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APPROACHES TO MARKETING YOUR CUT FLOWERS



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The University of Kentucky Center for Crop Diversification (CCD) helps farmers and businesses to plan, grow, and market better. We create and curate up-to-date, relevant, and accessible publications, price reports, videos, and in-person training opportunities.



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**OVER THE NEXT 30
MINUTES, WE ARE
GOING TO TAKE A
JOURNEY**

CONSUMER LIFETIME VALUE (CLV) APPROACH TO SALES & MARKETING

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

COMMON GROWER QUESTIONS:

- “SHOULD I SELL MORE BOUQUETS OR RAISE PRICES?”
- “ARE WORKSHOPS WORTH THE TIME?”
- “WHY DO SOME CUSTOMERS KEEP COMING BACK WHILE OTHERS DISAPPEAR?”

INSTEAD OF EVALUATING SALES BY BOUQUET SALES OR IF AN EVENT MADE MONEY, MOVE TO A **CONSUMER LIFETIME VALUE APPROACH**



WHAT IS CONSUMER LIFETIME VALUE (CLV)?

*the total value a customer brings to your farm
over time, not just today's purchase*

this is a mindset, not a math exercise

Applying the CLV Approach

Some sales are single, profit-building purchases, while others are relationship builders.

We want to look at CLV as a systems approach, not a spreadsheet.

You can evaluate success on bouquets or subscriptions sold, but **do not ignore what happens after the first sale.**



Customer Journey

1) First Touch

Consumer becomes aware of your farm for the first time

Common touchpoints:

- Social media
- Farmers market booth
- Word-of-mouth
- Media mentions or community events

What matters most:

- Social media presence
- Market visibility
- Farm story & branding

2) First Purchase

Consumer makes a low-risk, first-time purchase

Common types:

- Bouquet
- CSA subscription or small order
- Single workshop or on-farm event

What matters most:

- Quality
- Pricing clarity
- Ease of purchasing
- Friendly interaction

4) Retention

Consumer makes repeat purchases

Common behaviors:

- Joins or renews CSA subscription
- Returning each season

What matters most:

- Offering options for repeat customers
- Consistent quality
- Reliable communication

3) Engagement

Consumer spends more time with your farm

Common engagement points:

- Workshop or on-farm event
- Email newsletter signup
- Social media interaction

What matters most:

- Workshops
- Educational content
- Personal storytelling

5) Advocacy

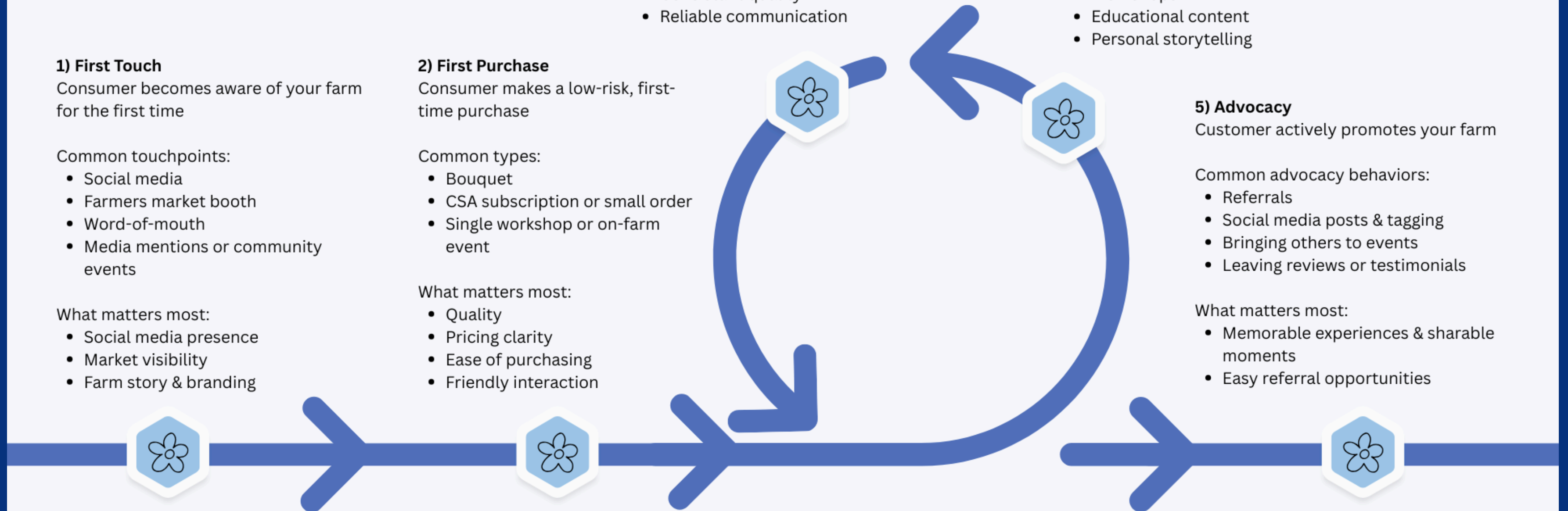
Customer actively promotes your farm

Common advocacy behaviors:

- Referrals
- Social media posts & tagging
- Bringing others to events
- Leaving reviews or testimonials

What matters most:

- Memorable experiences & sharable moments
- Easy referral opportunities



Entry Point & First Touches

Consumer **becomes aware** of your farm for the first time

Common touchpoints:

- Social media
- Farmers market booth
- Word-of-mouth
- Media mentions or community events

What matters most:

- Social media presence
- Market visibility
- Farm story & branding

Role: Discovery & building trust



First Purchase

Consumer makes a low-risk, first-time purchase

Common types:

- Bouquet
- CSA subscription or small order
- Single workshop or on-farm event

What matters most:

- Quality
- Pricing clarity
- Ease of purchasing
- Friendly interaction

Role: Acquiring customers & building trust



Engagement

Consumer **spends more time with your farm**

Common engagement builders:

- Workshop or on-farm event
- You-pick or agritourism
- Email newsletter signup
- Social media interaction

What matters most:

- Workshops
- Educational content
- Personal storytelling

Role: Emotional connection, heighten future spending, increase word-of-mouth promotion



Retention

Consumer makes repeat purchases

Common behaviors:

- Joins or renews CSA subscription
- Returning each season
- Branching out into other offering areas (bouquet → wedding)

What matters most:

- Offering options for repeat customers
- Consistent quality
- Reliable communication

Role: Cultivating long-term loyalty & profitability



Advocacy

Customer **actively promotes** your farm

Common advocacy behaviors:

- Referrals
- Social media posts & tagging
- Bringing others to events
- Leaving reviews or testimonials

What matters most:

- Memorable experiences & sharable moments
- Easy referral opportunities

Role: Cultivating referrals, word-of-mouth promotion, lower customer acquisition



What is the research behind it?

Positive experiences & experience goods themselves → higher levels of satisfaction
→ likelihood of future behaviors:

- Repeat purchases / shifting patterns
- Referrals + word-of-mouth promotion
- Social media engagement

(Kim et al., 2019) + (Brune et al., 2021)

+ fostering others to:

- Purchase
- Participate
- Create their own line of CLV



What is the research behind it?

Intent does not equal behavior = intention-behavior gap (Birch & Memery, 2020).

- Following a positive experience → report high intentions & overstate follow-through.
- Experience-based events often lead to high reported intentions.

The lifetime value of customers can vary; customer retention is important!

- Small reductions in customer retention = large reductions in CLV (Gloy et al., 1997)



theory



application

start somewhere, evolve it later

Applying the CLV Approach

Let's work through this worksheet to identify where marketing efforts are creating long-term value vs. only short-term sales + how to cultivate CLV

- A customer can keep generating value even when they're not spending money themselves, simply by talking about your farm

Applying CLV Lens to Your Cut Flower Farm

1) Identify Your Entry Points

How do **new customers** most often **first interact with your Farm**?

- Farmers market
- Social media
- Website or online store
- Workshop or on-farm event
- Word-of-mouth
- Other: _____

2) Map Repeat Engagement

After a first purchase or interaction, what **opportunities exist for customers to return**?

- Bouquet re-purchases
- Flower CSA or subscription
- DIY buckets
- Seasonal or holiday sales
- Additional workshops or events
- Weddings or special orders
- Other: _____

3) Identify Relationship Builders

Which activities **create the strongest emotional connection** to your farm?

- Workshops
- On-farm experiences
- Direct conversations at markets
- Educational content (email or socials)
- Personal follow-up or thank-you messages

Which of these do you currently invest the most time in?

4) Encourage Word-of-Mouth

What **makes customers likely to recommend** your farm to others?

- Unique experiences
- Product quality
- Farm story
- Shareable moments (photos, events)
- Ease of buying & communication

One thing I could do to increase referrals:

5) CLV Reflection

Which offering on your farm likely creates the most long-term value, even if it isn't the most profitable today?

One small change I could make this season to increase lifetime value:

Putting it together!

- **Not every product or experience needs to maximize immediate profit. Some offerings:**
 - **Acquire customers**
 - **Deepen relationships**
 - **Increase referrals**

Measuring Success

- **A CLV approach assigns each activity a role & helps you decide**
 - **Whether it brings in customers**
 - **Keeps them coming back**
 - **Encourages referrals.**

Putting it together!

- CLV is about relationships, not transactions.
- Short-term profit is not the only measure you should be looking at!
- Customers aren't just buying flowers. They are discovering, returning, & promoting.

Looking for more in-depth assistance?

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