide to producer and consumer by getting them together.	
17	Social Media- Facebook/Linked IN/Twitter/Quora	<p>Social Media has evolved over the years and has become a great channel to market your products/services.</p> <p>Facebook allows users to create profiles, upload photos and videos, send messages, and interact with their social media contacts. You can create a Facebook page to create initial awareness about your business by posting information and pictures of your product.</p> <p>LinkedIn is a business and employment-oriented social networking service that operates via websites. It is a great tool to connect with other professionals. It is important to have a LinkedIn presence especially when your customers are other businesses (i.e., in a B2B model).</p>	

Activity

Selecting Your Channels

		<p>Instagram: It is a social networking app that lets you share photos and videos from a smartphone. If your product is targeted at the younger generation, Instagram is a good option for you.</p> <p>Twitter is a free social networking and microblogging site that allows users to broadcast short posts called tweets. All users can send and receive tweets using the Twitter website or other applications that work with Twitter on smartphones. Twitter can be used for product updates as well as direct customer engagement.</p> <p>YouTube is a popular and free video sharing website where users can upload, view, and share videos. You can post product information videos on YouTube.</p> <p>Pinterest is a platform that allows users to share and save photos to virtual collections called pinboards. You can post images of your product and link them back to your website.</p> <p>Quora is an online site where one user can post questions and another user can post the answer to the question asked by the first user. You can create a company page and build credibility for your business by responding to your customers' queries in a quick and effective manner.</p>	
18	Cold calls/Tele calling	In today's virtual world, cold calling has been taken over by other newer technologies, platforms, apps, etc. However, this traditional channel is still used by many to contact prospects either through phone calls (tele-calling) or drop-in visits, such as door-to-door selling (Personal selling).	
19	First degree contacts	First degree contacts are people in your immediate network. You are in direct touch with them. For example, friends, family, relatives, and acquaintances.	

Activity

Selecting Your Channels

20	Referrals	While Referral programs can be very effective in spreading the word about your product/service, you need to have a product worth spreading first. So, focus on retention before referral. Having said that, referral programs are more likely to multiply your customer base compared to other channels, as these work on credibility.	
21	Platforms/Market places	Platforms/Market places are channels that have the potential to get hundreds of millions of customers/consumers to use your product/service. These are usually online intermediaries who provide a space for buyers and sellers to come together. For example, Apple and Android App stores, Mozilla and Chrome browser extensions, Facebook marketplace, Twitter, Pinterest, Amazon, Flipkart, etc. Some newer platforms like Tumblr, Snapchat are also picking up rapidly. Apple's app store generates millions of customers year-on-year.	
22	Leaflets/Flyers/ Pamphlets	Printing pamphlets, flyers, or leaflets and distributing them along with newspapers, or announcing the launch of your product/service on hoardings at signals are another great way of attracting target customers.	
23	Website	Website is a collection of related web pages, typically identified with a common domain name, and published on at least one web server. A website can be accessed via an IP network, such as the Internet, or a private local area network (LAN), by entering a URL address. The first page, called the Home Page, usually contains text, graphics, and hyperlinks to other web pages and files. In today's time, it is crucial that you maintain a version of your website that works well on mobile devices too. For example, Blogpost.com, Khanacademy.com, Alibaba.com, etc.	