How to Push Your Customer-Success Level Beyond the ‘Aha’ Moment

The holy grail of growth marketing seems to be the “aha” moment. That’s the moment, according to Appcues’ Ty Magnin, when users feel that “click” as to how your product will be valuable to them.

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For Facebook, the “aha” moment occurs when new users reach seven friends in 10 days. For Slack, it’s when teams reach 2,000 messages sent.

Finding this golden moment for your own technology requires complex analysis, but it’s a worthwhile pursuit. As VC Parsa Saljoughian shared on Medium, “The benefit of defining an ‘aha moment’ is that it focuses the entire company around a clear, meaningful North Star.”

Where “aha” moments fall short.

Don’t get me wrong. There’s a lot of value in discovering and optimizing around the “aha” moment. But, if we’re going to treat it as that North Star Saljoughian described – one around which all actions are optimized – we have to acknowledge that that moment of customer *recognition* doesn’t necessarily correspond with customer *success.*

Take my team’s experience . . . When we were building our cold-emailing tool, Mailshake, we were going after a major pain point in the space: technologies that were too complex to easily use. Our “aha” moment was the instant – acknowledged or subconscious – when customers realized how delightfully simple

our tool was to set up and use, compared to those of our competitors'.

But our task wasn't done: Once users hit that realization, we still noticed a big drop-off in engagement we hadn't expected. As things turned out, once users made it over the early adoption hurdle, they still faced the fact that writing a good, cold-sales email is actually pretty difficult.

We tend to think of emailing as something simple we do every day. But when you're fighting against the other 10,000 branded messages prospects receive each day (not to mention the fact that average open rates are only 10 percent to 20 percent, depending on the industry), it can be tough to get your message across. Condensing your company's benefits and unique value proposition into a three-to-four-sentence email is hard even for seasoned copywriters. The average business owner, we found, is struggling — and customers are disengaging as a result.

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To help our own customers be truly successful — not just get them across some early "aha" moment finish line — we realized that we had to invest not only in onboarding them, but in educating them. So, we built templates into Mailshake and started proactively offering webinars, campaign-review sessions, videos and other resources to help them overcome the obstacle of writing and sending good emails.

If all we'd optimized for was the "aha" moment of recognition about our product's simplicity, we'd have missed major cues that would have driven up churn, thanks to users who weren't fully engaged.

Finding your own customer success

metrics

By all means, conduct the kind of analysis Saljoughian described earlier. Find and optimize for your "aha" moment – but don't forget that there are next steps. The way you define "customer success" in your organization will vary – and chances are you'll have more than one factor to consider. Groove, for example, defines it according to the following metrics:

- **Onboarding:** Of the training prompts sent automatically, how many are completed within 24 hours? The company has found that, "Free users who complete the prompts within 24 hours are almost 80 percent more likely to convert to paid customers than those who don't."
- **Free-to-paid conversions:** A simple yes-or-no question. Did the user upgrade to a paid plan? If so, he or she has moved beyond the "aha" moment toward success.
- **Sessions per day:** Groove likes to see at least two 2 per user.
- **Monthly churn:** Groove looks at whether this overall metric is higher or lower than the previous month.
- **Net [romoter score (NPS):** According to Groove's Alex Turnbull, "An improving NPS score means that our app and business are performing better and becoming more valuable to our customers."

Drift's Erik Devaney says he also measures churn (in both gross dollar churn and net dollar churn) and NPS, but adds expansion revenue on a monthly basis (expansion MRR). *Forbes* contributor Arash Asli adds that customer onboarding cost, customer effort score, customer retention costs, customer health score and rate of adoption figure into the mix of customer success metrics.

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Identifying and measuring these metrics requires a process of analysis similar to that of finding your early “aha” moment. But, your ability to consider customer success more holistically, rather than looking at early wins alone? Worth it.

Do you go beyond the “aha” moment? Leave me a note below sharing the metrics you measure:

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