**Customer Lifecycle Stages**

As mentioned, the customer lifecycle has five stages: reach, acquisition, conversion, retention, and loyalty. While it's similar to the [**buyer's journey**](https://blog.hubspot.com/sales/what-is-the-buyers-journey), the customer lifecycle takes into account what happens long after a prospect makes a purchase.

We'll walk through these stages one-by-one.

1. Reach

In this stage, a customer searches for a product after becoming aware of an issue or problem they need to solve. This stage is called “reach” because it's your chance to reach the customer while they're deliberating.

In this stage, your customer is comparing products across competing brands (including yours), carrying out research, and reading customer reviews. [**Social media marketing**](https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/social-media-marketing), SEO, [**search engine marketing**](https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/search-engine-marketing), and other inbound and outbound methods should place your brand on this customer's radar.

This stage is successful when the customer reaches out to you for more information, looking to either educate themselves further or get a definitive price.

2. Acquisition

When the customer gets to your website or calls you on the phone, they've officially entered the acquisition stage.

This stage will look different depending on the acquisition channel the customer has used. If they called over the phone, for example, you'll need to respond to the customer's questions, as well as inquire for more information on the [**customer's needs**](https://blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-needs). Following that, you'll offer the best products or services to satisfy their needs, as well as educate them on the uses of those products or services. **Don't forget: your service team should be available via**[**live chat**](https://www.hubspot.com/products/crm/live-chat?hubs_post=blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-lifecycle-management&hubs_post-cta=live%20chat)**to answer urgent inquiries**

A content offer, pricing page, or blog post should give the customer what they need to decide on making the purchase.

Some of this content should be gated so that you can get the customer's information.. In many ways, all interactions are customer service experiences — even something as simple as someone accessing and using your site is a customer service touchpoint.

3. Conversion

Having gained all necessary information and being delighted with your brand's customer experience, the prospect makes a purchase. They've officially converted and turned into your customer.

In this stage, you want to make it clear that you're providing value. They've entered a relationship with you, not just made a purchase.

But the work doesn't end here. It's time to retain the customer so that they continuously come back to your brand.

4. Retention

Customer retention starts by finding out how the customer feels. Check in with them to ask how they've enjoyed their new product or service. Carry out [**customer service surveys**](https://blog.hubspot.com/service/surveys), measure your [**Customer Satisfaction Score**](https://blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-satisfaction-score), and establish a [**Voice of the Customer program**](https://blog.hubspot.com/service/voice-of-the-customer-methodologies) to find out what you can do better.

Using information directly from them, you can continuously make improvements to your products and services, as well as the customer service experience.

In this retention stage, you'll want to offer exclusive perks that only your customers have access to. 24/7 support, product discounts, and referral bonuses are all perks that can take your customer from a plain purchaser to a brand promoter.

5. Loyalty

In this stage, the customer becomes an important asset to the brand by making additional purchases. They might post on social media about their experience with your company and write product reviews that inform a future customer during the reach stage.

Brand loyalty is of the utmost importance. Here's a common example.

In the automobile industry, there are dozens of brands selling similar vehicles for similar purposes. So, what helps a customer choose an SUV between, say, Toyota and Chevrolet?

The answer is brand loyalty. For instance, the customer's first car could have been a Toyota Camry back in the 90s. The car was reliable throughout and beyond their college years. Now, as an experienced car-buyer looking to invest in a new SUV, which company are they going to go with? The brand that has been there for them for the past three decades, or the one that's completely new to them? Probably the former.

Your customer reaches this stage after being influenced by the previous four stages. In other words, you can't create brand loyalty out of nowhere. It must be nurtured and instilled in the customer through service experiences that solves for them and proves the value of your product (and of your brand).

Although these are the typical stages that a customer follows in their journey with a brand, this process can be fluid. Customers can come to learn about a brand in several ways: family or friend recommendations, social media, advertisements, research, and more.

Overall, it's essential to be aware of the customer lifecycle so you can manage it effectively.