

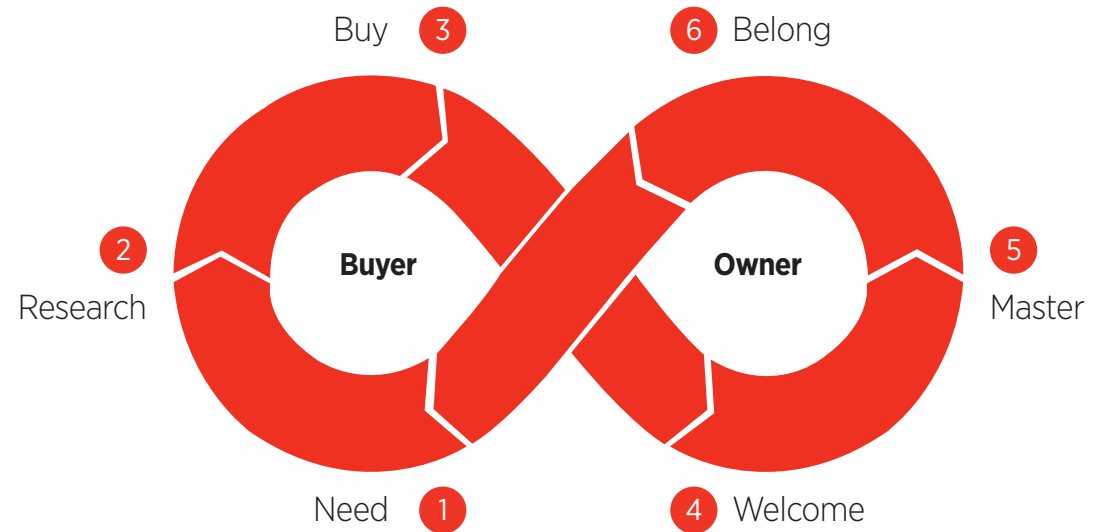


# Content Along the Customer Journey

**A Hammock **Idea** eBook**

Customer Media & Content Series





## The Customer Journey

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Marketers use the word “customer” to describe two very different types of relationships: (1) The customer as a potential buyer and (2) the customer as an owner. When viewed as a customer journey along an infinity loop, the two definitions of customer can be visualized. The left loop begins at the recognition of need (1) and progresses through research to the point of purchasing. The right loop’s journey is focused on ensuring the customer can use the product to master the professional purpose or personal passion that led him or her to purchase the product. The right loop is where transactions are transformed into long-term customer relationships.

This eBook explores the customer needs along this journey and what types of customer media and content can be used to help meet those needs—with the ultimate goal of creating long, mutually beneficial and sustainable relationships between the companies that sell and the people who buy and own.



1

Need Research Buy Welcome Master Belong

Unlike chickens and eggs, in marketing there is no mystery over which comes first: It always starts with a need. Potential customers rarely jump directly from recognition of a need to deciding on a product or service. That's because when we are customers, we do not know what we do not know. The marketer's first challenge in the customer journey is to be discovered as a source of information that helps the customer begin his or her research process.

Content that is there when a potential customer discovers a **Need** ▶



Search Marketing



Social Media



Native Advertising



Branded Content



Content Discovery

## 2



Need **Research** Buy Welcome Master Belong

Once the potential buyers discover a need and the range of potential solutions, they begin a process of filtering down the range of options. At this point help, not hype, is the key to effective use of customer media and content. According to the most recent research by Nielsen, the most trusted source of information other than advice from friends is information found on a brand's website. Indeed, studies show that most customers don't view content provided on a product's website as "advertising," but as "information."

Content that  
helps a potential  
customer **Research** ▶



Case Studies



Buyer Guides



Comparison Tools



eBooks



Video

### 3

Need Research **Buy** Welcome Master Belong



Some marketers view a purchase as the close of a sale to a customer. A better approach is to view the transaction as the opening of a relationship with a customer. The shopper is now the owner. It is important that you immediately send the message that you understand that the customer didn't purchase a product; he or she purchased a solution to a challenge or opportunity—a solution you will now help them put in effect.

Content that  
confirms the  
decision to **Buy** ▶



Get Started Pack



Welcome Email



Intro Web Cast



Intro Website

## 4

Need Research Buy **Welcome** Master Belong



Marketers can no longer rely on old sales methods: No longer can you sell products with beautiful brochures illustrated with world-class photography and then deliver those products accompanied by user manuals on tissue-thin paper with instructions written with Google translation software. Helpful on-boarding content—created with the same standards of quality reflected in pre-sale marketing—immediately demonstrates a company’s commitment to fulfilling the product’s promise.

Content that affirms  
the customer’s  
decision with a  
compelling **Welcome** ▶



Manuals  
*(Print & Digital)*



How-tos/Whys



Training Content  
*(Basics)*



Glossaries



WIKI  
*(Basics)*

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Need Research Buy Welcome **Master** Belong

At Hammock, we have a saying: “Don’t sell customers pots and pans. Teach them how to cook.” The value added to a product by providing content that helps a customer master his or her profession or personal passion is what elevates a product from commodity to trusted brand. How much value does such content bring to a product at this point in the customer journey? Here’s one measure: Recently, Lynda.com, a company in the business of teaching people how to use and master products created by other companies, was purchased by LinkedIn for \$1.5 billion.

Content that  
helps owners  
use your product  
to **Master** ▶  
their need



Recurring Media  
*(Print & Digital)*



Knowledge Management



Conference Guides



Blogs/Podcasts/Wikis



Certification Support



Courses/Tutorials



Video



Need Research Buy Welcome Master **Belong**

The greatest products are rarely those with the most features. Great products are those that help customers accomplish great things. In return, listening to and working with customers to create great products leads to relationships where customers are not only owners of products, but they also feel a sense of ownership of the company. Developing effective customer media helps elevate a company and customer above a level where the relationship is defined by sellers and buyers, makers and consumers—into a community composed of people who share a common goal to do great things together.

Content that  
creates  
community and  
a sense of  
**Belonging** ▶



Tours



Advisory Boards



Specialized Forums



Email Marketing



Conferences



Recurring Media



Community Management





**FOUNDED IN 1991**, Hammock is a marketing services company with a singular focus: the development and management of media and content that helps marketers establish and strengthen long-term relationships with customers. We are one of the oldest, continuously operating independent marketing companies to focus exclusively on providing content marketing services.

Still not sure what we do? Think of us as an advertising agency or public relations agency—but rather than offering services that are rooted in traditional types of media, our roots and expertise are in developing and managing media and content used by marketers to communicate directly with customers. While our home office is in Nashville, we work with clients nationwide. We also work with more than 400 independent writers, artists, photographers, videographers, sales professionals and developers to create customer media ranging from monthly magazines to innovative digital media. (Learn more at [Hammock.com](http://Hammock.com).)



# A Hammock **!idea** eBook

Customer Media & Content Series

# The **!idea** Email

One bright idea, every two weeks.

The Hammock Idea eBook series is a companion to Hammock's bi-weekly Hammock Idea Email. Distributed every other Thursday afternoon, the Hammock Idea Email features one essay about a topic we believe is important or informative to people responsible for leading the marketing strategy of their organizations. Read and subscribe at [Hammock.com/idea-email](http://Hammock.com/idea-email).

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