Client Journey for IP Experts

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1. What is a Client Journey?

A client journey is the complete experience a client has with a law firm or more specific with an IP expert, from their initial awareness of the service to their advocacy interactions. It encompasses all the touchpoints, interactions, and experiences a client has with a law firm, both online and offline. The client journey is a crucial concept in modern marketing and client experience management. It allows law firms to understand their clients' behaviour, needs, and pain points, and to design a seamless and engaging experience that meets their expectations.

Stages of the Client Journey

The client journey typically consists of several stages:

- **Awareness:** This is the stage where the client first becomes aware of the service. They may discover it through advertising, word-of-mouth, or online research.
- **Consideration:** In this stage, the client evaluates the service and compares it to alternatives. They may read reviews, compare features, and assess the value proposition.
- **Conversion:** This is the stage where the client decides to make a purchase. This means that the client decides to get involved in a specific project. The ease and convenience of the purchasing process can significantly impact the client's experience.
- **Loyalty:** If the client is satisfied with their experience, they may become a loyal client, returning to the business for future purchases and potentially recommending it to others.

Mapping the Client Journey

o understand and optimize the client journey, law firms should create a client journey map. This is a visual representation of the clients' experience, highlighting the various touchpoints, emotions, and pain points along the way.

By mapping the client journey, law firms can identify areas for improvement, streamline the client experience, and create more personalized and engaging interactions. This can lead to increased client satisfaction, loyalty, and ultimately, business growth.

The client journey is a crucial concept in modern business, as it allows IP experts and law firms to understand and cater to their client's needs and preferences. By designing a seamless and engaging client journey, IP experts can build stronger relationships with their clients and drive long-term success.

The power of journey mapping is that it encourages you to stop thinking about what you want from your prospects, leads and clients, and focuses instead on what your clients want to know. It helps you get inside their heads.

By understanding this relationship, you can understand how to structure your touchpoints to create the most effective and efficient process for your prospects, leads and clients. Mapping the client journey can help the IP experts address gaps in the knowledge about their own clients and work toward a successful long-term relationship.

	Awareness	Consideration	Conversion	Loyalty
Prospect, Lead, Client Action	View SoMe post, newsletter campaign live talk...	Conduct research, research competitors, compare competencies and reputation	Receive service, contact with client, interaction, service documentation	Make another conversion, Share experience
Touch Points	LinkedIn, newsletter, paper, word of mouth...	LinkedIn, website, word of mouth, 3rd party communication, blog posts	Phone, e-mail, social media group, digital client system	Word of mouth, social media case studies
Prospect, Lead, Client Experience	Interested, hesitant	Curious	Excited	Satisfied / excited
Typical KPIs	Number of people reached in the target group	Website visitors, Blog visitors	Conversion rate	Retention rate, satisfaction score
Business Goals	Increase awareness and interest	Increase visitors Content interaction	Increase conversion rates	Generate positive reviews, recommendations

Figure: Generic client journey map

Difference between sales funnel and client journey

- The two approaches of the sales funnel and the client journey are often used interchangeably, but they are different concepts. These concepts differ in perspective, scope, structure and control:
- **Perspective**
  The sales funnel looks at the actual sales process from the law firm's perspective, while the client journey describes the entire experience from the client's perspective.
- **Scope**
  The sales funnel ends with the successful mandate, while the client journey describes the entire experience process from the first contact to client retention and recommendation after the project.
- **Structure**
  The sales funnel is a linear process with clearly defined stages. The client journey is often less linear and may include steps backwards or jumps between stages.
- **Control**
  The sales funnel can be more controlled and designed by the IP expert. The client journey also includes touchpoints that are not under the direct control of the IP expert or law firm.

What is the connection between the client journey and content marketing?

Alignment with the client journey: An effective content marketing strategy must take into account the different phases of the client journey. The content must be tailored to the needs and challenges of clients in the respective phases of awareness, consideration, conversion and loyalty. This is the only way the client can be supported with relevant content throughout the entire purchasing process.

From the perspective of the prospect, this is where their understanding that there is a problem begins. The pain is felt. The prospect is looking for solutions; money probably already has to be paid or payments are on the horizon.

- **Awareness stage**
  The target group should be reached here. The content should generate attention and interest. The channels should be target group-specific. The expert’s own personal brand should be visible.
- **Consideration stage**
  The interest is aroused and the prospect should choose the IP expert. The prospect will inform himself and research. Two important criteria apply in this stage: Findability (organic results from Google searches) and reputation management (what impression does the prospect get about the IP expert from the materials,

reports, articles, links, etc. available online). This is also about building trust in the skills of the IP expert.

- **Conversion stage**
  The kicker here is that there is no really good alternative. The main thing is to understand the prospect's problem as well as possible and to be able to describe possible solutions. Here the profile must be convincing, especially on LinkedIn. The LinkedIn profile is not a CV, it is the landing page for the prospects. How easy is it to contact the IP expert? To what extent is the IP expert publicly visible as an expert, as part of a specialist community?

- **Loyalty**
  Here it is particularly important that the target group speaks about the IP expert. Recommendation by word of mouth. This is about the emotional connection between the client and the expert. The recommendations should be made with conviction. The content should involve the target group, and the connection should take place via interactions, particularly via social media.

2. Why are client journeys important for online marketing by IP experts?

Online marketing by IP experts is part of personal branding. Personal branding is the conscious process of building and communicating a public identity for a person. The aim is to create a uniform image of your own personality, skills and values and to convey this to the outside world in a targeted manner. The core elements of personal branding are:

- Self-reflection: Know yourself exactly, define your own strengths, values and goals.
- Positioning: Differentiating yourself from others and building a unique brand.
- Communication: Present your personal brand consistently across different channels such as social media, webpages or appearances on events.

Why is personal branding important? Personal branding is important to stand out and gain visibility in a competitive environment. It can:

- Build credibility and trust
- Open up new opportunities and contacts
- Advance career or business
- Offer unique added value for clients or employers

Content marketing is a crucial part of personal branding as it helps build authority, trust and visibility, build relationships and ultimately drive business success:

- Building authority and expertise:
  - Content marketing makes it possible to demonstrate your own specialist knowledge and skills.
  - By creating and publishing valuable content, you can position yourself as an expert in the industry.
- Promote trust and credibility:
  - Relevant and useful content helps build a relationship with the audience and inspire trust.
  - Authentic content that meets the needs of the target group increases credibility.
- Increase visibility and reach:
  - Content marketing makes it possible to spread your personal brand through various channels such as blogs, social media and podcasts.
  - A consistent content strategy can increase the reach and awareness of your personal brand.
- Building relationships and networks:
  - Valuable content can serve as a door opener for new contacts and collaborations.
  - Building an engaged community around your personal brand can create long-term relationships.
- Generating leads and business opportunities:
  - Content that solves problems for the target group can lead to prospects and clients.
  - A strong personal brand built through content marketing can open up new business opportunities.

By understanding which stage along the client journey the prospects and clients are in, content marketing can be adapted and individualized to the client situation. This means that the prospect or client is provided with content that is relevant and valuable to the particular situation. The client journey serves to align the content and the client and optimizes the conversion rate.

3. What role do personas play in client journeys?

Personas play a crucial role in creating and optimizing client journeys. They form the basis for mapping the client journey holistically and in a targeted manner.

What are personas?

Personas are fictional but realistic representations of an IP expert most important target groups. They describe in detail the characteristics, needs, goals and behaviours of typical target groups. Personas give prospects and leads a face and make their perspective for the expert and law firm tangible.

The role of personas in client journey mapping

Starting point for client journey mapping
Personas provide the basis for understanding the prospects whose journey you want to map. Without creating personas, you cannot create meaningful client journeys.

Personalization of the client journey
Personas make it possible to tailor the client journey to the specific needs, goals and behaviours of the target groups. Instead of creating a generic journey, you can optimize the experience for different types of prospects.

Deepening client understanding
The detailed information in personas helps to better understand prospects' thoughts, feelings and motivations. This deeper understanding is then incorporated into the design of the client journey.

Coordination and alignment in the law firm
Personas serve as a common reference for everyone involved in the client journey mapping process. They ensure that all teams have the same understanding of the prospects and align the journey accordingly.

Continuous improvement
As personas change over time, the client journeys based on them must also adapt. This allows law firms and IP experts to continually adapt the client experience to their needs..

4. How do you build a client journey as an IP expert?

Creating a client journey is an important step in understanding and optimizing the client experience. This process allows IP experts and law firms to view interactions and touchpoints from the client's perspective and build on this to create a seamless and effective client experience.

Step 1: Define the goals

Before you start building the client journey, it is important to clearly define the overarching goals. Questions you should ask yourself are:

- What business goals should the client journey support?
- What are the biggest challenges in the current client experience?
- What improvements should be achieved for prospects, leads and clients?

These goals serve as a guide for the entire client journey mapping process.

Step 2: Creating Personas

In order to represent the client perspective as accurately as possible, it is crucial to create meaningful personas. Personas are fictional but realistic representations of the most important target groups. They describe in detail the characteristics, needs, goals and behaviours of typical client groups. The creation of personas provides important insights that are incorporated into client journey mapping. In this way, you can design the client journey to be specific to your target group.

Step 3: Mapping the client journey

Based on the defined goals and the personas created, the actual client journey mapping can now begin. This process includes the following steps:

- **Identification of touchpoints:** All points of contact between the prospects, leads, clients and the IP expert along the journey are recorded - from the first contact to client loyalty.
- **Analysis of the client perspective:** For each touchpoint, how the prospect, lead or client experiences it, what emotions they feel and what needs they have is analysed.
- **Visualization of the journey:** The insights are summarized in a visual representation of the client journey. Maps, diagrams or timelines are often used for this purpose.
- **Identification of optimization potential:** Pain points, friction losses and opportunities for improvement can be identified using the visualized journey.

Step 4: Implementation and continuous optimization

After the client journey has been built, the identified improvement measures are implemented. It is important to continuously monitor the client experience and adapt it to changes. Regular reviews, client feedback and data analyses help to continuously optimize the client journey and adapt it to the needs of the clients. This allows the IP expert to ensure a consistent and positive client experience across all touchpoints.

5. Best practice from working with our partners

Example: Martin Wilming

👉 [LinkedIN]

Martin introduces himself as follows on his LinkedIn profile:

> *I have a passion for creative and strategic IP advice. I specialize in pharmaceuticals, biotech, chemistry, food/feed processing, mechanical engineering as well as software patents (they exist!). I am sold on contentious proceedings, be it at the EPO or in litigation. Some say I am obsessed with bringing home wins for my clients. Maybe there is truth in that.*
>
> *But as much as I love oral proceedings, I hate self-adulation. Let's get in touch to figure out whether there is something I could actually do for you. Send me a PM here on LinkedIn or an Email to martin.wilming@hepp.ch.*

Martin has understood the principle of the LinkedIn profile as a landing page for his network and communicates through passion and emotion for his clients. He combines a value proposition with his personal ethos. It also encourages direct communication.

Martin positions himself as a litigation expert in Switzerland. He has a regular live event on LinkedIn and writes a blog. From his LinkedIn posts he refers directly to his blog as a setting in LinkedIn.

Since Martin has a premium account on LinkedIn, he can integrate a so-called "Custom Like/Button" into his profile, which - as in this case - refers to his blog. You can also use this custom link to refer to other objects along the

client journey, such as your own website. The custom link **(1)** leads to Martin's blog.

On the blog **(2)** there is again a contact option and there he has a selection **(3)** for an email, the arrangement of a "virtual coffee" and a message. In this way, Martin shows that he is open to contact and if you don't want to write a detailed email but are looking for a direct conversation, you will find a direct way to contact us.

Using Martin Wiliming's example, you can see how LinkedIn posts, LinkedIn profile settings, his live events and the blog are designed to optimize conversion to direct contact. The individual contact offers - post, live talk, blog - are tailored to the different stages of the client journey.

Figure: Examples from Martin Wilming's customer journeys

Example:
Maria Boicova-Wynants

LinkedIN

Maria introduces herself as follows on her LinkedIn profile:

> *Do you want to make sense of Intellectual Property, or crave IP strategy insights, or perhaps are looking for inspiration or structure? You are in the right place.*
> *Warm welcome to my profile!*
> *What can I do for you?*
>
> *I help SMEs transform their IP into IP rights that make sense and bring value. I do it by designing the IP strategy and step-by-step strategy execution plans for SMEs.*
>
> *I train on Intellectual Property, Dispute resolution and Risk management. In a human language and tailored to your needs.*
>
> *I assist parties in solving their IP conflicts through expert determination, mediation, or strategic advice to navigate tricky negotiations.*
>
> *I inspire female legal professionals through personalized coaching and mentoring, and help them build their authentic online presence (by the way, join my group dedicated to elevating Women in Law here on LinkedIn - https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12953242/)*

Maria positions herself here as an IP strategy consultant and addresses the visitor to the profile directly - this is a landing page for her community and not simply a CV. She explains directly how she helps her clients and what differentiates her from comparable offers. She communicates personally, authentically, emotionally and with commitment to the visitors to her profile, who are also her prospects. She makes an immediate contact offer to the visitors.

The LinkedIn profile plays an important role in Maria Boicova-Wynants' client journey. It has a "Visit my website" button **(1)**. The website **(2)** is equipped with the same colors and design elements as the LinkedIn profile, which creates consistency in the user experience. All communication elements up to the newsletter **(5)** and her book **(5)** have the same uniform design signature. The users is always sure that they are part of Maria's client journey for them, no matter which touchpoint they are currently at. journey for them, no matter which touchpoint they are currently at. Maria shows various options for the client journey on her profile. You can view and subscribe to the newsletter under **(4)** and also contact her directly **(6)**.

The website **(2)** is integrated into the communication on LinkedIn and refers, for example, to a high-reach feed from the CEIPI IP Business Academy **(3)** where their book is reported. This is how you get a third-party reference for your site (keyword Topical Authority).

The different content that Maria offers on her LinkedIn profile, via your LinkedIn feed, via her newsletter, on her website and in her book are coordinated and reach the prospect in a targeted manner along their client journey. Different content is used multiple times in different formats. Like in the LinkedIn post, which then appears again in the newsletter. In this way, Maria can leverage efficiency potential in content generation. She actively integrates third-party channels to increase her visibility. This also includes her activity at the International Institute for Intellectual Property Management I3PM, which itself runs a very active LinkedIn feed and where she is active as Committee Chair for Quality in IP Management. In doing so, it shows competence and professional commitment and also reaches its target groups as part of its own awareness building.

> *Why me?*
> *I have ~20 years of experience in Intellectual property law and strategy, further enhanced by risk management, coaching, mediation, and data privacy expertise, as well as MBA and LL.M. degrees.*
>
> *My super powers are quickly getting to the core of any matter, being able to see the big picture, and above all - always delivering on promises. And I hear you, not just listen to reply.*
>
> *Domains of knowledge and passion:*
> *IP strategy, general strategy, IP management, trademarks, copyright, art law, art market, new technologies (big data, IoT, AI, Metaverse, NFTs), personal data, GDPR, sustainable development, coaching and mentoring.*
>
> *As a final personal touch:*
> *I play golf, have a barista certificate, and dream of one day owning a vineyard (and a coffee bar! and an art gallery!)*
>
> *Curious about how can I elevate your business? Don't hesitate to reach out!*
> *Whether it's unlocking the full potential of your IP, addressing legal challenges, or empowering your team with knowledge, I'm here for you.*
> *The fastest way to reach me: maria@wynants.eu*
> *or connect and DM.*

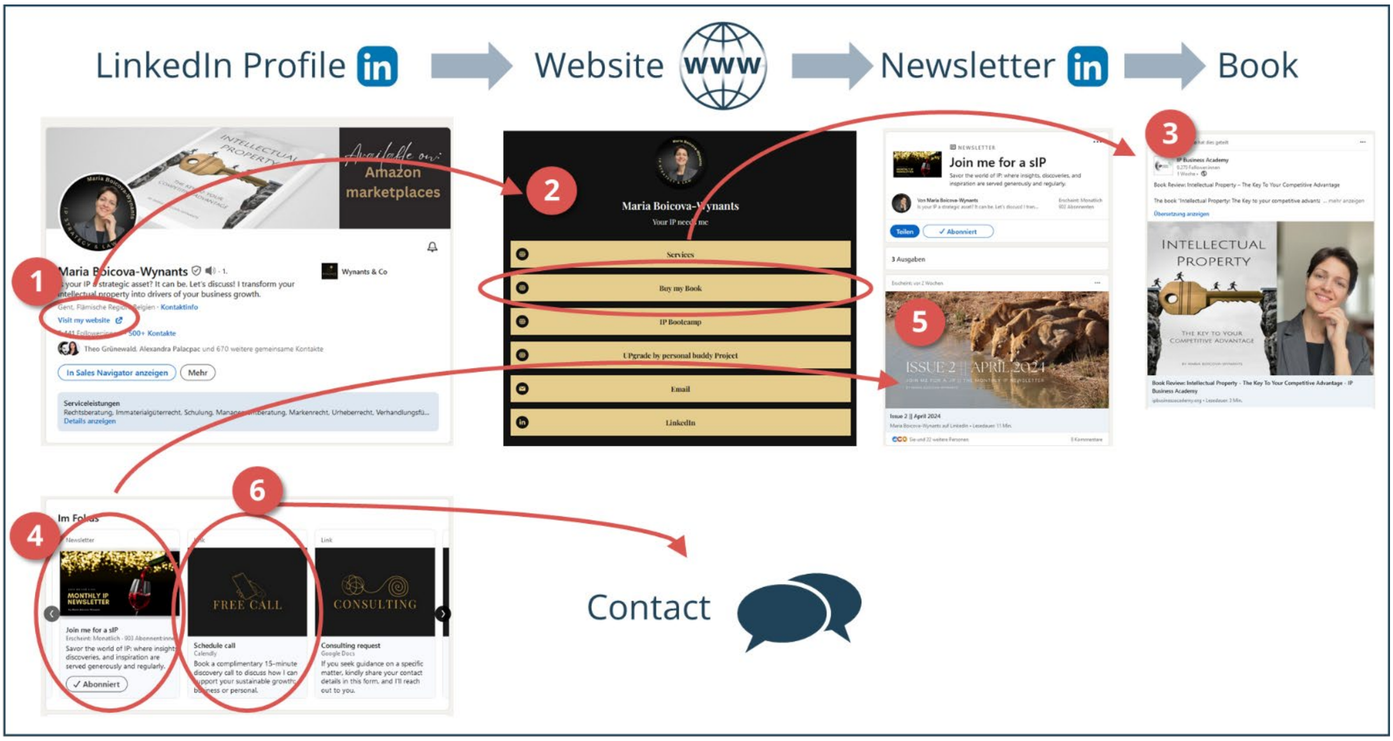

Figure: Examples from Maria Boicova-Wynant's customer journeys

6. If you have questions?

Here are a few typical questions about designing client journeys that I would be happy to help with:

- How can I position myself as an IP expert - I don't want to lose any business potential in the process?
- I don't have the time to constantly produce content, how can I do this efficiently and effectively?
- Where do the ideas for good, relevant, valuable content come from?
- How do I actually define my target group correctly and profitably for sustainable business for me as an IP expert?
- How can I ensure that I really reach my target group with my communication

If these and similar questions concern you, then I would be happy to talk to you and help you specifically. Just contact me on LinkedIn:

👉 https://www.linkedin.com/in/profalexanderwurzer/

There you will also find my #reflectandlearn, in which I report every month how I cooperate with IP experts in awareness building and business development.