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## Purchasing assistance in eStores

How to convert more online visitors into confident online shoppers: measures, findings and new approaches.

A whitepaper by Jutta Stienen

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Jutta is the VP Marketing at GUURU Solutions. With over two decades of experience in marketing, she understands that the value of every loyal customer goes well beyond a sale. It's the community of passionate, loyal customers that underpins sustainable success.

She is also a passionate Swiss cyclist, having competed in various championships, including the women's time trial of the 2013 UCI World Championship in Florence.

# Introduction: the Customer Life Cycle

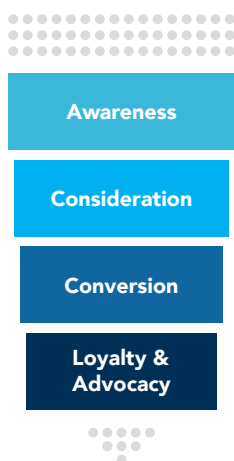
The shift towards eCommerce is still in full swing: According to *Morgan Stanley* the eCommerce market has plenty of room to grow and could increase from \$3.3 trillion today to \$5.4 trillion in 2026. So, what can an eStore do to take its share of the cake?

In the growing competitive environment, winning, satisfying, and retaining customers needs more attention than ever. But there is still a mismatch between what consumers want and what eStores offer.

So, what exactly do customers need to feel empowered to make confident purchase decisions and, in turn, become loyal customers? To understand this, it's worth taking a closer look at the customer journey and, in particular, the steps throughout the eCommerce buyer's journey to determine the strengths and weaknesses of your eStore.

In a recent survey, 45.9 % of 1,920 business professionals said that focusing on Customer Experience (CX) is their top priority. A study we conducted in April 2022 found that 58% of the companies surveyed identified customer retention as their most important strategic goal within the next 3 years. While the need to provide a "great customer experience" is obvious, it is not always clear where in the customer journey this "great customer experience" should be offered and with which initiatives it should be implemented. So, let's find out what steps exist along the eCommerce Customer Journey, where they take place, and what Customer Experience means in relation to each of these steps:

## Marketing-Funnel



## eCommerce Customer Journey



# The eCommerce Customer Journey

Focusing on a “great customer experience” means going through each step and taking the necessary actions to improve and streamline the Customer Journey.



## Consideration & Purchase

### Offer consumers on the eStore the best purchasing assistance

On the following pages, we will focus exclusively on the steps which happen on the eStore, namely the consideration and purchase phases, to hone in on converting eStore visitors into happy and returning customers.

As mentioned earlier, the three driving factors in these steps are technology, UX/images, and purchasing assistance. While the requirements for technology and UX for a good customer experience are relatively clear, the challenge with purchasing assistance is that it depends on the individual visitor. Every eStore visitor comes with their own needs.

So what can such purchasing assistance look like, which KPIs is it measured against and what are the possible solutions?

“Purchasing assistance” means being at the consumer’s side when they need advice, information, or recommendations to make a confident purchase decision. Its success is measured by sales conversion, NPS, churn, drop-off rates, shopping cart value, repeat purchases, and customer retention.

### A quick thought experiment:

Imagine you’re visiting a physical store in a shopping mall. You enter the store and find yourself all alone on 1500m<sup>2</sup> surrounded by 3500 items. There is no one in the store except you—neither other visitors nor sellers. The cash register is also unattended. No one welcomes you, no one asks about your needs, and no one advises you. How do you feel? Maybe you are courageous enough to call out, “Hello?”. Perhaps someone answers days after that. But by then, you most certainly would have left the store.

