



DRIVE **EXPONENTIAL** **GROWTH**

THROUGH OMNICHANNEL MARKETING

A WHITE PAPER

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Executive Summary



Over the past ten years, there has been a seismic shift in consumer habits.

As people hop between on- and offline worlds, businesses must provide an increasingly cohesive, personalized experience. An omnichannel approach aligns all your communication channels with consistent messaging, while providing users a seamless customer experience. Employ this customer-oriented strategy to ensure your brand receives a multi-fold return on your marketing investment.

Drive Exponential Growth Through Omnichannel Marketing

The more technology advances, the more it is integrated into our daily lives.

From customized Facebook ads to apps that help you find the kitchen section in your favorite IKEA store, customers are no longer confined to a single channel or platform as they interact with a brand. And as entrepreneurs become increasingly responsive to the needs of individual customers, the lines between what we do on- and offline will continue to blur.

In an age where Amazon tells us what we need before we need it, savvy marketers understand that today's consumer demands versatile, real-time responsiveness. Beyond offering content through many communication channels, omnichannel marketing blends these channels together to improve the customer experience during the discovery, purchase, and post-purchase phase of their buying journey.

Customers on the Move

Why is omnichannel marketing so important? Because today's consumers are always on the move. Check out these statistics:

- ✓ 98% of Americans switch between devices on the same day
- ✓ 71% of shoppers who use smartphones for research in-store say this has become an important part of their shopping experience
- ✓ Today's consumers average six touchpoints with a business before making a purchase, with nearly 50% regularly using more than four communication channels
- ✓ Google's statistics claim that 85% of online buyers begin their purchase on one device or channel and finish it on another
- ✓ 90% of customers expect consistent interactions across channels, and 87% say they believe brands should provide a more seamless experience between channels

The difference between multichannel and omnichannel marketing is small, but mastering omnichannel marketing can work wonders for your bottom line. Businesses that adopt omnichannel strategies achieve 91% greater year-over-year customer retention rates compared to businesses that don't. And companies with robust omnichannel customer engagement see a 9.5% year-over-year increase in annual revenue, combined with a 7.5% year-over-year decrease in cost per contact.

From Multichannel to Omnichannel

To adopt omnichannel marketing, organizations need to make a fundamental shift from multichannel marketing to a more comprehensive omnichannel strategy.

While having multiple touchpoints certainly isn't bad, the goal of omnichannel marketing is to connect all your marketing channels in a unified way. Here are some differences between a multichannel and omnichannel approach:

The multichannel approach aims to reach the largest number of people through the largest variety of channels.

Multichannel marketing casts a wide net hoping for the most customer engagements: the more, the merrier! From Every Day Direct Mail to email and social media campaigns, here a brand seeks to connect through a variety of platforms. Whether you snag clients at a retail location or through word-of-mouth marketing, a multichannel strategy allows you to use two or more options to connect with your prospects.

An omnichannel experience is a multichannel approach to marketing, selling, and serving customers that unifies many mediums to work together.

Here your print marketing, onsite displays, mobile marketing, and social media testimonials all tell a consistent story while providing the customer an integrated shopping experience. While multichannel marketing puts the BRAND at the core of the messaging, omnichannel marketing puts the CUSTOMER at the nucleus of all marketing activities by aligning messaging, goals, objectives, and design across each channel and device.

The focus is on building a stronger relationship between consumers and the brand by smoothing the customer experience, generating consistent content, and multiplying conversions as a result.

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Omnichannel Marketing in Practice

Say you're looking to synchronize your marketing channels to improve the customer experience. This could include:

- ✓ Placing QR codes on your print materials or packaging to link customers to your website for easy entry points linked to specific product preferences
- ✓ Allowing customers to use an app to access purchasing discounts while they're in line at your store
- ✓ Customizing promotions through personalized printings or one-to-one variable data
- ✓ Arming your onsite employees with iPads or tablets to check if products are in stock, schedule support appointments, finalize customer purchases from the sales floor, or send receipts via email
- ✓ Using onsite shopper consultants to showcase pre-selected merchandise that customers tagged during online shopping
- ✓ Including social media handles on your print marketing that encourages people to interact with your brand and its most loyal customers

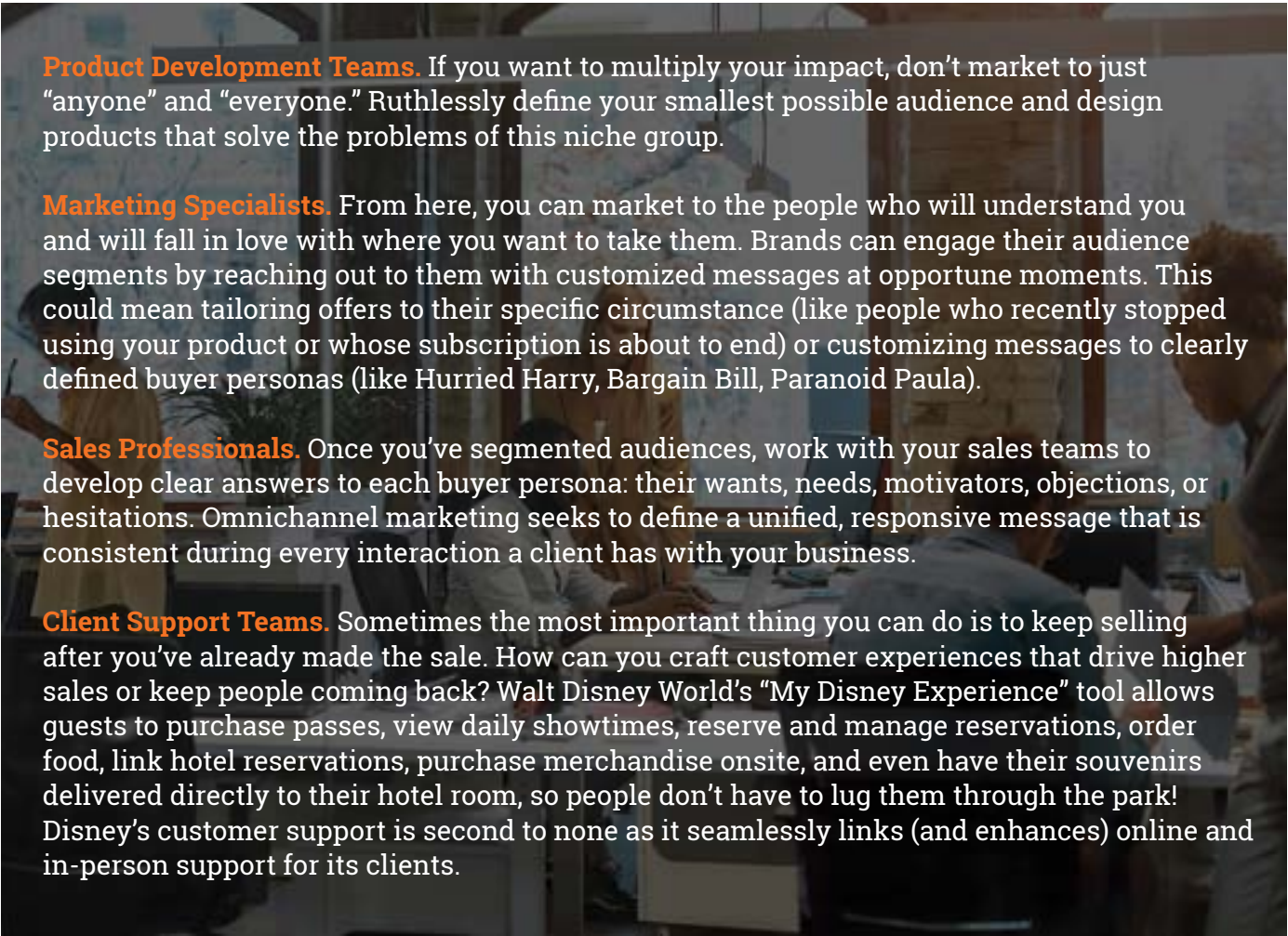
At any point in the browsing journey, customers should be able to leave off at one channel and pick up in another. As you integrate communication channels, you will naturally deliver a smoother experience regardless of the medium, platform, or the stage of a buyer's journey.



A Unified, Holistic Approach

The discipline of omnichannel marketing is still relatively new, but the success stories speak for themselves. From nonprofits to large-scale retailers, marketers everywhere find that unifying communication channels offers wonderful customer experiences that can lengthen onsite shopping time by nine percent and boost repeat shopping trips by 23 percent!

In omnichannel marketing, your goal is to create a customer-centric culture clearly presented through every medium. To do this, you'll need to work closely with several stakeholders:



Product Development Teams. If you want to multiply your impact, don't market to just "anyone" and "everyone." Ruthlessly define your smallest possible audience and design products that solve the problems of this niche group.

Marketing Specialists. From here, you can market to the people who will understand you and will fall in love with where you want to take them. Brands can engage their audience segments by reaching out to them with customized messages at opportune moments. This could mean tailoring offers to their specific circumstance (like people who recently stopped using your product or whose subscription is about to end) or customizing messages to clearly defined buyer personas (like Hurried Harry, Bargain Bill, Paranoid Paula).

Sales Professionals. Once you've segmented audiences, work with your sales teams to develop clear answers to each buyer persona: their wants, needs, motivators, objections, or hesitations. Omnichannel marketing seeks to define a unified, responsive message that is consistent during every interaction a client has with your business.

Client Support Teams. Sometimes the most important thing you can do is to keep selling after you've already made the sale. How can you craft customer experiences that drive higher sales or keep people coming back? Walt Disney World's "My Disney Experience" tool allows guests to purchase passes, view daily showtimes, reserve and manage reservations, order food, link hotel reservations, purchase merchandise onsite, and even have their souvenirs delivered directly to their hotel room, so people don't have to lug them through the park! Disney's customer support is second to none as it seamlessly links (and enhances) online and in-person support for its clients.

Ultimately, your teams should strategize to build a coherent, action-oriented experience that customers traverse across multiple platforms. No team or department should work in a vacuum. Break down interdepartmental silos whenever possible. Collaboration is vital!

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A 3-Step Guide to Starting Omnichannel Marketing

Ready to embrace a more unified marketing strategy? Here are three steps to consider:

1. Collect Customer Data

With an omnichannel approach, data management is a top priority.

Finding the right data management platform can help you collect, manage, and process information to customize marketing using rich customer profiles. For example, young females working in the healthcare industry are much more likely to buy compression socks based on style, not just comfort. So, the “Crazy Compression” apparel company highlights its “out of the box,” colorful, unique identity in its landing pages and nurturing strategy.

If you don't already have a Customer Relations Management (CRM) system, this is a crucial investment. CRM software compiles data from a range of communication channels, including your website, email, live chat, marketing materials, and social channels. This data platform will provide valuable insights about your target audience and offer useful analytics to personalize content.

2. Streamline Content

The key to a seamless omnichannel experience is creating unified, consistent content across a variety of platforms.

All messages must reflect the products and ideas of the overarching marketing campaign. Using the data you collect through CRM, your business can develop 1:1 personalized marketing that is uniformly displayed in catalogs, mobile apps, your website, in email marketing, or through sales consultations online or onsite.

3. Consider All Channels

As businesses target narrower market segments, brands must access these customers through both print and digital media.

Research shows it takes between seven and 10 exposures to a brand message for a person to finally “see” it. Consumers want to connect with brands across various channels and platforms, and marketers who leverage print alongside digital channels will see an increased response.

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Print holds significant weight in the consumer buying journey. It has been said that “The Web is where we go to get answers, but print is where we go to ask questions.” Print continues to be a catalyst that drives online research and buying practices. For example, data shows that 44 percent of customers visit a brand’s website after receiving direct mail marketing (10 percent more than people who visit landing pages after receiving an email). While under half of all consumers act on an email immediately, almost four out of every five customers will act on direct mail right away. And half of all consumers hold on to print marketing materials for future reference.

Research from the Content Marketing Institute shows that marketers who use print as part of an omnichannel marketing strategy feature ROI rates among the highest of all channels. One-third of businesses say they use print materials like newsletters and booklets to distribute their content, and those who do so consider print to be the most important marketing channel after email (for B2B) and Facebook (for B2C).

For many consumers, print channels are still seen as the most trustworthy, so it makes sense to incorporate magazines, brochures, or direct mail campaigns into any omnichannel portfolio. A recent InfoTrends survey found firms that sent exclusively personalized print materials garnered a response rate of around six percent and a conversion rate of over 16 percent. One Minnesota marketing and corporate communications director recalls an “aha moment” that occurred when their business tried leaving direct mail out of the promotional mix: “Response rates plunged, reminding everyone involved why direct mail is still the backbone of our business.”



Conclusion

In the United States, 213 million adults access the internet, with an average of four different devices. Today's customers are more connected, and they have more control over the buying process than ever before. Businesses that unify communication across all channels stand to gain a piece of the \$1.8 trillion that cross-channel sales are predicted to reach this year. Omnichannel marketing is the new standard, and your real-time responsiveness will give people the confidence to move forward with your brand.



About Your Sponsor

Print continues as a catalyst to drive online research and buying practices, and it can spark interest at crucial points in your sales funnel. Ready to expand the role of print in your omnichannel marketing? We're here to help you integrate the "moving parts" of your campaigns in ways that point customers to their next best action. Fabulous mailings, brochures, and catalogs can heighten engagement and add momentum along their path to purchase.

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