BAPM Career office team at the launch of Travelers Modeling Competition
A Study on Customer Engagement - Ieshika Chandra

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Winter is here! See you in November!
“84% of people believe customer engagement will overtake productivity as the primary driver of growth.” – Salesforce

Customer Engagement

– Ieshika Chandra

KEEP UP WITH CUSTOMERS AS THEY MOVE!

Having said that, let’s dive deeper to know the power of Customer Engagement. Customer engagement is an emotion that connects customers with their brands. With the advent of social connectivity, customers are more powerful than ever before. Their always-connected status and ability to find information in seconds put them in control of their own experience, and this trend has forced marketers to rethink how to engage them and keep them coming back.

Think of a product promotion that cracks up when you are planning to buy a similar product. It is not a mere coincidence, but all about providing relevant products to you at the right time. Companies nowadays are focused on providing excellent customer experience and anticipating the evolving needs and requirements of their customers. While I was researching on this wide evolving topic, I realized that Customer Engagement could be well explained through a 4-step illustration.

It starts with Customer Identification, where we identify the suitable customers for our products. It involves 3 steps:

- Align product offerings with customer needs
- Segment customers based on demographics, interests and buying behavior
- Deliver precise solution and increase the customer lifetime value

Next significant step is leveraging Data Analytics for the smart use of Technology. The technology evolution has projected us into a new stage where there is a transformation from broad connectivity to personalized connectivity.
Personalization or “The Internet of Me” is very important for the growth and marketing of a company. Companies send location-specific content and personalized messages with social integration to remain tuned with their customers.

Moreover, as consumers are becoming increasingly connected and reliant on multiple channels in their everyday lives, businesses are taking note and evolving how they communicate with their customers. Thus, **digitization of customer care** is in full swing. But wait, the heart of a business lies in its **Marketing Strategy**. Companies must market the content that resonates with the customer needs. As people change their behavior, marketers need to adapt accordingly!

**According to a study, 64% of visitors who watch a video are more likely to buy a product online.**

They need to pursue one holistic approach rather than thinking individually about a mobile experience, a desktop experience or a tablet experience. And that is an **Omni-channel strategy** which gives seamless buying experience irrespective of customer shopping online from a mobile device or a desktop or in a brick and mortar store.

Bank of America, one of the biggest brands in the banking industry is setting standards for a dynamic experience, allowing their customers from scheduling appointments to depositing checks online through their mobile app.

Meanwhile, when the marketing strategy strikes the cord well the customers, **Customer Satisfaction** takes the lead. A study by InfoQuest found that a ‘totally satisfied customer’ contributes 2.6 times more revenue than a 'somewhat satisfied customer.' Similarly, an unhappy customer tells between 9-15 people about his experience. In fact, 13% of unhappy customers tell over 20 people about their experience. These numbers are daunting, isn’t it? In the end, I would say that no business can work without customers. You and your marketing team spend thousands of dollars getting the attention of prospects, nurturing them into leads and closing them into sales. All you need to do to achieve this is to get on the shoes of your customer. What would you want from your business if you were the client? Treat your customers like your friends, and they’ll always come back.
Always Just Following the Flow

-Prasraban Mukhopadhyay

All of us at times ponder upon why certain things are done the way they are. Why is an ice cube square in shape or the width of a USB port manufactured as 12mm? It would be really fascinating to know, at times, why certain things are made that way, which at times don’t have a rationale behind. Here is one such interesting information which I had stumbled upon years ago which to me till now is a good food for thought.

The standard North American railroad gauge, which is the distance between the rails, is 4 feet 8.5 inches wide because that's how they were built in England and the English immigrants built US railroads.

Why did the English build them like that? The answer to it is that the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways and that's the gauge used by them!

Any reason for them to use that gauge?

The people who built the tramways used the same tools they used for building wagons, which used that wheel spacing. Now the obvious question which comes to mind here is why did the wagons have that wheel spacing? Had they tried to use other spacing, the wagon wheels would break on the old, long distance roads in England, because that's the spacing of the wheel ruts.

Who built those old roads then?

The ancient Romans built the first long distance roads in England. Their chariots formed the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagon wheels.

When you see a Space Shuttle, there are two big booster rockets attached to either side of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters (SRB’s). Reportedly, the engineers who designed them would have preferred them wider, but they had to be shipped by train to the first ever launch site. The railroad line from the factory runs through a tunnel in the mountains. And this design is still followed now because it works properly. The SRB’s had to fit through that tunnel, which is slightly wider than that railroad track and the railroad track as you know, is about as wide as two horses' behinds.

Thus, a major Space Shuttle design feature of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system was determined thousands of years ago by a horse's back end!

Whether this story is entirely true or not, it gives us the opportunity to consider our own work:

Why do we do what we do, the way we have always done it?

Could it be improved? Why not create something different today?
7 Questions with Faculty: David Bergman

Briefly, give us an introduction about yourself, please.

Hello all! I joined UConn in 2013 after completing my Ph.D. from Carnegie Mellon University’s Algorithms, Combinatorics, and Optimization program. My research is grounded in computational optimization and automated business decision making, where I focus on developing new, generic algorithms that push the frontier of the problems we can solve. I also have extensive consulting experience where I apply state-of-the-art optimization algorithms in real-world settings.

How did you land your first teaching job?

I’ve been teaching since I was in high school, where I gave private tutoring lessons. Since then I’ve always gravitated towards teaching positions, from holding TA positions in college, to teaching courses in graduate school, to working with a national tutoring service, and now teaching as a professor at UConn.

What excited you to be part of the BAPM Faculty?

There are two exciting aspects – the students and my colleagues. The students we recruit have amazing experiences, and each student brings a new perspective to the program. Learning from them, while they are in the program and as they venture off into their careers, has been amazing. My colleagues here at UConn are the world leaders in the research areas they work in. Working with the other faculty members have broadened my research experiences, and I look forward to continuing working with them in the future.

What would you like to improve at BAPM?

I think the graduates of BAPM are well equipped to enter the workforce. What I might change is the mindset of students and their focus on grades. The focus should be on learning – good grades are the byproduct of great learning.

What advice would you like to give to graduating BAPM students?

Find something you are passionate about. The best job that you can get coming out of a graduate program is not necessarily the one that pays you the most – it is the one that you will learn the most from and the one that interests you the most. An interest in your professional position will ensure that you succeed. You now have a strong foundation in analytics – find an industry, or role, that suits this background and excites you.

What are your hobbies and interests apart from making BAPM great?

I do nothing but work to make BAPM better 😊. I love coffee (and going to new coffee shops), spending time with family and friends, traveling, and meeting new people. I also strive to volunteer at organizations that assist people in need.
Tell BAPM something surprising that we do not know.

Analytics is not the answer to every business problem. I know this might be surprising! It is an excellent tool that is just starting to become integrated into business decision making, but analytics alone is not enough to solve any problem you might encounter as you embark on your career. Learn from those with experience, as they have knowledge which is often much deeper than any analytical result you can prove.

Interview with the Alumni – Nehal Davda

Tell us about yourself.

Hello BAPM, I am Nehal Davda, a former student of BAPM - Fall 16 Batch. I graduated from the BAPM program in August 17 and am working as Vice-president – Decision Management at Citi. I have a Bachelors in Engineering from Mumbai University, India. I had 4.5 years of professional experience working as Business Analyst for Mu Sigma and Capital One before joining UConn. I also did a 12 weeks Summer fellowship with Massachusetts Institute of technology during summer before graduating from BAPM.

What did you like about BAPM and how can BAPM improve?

I like the combination of analytics and Project management since I already have a professional experience in analytics and courses in project management will help me when I try to advance my
career towards managing analytics teams and projects in future.

BAPM course has improved a lot in a span of one year. Downtown campus has fulfilled the need of much-demanded campus life experience which unfortunately I did not get a chance to explore. Few new courses and electives have been introduced this year making the program more complete. Though I see continuous improvement being made in course structure every year, I feel there is a scope of improvement for BAPM in lines of extracurriculars aspect. It would be great to have BAPM specific Cultural and Sports fests, Intra College Data Challenge and Case Competition, Fun events, and Outings, celebrating festivals, etc. which will provide an opportunity to students to come together, showcase their talents, bond with other students and learn from each other thus providing a wholesome university experience.

In your opinion, which BAPM course helped you the most?

Predictive Analytics by Ram Gopal certainly built a solid foundation in R and Statistics. His Session notes and class recordings came handy while brushing up the concepts while preparing for technical interviews.

Let us get to the point now. How did you crack your interview? How did you prepare for it? How did you get your company interested in your profile? How can current students work towards that direction? Please add the complete job-hunt story too.

My Phase 1 started with some groundwork 2-3 months before application process where I looked out for the companies which had profiles of my interest, listed them down, tried connecting to people working with those companies, gathered information from them and tried finding if someone can refer me. I also prepared and got my resume reviewed and updated my LinkedIn profile during this stage.

Phase 2 was applying to those companies. This was the longest and frustrating step. It’s quite disappointing to see tons of rejection emails as soon as you wake up in the morning and open your mailbox. It’s important to remain calm and not to lose hopes and motivation and continue to brush up your skills and knowledge during this time rather than thinking about the rejection. Also, it is important to regularly check the websites of the companies you have already applied to for further open roles. Keep track of your application, company name; roles applied for, call back status, etc.

I eventually started receiving interview calls and interviewed with around 7-8 companies. I learned from the interview process I got rejected and prepared better for the upcoming interviews. I finally landed a final offer from 2 companies. Also, along with preparing for the interviews also prepare for the other skills like offer/salary negotiation skills, juggling between multiple offers as you never know when they will come handy.

As an alumnus, in what way, would like to be involved with the program? Any suggestions to improve the alumni participation with the program?

I would love to be involved in any way possible which would benefit the students, be it interacting with current and future students, guiding them through the college and job application process, sharing my experience, etc.

It would be quite beneficial to have an official portal for UConn BAPM having features like Live alumni profiles and alumni directory to locate alumni around the world and provide a focal point of contact among alumni and existing students to interact and network with each other. This will strengthen the ties between the institute and alumni.
and will tremendously improve alumni participation in the program thus benefiting both the alumni and existing students.

**How and where you used to hang-out here in Hartford? Any suggestions?**

There are plenty of places to Hang around in Hartford (At least good enough to explore for 1.5 years)

Wednesday’s Pigs Eye ritual and City steam visit was quite common with our batch
Bushnell Park and River Front are just a stone throw away from college for a quick refreshing after a class walk during Spring and Summer.
Hartford has few Indian restaurants like Bombay Olives, Priya (Dharani now), Utsav, Godavari, Sutra, Taste of India to satiate our cravings for Desi food.

West Hartford had a variety of options when you feel like splurging a little over food and drinks my favorite ones being Cheesecake factory and Barcelona. Other good options are Buffalo Wild Wings and Olive Garden. We also have movie Theater at Rave Cinemas, Shopping at West farms and Bowling at Ducks on the Ave. Besides we have regular House Parties for Birthdays, Farewell, Job, internship, random reasons at 250 Mains and Clemens making them another popular hangout spot for get-togethers.

**What would you like to share which we haven’t asked you?**

I would like to share my experience doing a fellowship at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. A fellowship program is similar to internship program except that its offered by universities or institution rather than a company and I was fortunate enough to land one while applying for an internship.

I had a fun and productive summer at MIT campus. I worked as an Analyst at their “Sustainability living lab.” A living lab” is a place-based research concept that utilizes the college campus as a test-bed for innovation and knowledge generation. MIT’s sustainability living lab tried to solve global sustainability issues at local level. During my tenure, I used various analytics techniques, built models and visualization which will optimize the energy usage, prevention of toxic waste in the MIT campus and monitoring several metrics related to energy and sustainability. I got an opportunity connect with the students and faculties and other program managers working there. I would strongly recommend the students to look out for such fellowship opportunities while searching for an internship.
BAPM Career Office  
- Ishrath Sharffuddin

Career planning is not a sequential process that leads you to your dream job. It is rather a cyclic loop that requires constant monitoring and support. An individual should learn about themselves, identify their skills and link it to the requirements of industry, research career options to get closer to the end goal. This could be a very tedious process especially when there are many things on your plate. The overall purpose of college is to help students find a career path that will lead to a successful, happy future. In other words, lifelong skills that will help them to land a job.

The graduate career services office at the UConn School of Business has a job bank, which records all vital list of career opportunities for students. Career advisors work tirelessly to keep this updated. Additionally, appointments with the BAPM career counselors have helped students understand the importance of a good resume, and how to land the best internship and job opportunity.

Travelers most recently, on October 5th not only presented a case competition for students but also opened doors for internship and full-time job opportunities.

Workshops on resumes and interview skills

While no one is born knowing how to write a resume. Often career offices also post online resources of sample resumes and interview questions. Including the resume workbook guide and additional tools like VMock, implemented to help students understand the construction of a good resume.

Mentorship opportunities from alumni

Networking is not only what helps most students land jobs upon graduation, but it also helps students gain internship and job shadow opportunities. Milind Jagre, a BAPM alum conducted an info-session focusing on his journey from a student to a Data scientist at Ford Motor Company. Being a college student and never stepping foot in the career services office is like having a gym membership and doing sit-ups in your room. There are many ways career services can help you in your job hunt, so why do it alone?