OMNICHANNEL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

I want to thank the reviewers who helped me provide more creative thinking insights and create a free error technical manual. I particularly appreciate that they offered their wealth of expertise on several key creative thinking essentials.

Finally, I'd want to express my heartfelt appreciation to my student and colleague for their moral support in creating this manual.

DEDICATION:

I'd like to dedicate this technical manual to the students, faculty members, and President of KMITL University, as well as to everyone else who helped me finish it, both directly and indirectly.

PREFACE:

This technical manual is entirely centered on creative thinking abilities that may be used by business graduates, entrepreneurs, people, and academics. The technical manual contains a comprehensive encyclopedia on the art of creative thinking. The author of this cited mentioned a potential market for any product that requires essential abilities to uncover. According to the author, the existence of business experts who are not competent creative thinking salespeople may lead some entrepreneurs to fail and impede the sales of others. With references from chapter one to chapter ten, this book has filled the void left by other specialists in creative thinking. For example, there is insufficient information and resources about contemporary creative thinking techniques, which has been a nightmare for the corporate sector; nonetheless, this book includes sufficient enlightening skills regarding everything linked to creative thinking. Aside from the issues of creative thinking, this book offers other intriguing topics/subtopics that you may not have considered. There is more to reading a book, which is deemed insufficient unless you have implemented the approaches and tactics outlined in the book into the sustainability of your firm.

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1.1.1 OMNI CHANNEL DEFINITION:

Omni - channel is a cross-channel technique to marketing that aims to improve the customer experience and foster stronger relationships across all potential channels and devices. This encompasses both conventional and digital channels, POS, and physical and online encounters.

An Omni channel strategy integrates back-end communication, distribution, and advertising channels. A customer service professional at a shop, for example, can refer to the client's prior purchases and interests just as readily as a consumer service representative on the phone or a customer support webchat agent. Alternatively, the buyer can use a desktop computer to verify inventory by store on the company's website, then purchase the item later with a smartphone or tablet and pick it up at a specified location (Lehrer & Trenz, 2022).

1.1.2 OMNI CHANNEL ECOSYSTEM DEFINITION:

All aspects of the purchasing process are interrelated in an Omni channel environment. Although a client may start by viewing your website, they may choose to continue shopping in-store, through smart phone, or through social media (Berezovsky & Gryphaea, 2020).

1.1.3 5 KEY FOUNDATION BLOCKS OF OMNI CHANNEL ECOSYSTEM:

Omni channel ecosystem comprised of five critical foundation blocks to assist merchants in executing a full Omni channel approach (Wang, Xie, & Ma, 2021):

  i.   Product Catalogue Compilation
 ii.   Inventory Visibility Across Channels
iii.   Logistics and fulfillment
 iv.   Management of Distributed Orders
  v.   Customer Insight from 360^0 Angle

Each block is comprised of two critical components: Flexible back-end technology and an **API economy (also known as Omni-API)** (Taches, 2016).

➢ Flexible Backend System

An adaptive back-end system focuses on developing a strong and flexible software design and technology stack for back-end systems that support Omni channel operations. This improves agility by tackling architecture and technological constraints, with an emphasis on specific retail sub-domains like Catalog and Inventory (Adivar, Seminole, & Christopher, 2019b).

<u>The API Economy</u>

The increasing need for Omni channel features has hastened the requirement for organizations to acquire and install adaptive back-end technologies at the heart of operations. This necessitates the use of application programming interfaces (APIs) to get accessibility to an institution's fundamental tools and services, both within and outside the company. The API economy is a novel and already market-proven business model that is adaptable, robust, and capable of on-demand integration with nearly any external system. The classic retail duality of store vs site is inadequate for competing in today's market. Businesses must be prepared to incorporate new options with little interruption when new markets and mobile applications emerge, whether they wish to adopt in-app Apple Pay, advertise through Groupon, or develop an Instagram collection store a la Target Awesome Shop. API Economy is a roadmap to future preparedness for retailers, demonstrating how APIs may improve an institution 's profitability (Cyprinids, 2019b)

1.1.3.1 Product Catalogue Compilation

Product qualities have never been more important in the retail market. Product information has developed with the growth of eCommerce and social media; previous to online shopping, a typical brick and mortar store's product features included the UPC, color, size, product ID, and product description. Product features have developed to enable for more effective queries with the introduction of eCommerce, and now contain far more customer—centric features such as quality care, fabric information, place of production, amount on hand, return summary, delivery description, product picture, product video, and customer feedback (Tomomi, Gangway, & Mandala, 2022). Customers have grown to demand rich product information to help them make an informed decision when purchasing online. Product data is the connective tissue of retail, and it can be utilized to improve practically every aspect of a company's operations, storage, and transportation. Because of the quantity of characteristics added to product information via

eCommerce platforms, customers are now frequently prepared with more brand information than the average shop assistant. Because conventional product management systems were not designed to accommodate a sophisticated range of product information, merchants and suppliers tended to transmit a limited set of data via their outdated catalogs (Valentini et al., 2020). However, exchanging product data is one of the pillars of creating a more thorough shopping experience for customers, regardless of where they purchase. Regardless of the sales method, retailers require a single catalog.

– **General difficulties** include a restricted attribute set that does not allow for the inclusion of customer-friendly - characteristics as goods improve.
– Tightly connected systems can limit product catalog changes owing to the ripple impact on downstream systems.
– Because there are separate databases for online and retail catalogs, any change may result in inconsistency or necessitate a major expenditure.

1.1.3.2 Inventory Visibility Across Channels

Now that customers can shop for an item via any of a variety of available channels, merchants must be able to communicate an item's inventory status, i.e., availability and location, promptly, making inventory status a major characteristic for any product. While previous product information systems were not built to handle inventory and location, this information is critical for prompt delivery in today's reality. To efficiently compete for consumers' business, shops must now have real-time inventory control as well as detailed product details. Poor inventory management can have disastrous repercussions. Retailers frequently cancel online purchases when a product appears to be out of stock, only to discover that the product is still available in their physical locations (Barratt, Kull, & Sodexo, 2018). Cross-channel inventory addresses this, however most businesses still have separate inventories for each channel as a result of installing eCommerce domains after establishing physical locations (Zhou, Zhang, Zhong, Cao, & Cheng, 2021).

– **General Problems -** Channels suffer from an erroneous image of product inventory status, which leads to canceled orders and revenue loss.
– Inventory is not available across all channels due to the maintenance of separate warehouse systems.

– Systems for managing inventory are transaction-sensitive, so each change has a considerable risk.

1.1.3.3 Logistics & Fulfillment:

In a typical supply chain, merchants purchase things from vendors, who then send them to distribution centers (DCs), which then transport them to shops as needed. When a retailer launches a new channel, such as eCommerce, they must utilize an entirely different supply chain model. To avoid a difficult interface with their usual practice, online purchases were fulfilled from a different DC. This resulted in a poor customer experience across channels, redundant procedures, and inadequate inventory information at the distribution centers (Ivanov, Deluge, & Sokolov, 2022). Retailers were frequently unable to satisfy their needed needs due to channel isolation.

– **General Difficulties**
– Split inventory necessitates the upkeep of various warehouse and inventory sets, as well as the supplementary warehouse personnel required to do it.
– Shifting inventory between warehouses might incur additional expenditures.
– Adding additional fulfillment alternatives, such as ordering online for in-store pickup or buying in-store for home delivery, is a significant endeavor.
– Peak season demand is challenging to handle.

1.1.3.4 Management of Distributed Orders

An eCommerce engine involved for organizing information, performing procedures, and monitoring of performance to guarantee client orders are delivered properly and cost-effectively across a complex network of sourcing and fulfillment operations is known as an order management system (OMS). Intelligent order sourcing, multichannel support, global inventory visibility, real-time order execution, and demand sensing are just a few of the system's key characteristics. It provides uniform functionality across channels, allowing consumers to access the same promotions, shipping options, and other features without having to worry about whether or not a certain feature is offered on a particular channel (e.g., mobile) (Lim & Sari, 2018).

– **General Difficulties**
– Order processing and delivery delays
– Incomplete product visibility across all channels

- OMS inventory visibility across channels is lacking.

- Uneven feature support across channels

- Optimization of sourcing, including ship-from-store and item transfer planning

- During busy seasons, there is a lack of communication about backorders and out-of-stock products.

1.1.3.5 Customer Insight from 360^0 Angle

Consumer insight is at the heart of Omni channel commerce, and businesses are keen to employ these new capabilities to create more tailored customer solutions. Consumers, on the other hand, desire the opportunity to interact with the store over a number of channels, as well as the flexibility to pick up where they left off on one channel and continue on another. From another angle, technology has enabled businesses to amass vast volumes of information on their customers. It is now feasible to investigate a customer's browsing habits, previous shopping history, purchasing behavior, social media interactions, and channel choice - and this is only the beginning (Hosseini, Merz, Olinger, & Wenninger, 2018).

In today's market, businesses must maintain a 360° perspective of their clients and use that data to deliver a more seamless customer experience. To do this, consumer information from numerous communication channels, as well as customer communication from diverse sources, such as telephone, email, social media, and live chat, must be combined. Obtaining the data is only half the battle; equally crucial is accurately analyzing the data and applying it to make sound judgments. Customer transaction histories, interaction histories, and insights obtained from across retailers' many brands, business divisions, and platforms may now be linked to create a full customer profile.

When combined with syndicated data such as demographics, gender, discretionary income, and so on, this data gives the retailer with an extraordinarily thorough picture of a customer's purchasing potential, lifestyle, favorite product lines, and even price sensitivity (Sfakianaki, Hristopoulos, & Lazaris, 2022).

- **General Difficulties -** Inadequate understanding of client preferences and purchasing habits

- Inability to give clients with localized or tailored experiences

- Access to consolidated account information and other product data is restricted.

CHAPTER 2

2.1 BENEFITS OF OMNICHANNEL ECOSYSTEM:

2.1.1 Proactive, on-time communication

Customers now may order their aircraft tickets while they wait for their mission-style burrito to be delivered. Others may look into mortgages or insurance while driving to work (Yin, Chiu, Hsieh, & Kuo, 2022).

People's attitudes about pre-purchase research have shifted as a result of the availability of information on demand. These **"micro-moments,"** according to Google, are significant because they are:

"Moments in which customers act on a need, such as learning something, doing something, discovering something, watching something, or purchasing something." They are intent-rich moments in which judgments are made and preferences are formed."

Micro-moments have given rise to hyper-personalized communications. Brands are realizing the benefits of emails, push alerts, SMS messaging, and phone calls that reach their consumers at their time of need, depending on behavioral triggers like looking for answers on your company website (Freije & László, 2021).

Workplace Omni channel communications examples (Han, Lim, & Kang, 2022) include:

− From the time of contact, customer support employees have access to a client's multi-year history with your company, product purchase history, and communication preferences.
− A unified and smooth customer support experience, regardless of whether a consumer is conversing with a customer service professional (CSR) or dealing with an employee at your company's physical location.
− Personalized, behaviorally-triggered offers delivered via mobile, email, and other channels to reward clients for their loyalty and promote repeat purchases via special deals.

2.1.2 Data insights and centralized technology

Every multichannel communications strategy is supported by a technological foundation. For many companies, cloud-based unified communication platforms like Atlantic Online Cacaos can offer the benefit of ease-of-implementation, mobility, and consolidated data insights. Employees

benefit from the ease of consolidated insights and a single point-of-truth by combining cloud-based communication tools with customer relationship management (CRM) software (Chatterjee, Chaudhuri, & Brontis, 2021).

Superior data insights also aid business in the following ways (Hübner et al., 2021):

− Customer data that has been enriched, providing a single source for all important client facts and interactions with your firm across numerous channels.
− Instant access to the whole history and context of your client relationship, including firmographic information auto-population.
− For proactive relationship management, automated notifications and cautions based on behavioral data, such as dissatisfied chat messages or frequent contacts to customer care.
− Insight into your customers' favorite communication channels.
− Insights based on behavior, such as the intelligence required for automatically triggered, tailored outbound messages by email, mobile push notification, or mail.
− Smarter deployment of your customer service resources, including contact center manpower and technology expenditures, based on customer data insights.

2.1.3   Improved Employee Experience

Employees desire the tools they need to efficiently connect with clients and colleagues, as well as provide excellent customer service. A bad brand contact occurs when an irate consumer explains a return request for the fourth time. However, these situations can be frustrating for your CSRs who lack the communication history on the customer required to understand why the problem has escalated (Kauffman & Weber, 2021).

Omni channel communication technologies make it simple for front-line personnel to understand customers and provide excellent service the first time.

2.1.4   Consumer Comfort and Satisfaction

Convenience has always been vital in providing exceptional service to your consumers, but it has grown much more so in recent years. According to a **National Retail Federation report**, 83% of shoppers appreciate convenience more now than they did five years ago. According to the same report, 97% of consumers abandoned a purchase or abandoned a brand due to inconvenience (Adivar, Seminole, & Christopher, 2019).

Customers have more alternatives than ever before, and providing reliable, convenient service is critical if you want to acquire and maintain customers. Omni channel communications enable your company to send relevant messaging to customers—and employees—via the most suitable channel every time. This uniformity improves the efficiency of your internal and customer-facing activities, resulting in a more gratifying customer experience (Merritt & Zhao, 2020).

Omni channel communications significantly improve the convenience of communication for your customers and staff.

2.1.5 Business Plan Based on Insights

Organizations may enhance their sales, customer retention, and happiness by better understanding how their prospects and existing customers interact with their brand across channels (Mokeski, Arvidsson, Miragliotta, Ghezzi, & Mangiaracina, 2019).

Here are a few examples of how **Omni channel communication technology** may help with company strategy:

− Customer insights are being used to inform more focused "push notification" engagements via mobile apps.
− Improved mobile or web design to eliminate "friction" during the online purchasing process.
− The release of new goods and offers for happier consumers, such as cost reductions for individuals who select paperless billing.

2.2 NAVIGATING THE OMNICHANNEL ECOSYSTEM:

2.2.1 An Omni channel ecosystem's touchpoints

All aspects of the purchasing process are interrelated in an Omni channel environment. Although a client may begin by visiting your website, they may choose to continue shopping in-store, through mobile device, or via social media. In order to be truly Omni channel, your call centers must be integrated with the retail web (Dahl, D'Alessandro, Peltier, & Swan, 2018).

A plethora of supporting pieces is woven throughout the consumer experience. A variety of retail channels, integrated digital business tools, market research, and efficient fulfillment and payment alternatives all contribute to the development of an all-encompassing and seamless Omni channel ecosystem (Dahl, D'Alessandro, Peltier, & Swan, 2018).

2.2.2 Factors to consider while creating an Omni channel strategy

Although the bulk of services will be shared by all Omni channel ecosystems, each ecosystem will need to be specifically suited to the store executing the strategy and the customers they intend to serve. When developing an Omni channel strategy, it is critical to prioritize the customer experience. Consumers increasingly demand a strong association between online and offline businesses, which means that your branding, corporate image, and level of customer service should be consistent across all channels (Hilken et al., 2018).

In an ideal world, the entire customer experience would be intuitive, effortless, and seamless. To do this, one may need to invest in expert IT help or consider redeveloping ecommerce site. Using a system that requires customers to login to online business might be an excellent method to track specific purchase patterns. This might also help to identify consumers more simply, so that when they get in touch either in-store or by phone, one has all of their information at hand, enabling one to customize their experience (Hilken et al., 2018).

While cost will most certainly be a consideration while developing your ecosystem, the well-documented rise in income from Omni channel retail will ensure that your company gets a return on investment.

2.2.3 Optimization of Omni channel experience

Although it is necessary to consider the ecosystem as a whole to guarantee that it operates smoothly and rationally, it is also necessary to optimize each phase of the process separately. It will take time and study to optimize an Omni channel approach, but the benefits to both the business and the consumer will be well worth the investment. Look at how customers now interact with the firm, chat and engage with customers about how to improve the shopping experience, and which aspects of Omni channel retail are most important to them. The information gleaned from this study should provide a fair idea of where to direct your efforts and which parts of optimization will yield the best outcomes (Park, Dayaram, & Montreuil, 2020).

Customers are increasingly expecting at least some level of Omni channel availability while buying, both online and in person. By collaborating to develop and implement a complete plan, you can begin to provide your consumers with a better purchase experience and more informed, individualized interactions. Because Omni channel shopping is proven to be extremely popular with customers of all demographics, your approach, if correctly executed, should result in more

revenues, increased customer loyalty, and a future-proof online and offline presence (Park, Dayaram, & Montreuil, 2020).

2.3   MULTICHANNEL VS OMNICHANNEL MARKETING:

Even though both emphasize the use of numerous channels to contact consumers and prospects, Omni channel and multichannel commerce are much different (Berman & Thelen, 2018).

We want to assist create a distinction between the two because the borders are so muddled here and the discussion so frequent.

- **Multichannel Marketing:** The use of more than one channel to conduct campaigns is referred to as multichannel marketing. This is frequently done manually, channel by channel. On a 'quantity over quality' premise, content with little to no differentiation or customization is released in every accessible channel with rudimental segmentation (Shankar & Kushwaha, 2020).
- **Omni channel marketing** is entirely focused on the consumer. It employs a data-driven, AI-driven strategy to comprehend complicated data points such as customer behavior, preferred channels, and lifecycle stage (to mention a few) in order to identify, you guessed it, which messages to deliver to which consumers via which channels and when. As a consequence, customers get a more seamless, fully tailored experience that is significantly more likely to drive purchases (Shankar & Kushwaha, 2020).

2.4   THREE SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MULTICHANNEL AND OMNI CHANNEL MARKETING:

The difference between multi- and Omni channel marketing techniques is that Omni channel marketing truly places the consumer at the center to provide a totally consistent, unified experience at every contact point, as opposed to just enabling that touch point.

There are four major factors to further clarify the distinctions between multichannel and Omni channel marketing techniques (Gere & Herskovic, 2022).

2.4.1 Customer vs. Channel

The multichannel strategy simply seeks to spread the word across as many channels as possible. Multichannel marketing entails casting the largest net possible in order to obtain the most client engagements; the more the merrier. Companies that use a multichannel approach contact with customers across two or more channels, the most common of which being social media and email (Gere & Herskovic, 2022).

In contrast, the Omni channel strategy combines and integrates all channels in order to engage customers holistically.

Customers have been targeted with one-size-fits-all multichannel marketing for far too long. Customers and prospects will find this somewhat aggravating at best. At worst, they'll be rushing to press the 'unsubscribe' or 'report' button.

Omni channel initiatives that are well-executed have the opposite impact. By paying attention to the intricacies of consumer behavior and purchase history and leveraging that knowledge to fuel personalization, a clear message is conveyed to customers: We see you, and we hear you. and we are here to help. Companies who have well-defined Omni channel customer experience strategies in place have a 91% greater year-over-year gain in customer retention rate than firms that do not have Omni channel programs in place (Gere & Herskovic, 2022).

2.4.2 Engagement vs. Consistency

The second important distinction between the approaches is the emphasis on consumer experience in Omni channel. Omni channel marketing guarantees that clients receive the same service and messaging across all channels (Gao & Huang, 2021).

A consistent brand appearance and messaging fosters greater familiarity and stronger brand ties. Marketers that deploy an Omni channel marketing strategy must ensure that all internal departments are on board and on message. To guarantee the success of Omni channel deployment, departments such as public relations, customer success, social media, and sales require clarity and alignment (Gao & Huang, 2021).

2.4.3 Effort vs. Effortless

According to Misia Tramp, EVP of Insights and Innovations at Thasos's, another aim of multichannel marketing is "learning how to minimize effort from the client experience."

"There is a tendency to perceive the multiple channels available to communicate with customers nowadays as just additional possibilities to be employed," Tramp continues. That is a more multichannel strategy. "Using data to determine where effort occurs in the consumer experience and how to minimize, rather than increase, effort" is what Omni channel entails.

Omni channel marketing aims to facilitate both the easy deployment of campaigns across numerous channels to multiple audiences and the easy purchase experience for customers (Berman & Thelen, 2018).

2.4.4   Personalization to the extreme

The Omni channel marketing approach collects and analyzes data from consumers in order to identify their pain spots, which necessitates additional work in order to provide a hyper-personalized experience (Torvinen, Karafuto, & Sarajevo, 2020).

While the multichannel strategy communicates the company message and encourages people to take the call to action (CTA). With an **Omni channel approach,** you go above and beyond to better understand client journeys in order to provide customized solutions.

2.5   CONCLUSION:

So, it can be concluded that people will be able to give a more cohesive, tailored experience to customers if they use Omni channel marketing. These efforts not only result in a more seamless user experience, but they also promote client loyalty, sales, and brand visibility. Marketers must change their attention to Omni channel activities in order to boost client retention and, consequently, income.

2.6 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

I.   **Omni - channel** is a _____ technique to marketing that aims to improve the customer experience
   a. Cross-channel
   b. Channel
   c. Single channel
   d. None

II.   Omni channel ecosystem comprised of _____ critical foundation block
   a. Two
   b. Three
   c. Four
   d. Five

III.   Consumer insight is at the _____ of Omni channel commerce
   a. Centre
   b. Side
   c. Heart
   d. None

2.7 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

   I.   Write a note on API economy.
   II.   What are the benefits of Omnichannel Ecosystem. Explain.
   III.   How to navigate omnichannel ecosystem? Explain.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 OMNICHANNEL MARKETING

3.1.1 DEFINITION:

Omni channel marketing is an approach that attempts to provide a smooth buying process from the first touchpoint to the last, irrespective of the platform the consumer is utilizing (Manser Payne et al., 2017).

The **purpose of an Omni channel marketing strategy** is to provide consumers with a comfortable, consistent user interaction that provides several options for satisfaction. An Omni channel approach may allow customers to search and purchase products online, in-store, or a mix of the two, such as "purchase online and collect in-store." Today, firms in a variety of industries, including medical, retailing, finance, computing, and others, are using Omni channel strategies (Manser Payne et al., 2017).

3.2 COMPONENTS OF OMNI CHANNEL MARKETING:

A great multichannel marketing strategy includes much more than just selecting channels and running advertising.

3.2.1 Marketing Platforms:

Marketing platforms are how your clients will discover about your products. Marketers may launch Omni channel campaigns on social media networks like **Instagram and Twitter**, via SMS push notifications or email, or they can employ marketing automation technologies like online ad platforms that distribute ads across numerous digital platforms, such as popular sites and pages (Numeracy Seminole et al., 2017).

3.2.2 Sales marketing:

Since the purpose of multichannel marketing is to persuade people to buy, you must have a readily available shop or website where the target clients are most willing to buy. Consumers may be directed to an online marketplace, a smartphone app, or a physical store as part of your Omni channel retail approach (Tomomi, Gangway, & Mandala, 2022)

3.2.3 Company operations:

A company's activities include how its marketing strategies are established and implemented, as well as how it handles **customer relationship management (CRM).** To develop consistent and successful marketing activities throughout communication platforms, your marketing team should have a defined vision and workflow. Retention rates may diminish if the organization does not have a framework in place to manage its operations. If new clients do not have a consistent experience, they may depart (Belvedere et al., 2021).

3.2.4 Fulfillment strategies:

Fulfillment encompasses the complete inventory supply chain, allowing your inventory to be tracked and sent to clients. For a business to be effective, orders must be completed and inventory must be properly maintained. This also enables the online feature of displaying your inventory numbers to customers in real-time when they buy at your e-commerce site (Taylor et al., 2019).

3.3 BENEFITS OF OMNI CHANNEL MARKETING:

When clients do not have enough channels to choose from or there is no smooth transition, it causes friction and negatively effects the customer experience. Shoppers that purchase through numerous channels often have a 30% greater lifetime value than others. Businesses may demonstrate customer experiences by developing an Omni channel approach (Berman & Thelen, 2018).

Here are the primary advantages of an Omni channel communication strategy.

3.3.1 Increased return of investment (Ro

 Businesses that choose an Omni channel strategy are likely to spend much in innovative technology and solutions. When implementing new tools, it is necessary to integrate them throughout the business processes (In gene & Pelton, 2020).

It requires a bigger vision from organizations and must be led from the top in order to be effective. However, investing in customer interaction tactics yields a larger return on investment in the long term. Businesses have noticed the following key benefits:

- **Reduced touchpoints -** The technique enables your representatives to quickly identify clients' needs and give appropriate answers. This increases the FCR measure while decreasing the number of touchpoints (Zimmermann, Weitz, & Lauinger, 2022).

- **Increased customer satisfaction -** When clients obtain swift practical solutions with the correct processes and technology on the first contact, their level of satisfaction rises. It considerably increases the customer's lifetime value (CLTV) (Hamouda, 2019).

3.3.2 <u>Consolidate talks onto a single platform.</u>

To understand better the user experience, one may use an Omni channel customer interaction platform to consolidate all of your customer communications in one location. By evaluating data, you may acquire valuable insights on personalizing client engagement across all touchpoints (Baldeo Rai et al., 2019).

You must be present where your clients are. You may provide real-time interaction and enhance the consumer service by being active on the desired touchpoints.

The following are the important steps in creating an Omni channel customer experience (Hilken et al., 2018):

- **Map your customer journey -** It allows you to better understand your customers' demands and utilize the knowledge to develop strategies to engage them across all touchpoints.
- **Identify the preferred networks -** Understand the platforms most clients commonly utilize to communicate with company. To provide a wonderful experience, be present where your consumers are.
- **Create the proper strategy -** Using consumer insights and channel information, create the right plan to give a seamless experience across channels.
- **Identify the gaps -** Recognize the gaps in your communication approaches or fragmented experiences and bridge them to provide the finest Omni channel experience possible.

 1.   **Gain insights through understanding your consumer journey.**

The Omni channel approach allows to acquire useful information about prior consumer experiences with business. It is beneficial to utilize customer journey maps to satisfy the demands of customers and provide an ideal Omni channel experience (Vernal, 2018).

Knowing your consumers' behavior allows you to improve processes to decrease customer dissatisfaction, fill process gaps, and encourage them towards conversion.

What role does user journey mapping play in creating a strong Omni channel experience?

- **Identify the touchpoints -** Understand the main touchpoints where your consumers want support and be actively there to engage them (Ieva & Zilina, 2018).
- **Take proactive actions -** Understanding all touchpoints will allow you to respond proactively across the customer's behavioral phases (Wunderlich et al., 2020).
- **Create procedures -** To improve customer experience, you may create precise methods for providing effective real-time help through the appropriate channel (Wunderlich et al., 2020).
- **Create self-service alternatives -** Providing self-service choices like as tutorials, videos, and so on allows clients to locate solutions before contacting you (Shi et al., 2020).
- **Collect customer input -** Ask your consumers for feedback on a regular basis, share it with the relevant departments, and constantly fix the gaps (Shi et al., 2020).

2. Increased team productivity

In general, addressing a single issue takes a long time due to several back-and-forth contacts with consumers. The Omni channel dashboard provides your team with real-time feedback on consumer engagements handled on each channel (Adivar et al., 2019).

Being Omni channel aids in meeting important KPIs and improving team effectiveness. First Contact Resolution (FCR), Total Resolution Time, Average Response Time, and Missed Conversations are the critical KPIs (Adivar et al., 2019).

How Omni channel boosts agent effectiveness and team productivity

- **Fewer touchpoints equal less complexity -** The insights assist to understand better the client journey, and all departments must work together to give customized solutions at the initial touchpoint (Cui et al., 2020).
- **Time and resources -** As the FCR improves, you may address more questions by decreasing the average response time. You can manage and allocate resources appropriately across business functions (Cui et al., 2020).

3.3.3 Improve customer retention

An Omni channel approach integrates all channels and aids in the knowledge of consumer behavior by evaluating their journey in order to provide consistent service. Over the course of their lifetime, Omni channel clients are 30% more valuable to a company (Gao et al., 2021).

Brands that make an attempt to engage their audience across several channels prevent attrition and serve as one of company's customer retention tactics. The Omni channel communication approach enables consumers to communicate with the company via their preferred channel while also allowing for a smooth shift within the same contact (Gao et al., 2021).

Customers find it most convenient and tend to maintain your business for a longer period of time when firms provide all channels for them to communicate with time.

3.3.4 Provide a consistent client experience

Users can interact with companies using online and offline channels such as live chat, Facebook messaging, kiosks, or by visiting storefronts or service centers. Creating uniformity across all channels helps both the user experience and the brand image (Gasparini et al., 2022).

The Omni channel customer care approach prioritizes providing a consistent experience across all channels. It indicates that the channels have been consolidated under one platform to provide stability and uniformity across the board. The experience is the same regardless of the customer's touchpoints (Gasparini et al., 2022).

The following are the primary advantages of a consistent Omni channel experience (Quach et al., 2020):

- Connects with consumers in real time across their chosen channels, **lowering average response time.**
- Improves customer satisfaction by employing insights to give effective solutions the first time, as well as the **rate of first contact resolution (FCR).**
- Provide useful information about client profiles by evaluating their journey to gain a **better knowledge of their requirements and interests.**

3.4 CREATING AN OMNI CHANNEL MARKETING STRATEGY:

Following are the steps to create an effective Omni channel strategy (Akter et al., 2021):

1. Cultivate Customer-centric culture

2. Understand customers

3. Implement Right tools

4. Segment users

5. Personalize

6. Proactive across all channels

7. Test and Track success with right metrics

3.4.1   Step 1: Develop a Customer-Centered Marketing Culture

To use multichannel marketing, businesses must fundamentally change their marketing approach. As previously said, the primary difference between Omni channel and multichannel marketing is that Omni channel marketing favors the consumer over the brand (Gill et al., 2019).

The first step in going multichannel is changing your perspective on the buyer's journey. Examine all of the touchpoints a consumer has before becoming a customer to ensure that they all give a consistent CX. To execute this change, you must have all relevant teams on the same page. This means that no team or department should operate in isolation. Individual departments should, of course, have their own goals and KPIs, but they should all work together to provide wonderful client experiences (Gao et al., 2019).

3.4.2   Step 2: Get to Know Your Customers

Understanding the buyer's journey is only the first step in implementing Omni channel marketing. The following stage is to have a thorough grasp of your clients. If one has previously developed buyer personas, one is off to a solid start. If one hasn't already, start by determining the target audience's demands, needs, behavior patterns, demographics, habits, preferences, motivators, and goals. Then, consolidate the first-party data gathered through various techniques, evaluate it, and detect trends (Lynch & Barnes, 2020).

For example, utilize Google Analytics to determine the channels that bring traffic to your website, how people travel around your website, and the most regularly used search phrases that lead to your site. Knowing this will allow you to identify their pain points. You may supplement these two tasks by conducting interviews and surveys on a regular basis to gather hard data on your prospects and customers (Merritt & Zhao, 2020).

3.4.3 Step 3: Integrate the Appropriate Tools

After gathering the important consumer attributes, one must now choose the appropriate tools and apps to engage with them. The tools should address the whole buyer's experience, from discovery to enjoyment (Singh et al., 2019). As part of your stack, you will require the following tools:

- *System for Content Management (CMS)*
- *Platform for Marketing Automation (MAP)*
- *CRM (Customer Relationship Management) software*
- *Social Media Management Software*
- *Content Marketing Instruments*
- *SEO software*
- *Platform for Customer Data (CDP)*
- *Additional quantitative and qualitative analysis tools*

The MAP and CRM software are critical components since they are used for personalization. As a result, before selecting any program that may interface with the MAP and CRM, ensure that it is compatible with both (Rodríguez Salazar, 2022).

3.4.4 Step 4: Define Your Target Market

There are virtually limitless methods to segment your audience based on demographic, regional, psychographic, and behavioral factors. Determine the data points/audience traits that are most important to the company goals and utilize them to create audience subgroups. One may, for example, build segments based on product consumption and subscription information. Customer retention is a top goal for businesses (Dimitrios & Tsioropoulos, 2022). So, using the aforementioned two data points, segment the audience (Sevak, 2021) as follows:

- **A user group whose subscription is about to expire**: Begin a campaign that reminds customers to renew their membership via emails and push alerts as a mild nudge. If they haven't renewed by the last day, give them a special deal.
- **A subset of people who have abandoned your product:** Create a customized re-onboarding campaign for such consumers, explaining the different product use cases and assisting you in understanding their reservations.

The segmentation strategy is used effectively by successful e-commerce businesses. Cart abandonment is addressed with retargeting efforts and reminder emails (Sevak, 2021). They also provide discounts or promo coupons to help expedite the procedure.

- • **Bonus Tip 1:** If one is just getting started, segmenting audience based on buyer persona profiles can help to get started.
- • **Bonus Tip 2:** Using several pathways to purchase (i.e., marketing and sales funnels) is another great method to segment audience.

3.4.5   Step 5: Customize

This is when user begin implementing the ideas after creating the groundwork described in the previous four phases. Personalization is the most important part of Omni channel marketing because it helps customers feel appreciated. The key to personalizing is to go beyond standard boilerplate communications and develop a 1:1 relationship with the target audience. One can go beyond Dear and customize communication at a much higher level with the correct tools. As business acquire more consumer data, your capacity to customize the CX will improve. Personalization requires context, which data points supply. For example, if company target group includes both contemporary and traditional marketers, one may tailor the advertisements, emails, landing pages, and so on (Torvinen et al., 2020).

Also, take use of the platform's customizing tools. For example, one may run Google display advertisements on the websites visited by target audience or leverage the granular level targeting tools provided by social media networks. An important consideration to bear in mind when customizing is the objective and stage of the segment/users' buyer journey. Someone don't want to bother people who have signed up to receive an entry-level eBook with a demo request just yet (Torvinen et al., 2020).

3.4.6   Step 6: Be Proactive on Every Platform

To create a consistent customer experience, business must be present on the channels where the consumers spend the majority of their time. Consumers shop and connect with brands through a variety of gadgets and marketing channels. Make it difficult for users to contact. Some e-commerce companies learnt the hard way a few years ago by only being available via their specialized app for mobile consumers. Engage with them on their preferred medium and be active on several

channels that they like at different phases of their buyer's journey ("Omnichannel Retailing: The Role of Situational Involvement in Facilitating Consumer Experiences," 2020).

Maintain uniformity across all mediums as well to avoid confusing the consumers. If a consumer discovers you on social media and visits your website, there should be a similar thread, such as the brand voice or design, that promotes consistency in your presentation.

3.4.7   Step 7: Monitor the Correct Metrics

Choosing the correct allows them to communicate and provide accurate data more easily. When you integrate several technologies, one gets a simplified picture of key analytics, which helps you draw actionable insights and avoids confusion (Zuberi & Rajaratnam, 2020).

Using the correct tools to track the right metrics can also help to uncover irregularities in your data. For instance, while running social media advertising, you may examine campaign outcomes in the insights area. One will notice a difference in the findings if cross-check these data with an analytics program like Google Analytics. This type of measurement inaccuracy is typical when reporting metrics like link clicks. The social media network counts link clicks regardless of whether the user waits for the landing page to fully load, but the analytics tool only counts real clicks (Zuberi & Rajaratnam, 2020).

3.5   BEST PRACTICES IN OMNI CHANNEL MARKETING:

There are five best practices in an Omni channel marketing:

   i.   Consistent Brand voice
  ii.   Device-agnostic
 iii.   Customer service software
  iv.   Self-service for customers
   v.   Test and Persist

3.5.1   Consistent Brand Voice

In an era of information, brands must work hard to distinguish out from the crowd. The user is bombarded with SMS, alerts, emails, and other forms of communication. Brands have a short

window of opportunity to create a mark in this jumble of attention-grabbing strategies (Pagani et al., 2019).

A consistent brand voice across all media guarantees improved brand awareness and a consistent customer experience. This also allows clients to go smoothly through the funnel.

3.5.2   Be Device-Independent

The typical internet user visits the website from two or more devices. To increase the reading of your text, text fields, or other web features, the website should be accessible across all devices. A responsive website allows for simple navigation and information access regardless of device (Ulusoy et al., 2019).

3.5.3   Install Customer Service Software

Reiterating the same complaint to a customer service professional is incredibly aggravating, especially when they have already discussed the issue via social media and email.

To avoid such scenarios, businesses should think about investing in dependable customer service software. Customer support representatives may better help consumers by obtaining access to cross-channel reports. If the program does not provide cross-channel reporting, it should at the very least support CRM integration (Sousa et al., 2021).

3.5.4   Make Customer Self-Service Available

Customers expect a prompt answer to their inquiries. There might be two problems with this.

- •   Contacting a customer support person is time-consuming.
- •   Organizations cannot rely entirely on chatbots since they have limits and have yet to mature.

It is important in such instances to enable consumers to fix simple difficulties on their own. Organizations can develop a frequently asked questions segment, a self-service portal, a user forum, or instructive films to address frequently asked questions (Alexander & Kent, 2020).

3.5.5   Test and persist

As with any marketing activity, nailing out the Omni channel marketing strategy on the first go is impossible. Marketers must continue to iterate and test numerous factors such as messaging, marketing channels, procedures, rich media, and so on in order to learn what works. Adopting the

growth mentality will put you ahead of the game in the Omni channel marketing efforts (Hosseini et al., 2018).

3.6 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

I. The purpose of an Omni channel marketing strategy is to provide consumers with _____.

    a. Comfortable user interaction

    b. Consistent user interaction

    c. Both

    d. None

II. Enables your representatives to quickly identify clients' needs and give appropriate answers.

    a. Reduced touchpoints

    b. Increase customer satisfaction

    c. User interaction

    d. All of above

III. There are _____ steps to create an effective Omni channel strategy

    a. Five

    b. Six

    c. Seven

    d. Eight

3.7 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

I. What are steps to create an effective strategy for omnichannel marketing?

II. What are the components of omnichannel marketing?

III. What are the best practices of Omnichannel Marketing?

CHAPTER 4

4.1 OMNICHANNEL ATTRIBUTION

4.1.1 MEDIA MIX MODELLING DEFINITION:

Media mix modelling (MMM), also known as marketing mix modelling, is an analysis technique that enables marketers to measure the impact of their marketing and advertising campaigns in order to determine how various elements contribute to their goal, which is frequently to drive conversions (Lawry & Happy, 2021). The insights gained from media mix modelling enable marketers to fine-tune their campaigns based on a variety of factors ranging from consumer trends to external influencers, resulting in the creation of an ideal campaign that drives engagement and sales. MMM uses aggregate data, allowing it to evaluate a broader range of channels, both traditional and digital. Furthermore, MMM enables marketers to account for external influences such as seasonality, promotions, and so on (Shi et al., 2020).

4.1.2 EXAMPLE OF MEDIA MIX MODELLING:

Understanding why media mix modelling was developed is a good way to understand what it measures. MMM gained popularity in the 1960s and 1970s, when the marketing landscape was simpler than it is today. Kraft was an early adopter of this type of analysis (Sevak, 2021). When they first introduced Jell-O, they could choose between three or four television networks and magazine advertising to promote the new product. The traditional MMM approach allowed them to see how sales would be affected if they advertised at different levels, in different parts of the country, at different times of the year. For example, they could advertise Jell-O in ten cities for ten weeks to see if sales increased (Sevak, 2021).

4.1.3 ROLE OF MMM IN MORDERN MARKETING:

Over the last two decades, Media Mix Modeling has nearly been forgotten. Advertisers were given a big promise by digital advertising: "Everything is trackable." Advertisers were led to believe that their marketing operations were data-driven, allowing them to sit back and watch as ad spend increased while sales increased. This was true until two significant events occurred: the emergence of attribution fraud and the deprecation of cookie and device identifiers (Isakova et al., 2018).

Media Mix Modeling has been around for over 50 years, with agencies consolidating ad spend reports and tying those up with changes in product pricing, as well as conducting market research

on competitor activities during an ad campaign to provide evidence that an Advertiser's marketing spend was producing incremental results.

Media mix modelling provided agencies with an extremely strategic tool, allowing them to is Despite the fact that it was recognized that media mix modelling is not a deterministic method of measurement, it was utilized to make strategic judgments.

A wise marketer will use two or more methodologies to make strategic marketing decisions rather than choosing between attribution, incrementality measurement, and media mix modelling. malate "what would happen if we raise expenditure by x%? (Isakova et al., 2018).

The money being spent on Each Marketing Channel

According to the Small Business Administration, the basic rule for budgeting is to spend 3% to 5% of your gross income on marketing. If your annual gross income is less than $5 million, you should budget between 7% and 8% (Isakova et al., 2018).

4.1.4 Social Media Marketing (SMM)

Whether you run a small, medium, or a large business, you shouldn't ignore the power of social media marketing. With a quick Google search, you'll quickly see that most social media marketing plans tend to range from around $4,000 to $7,000 per month. This does include running paid ads. A basic monthly cost, for just one social media platform can be anywhere from $1,000 to $2,500. However, some digital marketing companies can provide social media marketing at lower or custom pricing. If there's a company you like, feel free to reach out to them and see if they can provide a social media marketing service that fits within your budget (Gotwald-Faja, 2017).

The amount of money you spend on social media marketing should be appropriate for your brand. Businesses that use social media marketing often spend 15% to 25% of their marketing budget on it. Following that, you should determine how much you want to spend on each social networking platform. Consider Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, and LinkedIn as social media platforms. Check out all of the blog entries in our "Social Media" area for additional information on this style of marketing (Myerson, 2021).

4.1.5   Email Marketing:

Email marketing links the owner of a firm with potential clients. With the right strategy, an email marketing campaign may generate thousands of dollars in revenue. A good rule of thumb is to allocate 15% of your annual budget on email marketing. You should also think about the products or services you sell, your industry, and your overall marketing objectives. Email marketing provides a high return on investment when done correctly (Rehman, 2020). For every dollar paid, you should expect a return of roughly $44. The quality of your email list, a clear call to action, a clever subject line, and when to send the email are all crucial things to consider in your email marketing campaign.

4.1.6   Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Numerous business owners have no notion how much they should invest for SEO. Because this is a long-term technique, you are unlikely to notice spectacular results in the first month or two. According to MOZ research, most businesses pay between $750 and $1,500 each month on SEO services. It is fairly unusual for national and highly competitive sectors to spend between $2,500 and $5,000 each month (Dhanraj & Lavanya, 2022). The price will be determined by your market and the amount of competition for the keywords you choose to target. An SEO consultant can assist you in determining your unique SEO budget. However, in nearly every business and area, even a tiny investment in SEO will improve your ranks in the long run (Dhanraj & Lavanya, 2022).

A percentage is another approach to budget for SEO. The majority of smaller firms who participate in SEO spend close to 25% of their marketing expenditure on this channel (Dhanraj & Lavanya, 2022). Your income will rise as your website's rating in Google improves, and your rankings will become more secure. As a result of this, you should reduce your SEO expenditure to roughly 10%.

4.1.7   Pay-Per-Click (PPC)

Pay-per-click (PPC) is a marketing method that can provide a high return on investment. In reality, businesses generate an average of $2 in income for every $1 spent on Google AdWords (Zuberi & Rajaratnam, 2020).

When budgeting for PPC, keep lead quality, visitor frequency, cost per lead, and geographical location in mind. Do you want to get "Y" number of leads or "X" number of customers? On average, 20-30% of searchers will click on sponsored advertisements (Zuberi & Rajaratnam, 2020).

4.1.8 <u>Website Updates:</u>

You may easily update your website by adding photographs, videos, and changing the appearance. These enhancements will help you keep ahead of the competition while also improving the overall user experience. These changes are typically performed at little or no expense to you. This assumes you have a website that is simple to modify and does not necessitate you understanding website code. Depending on what you want, website updates that need a developer might cost anywhere from $250 to $5,000. This, however, is not a typical monthly cost (Le & Nguyen-Le, 2020). Website upgrades that necessitate the services of a developer are often done on a yearly basis.

4.1.9 <u>E-Mail Templates:</u>

Email templates might help you enhance your email conversion rates. The pricing of email templates may vary depending on where you buy them, but it should be between $30 and $150. If templates convert well, they can have a good ROI. They are also purchased on an as-needed basis, similar to website changes. They are not a recurring expenditure (Thai chon et al., 2020).

4.1.10 <u>Text Messages:</u>

Short Messaging Service (SMS) marketing include sending promotional, coupon, and brand awareness initiatives via text messages. While most people believe that text messages are only for large organizations with large funds, this is not the case (Nesli, 2022).

SMS texts, unlike other marketing platforms, are read within five seconds. The majority of service providers demand a fixed fee. Your text message marketing campaign should cost between $80 and $100. (Marketing, 2019)

4.2 <u>MULTI-TOUCH ATTRIBUTION DEFINITION:</u>

Multi-touch attribution is a marketing measurement method that accounts for all customer touchpoints and assigns a certain amount of credit to each channel so that marketers can see the value that each touchpoint has in driving a conversion (Nass et al., 2020). Assume a consumer is thinking about buying a new pair of shoes. Nike advertisements target them after they conduct some research. They first see a display ad, which they ignore. Following that, they see a native ad on their Instagram feed that piques their interest and directs them back to the Nike website. Finally,

they receive an email with a promotional offer that includes a discount code, prompting them to make a purchase (Nass et al., 2020).

Each of these advertisements represents a stage in the buyer's journey. Multi-touch attribution enables marketers to attribute the sale to the native ad and the email campaign. They can then note that the display ad was ineffective and abandon that strategy (Nass et al., 2020).

There are several multi-touch attribution models available to marketers that take into account user-level data, i.e., the impact that user-level events (clicks, impressions) have on the overall goal. Ad effectiveness is scaled differently in each of these models.

4.3   BENEFITS OF MULTI TOUCH ATTRIBUTION:

Multi-touch attribution models are becoming increasingly relevant for marketers, particularly those trying to assess the effectiveness of digital efforts. Because they provide a more granular, person-level perspective than standard aggregate methods such as media mix modelling, they are preferred. One of the most significant advantages of multi-touch attribution is that it provides visibility into the success of touch points across the customer journey (Cui et al., 2020). This is crucial because customers are growing more competent at evading marketing messages. Marketers must use data-driven marketing to tailor their messages to reach consumers on the appropriate channel at the right time. This is made possible by the granular data provided by multi-touch attribution, which allows marketers to identify audiences across channels and understand those individuals' precise marketing desires.

Multi-touch attribution not only assists marketers in improving the consumer experience, but it also assists marketers in achieving higher marketing ROI for their marketing efforts by illuminating where spend is most and least effective. By engaging consumers with fewer but more impactful marketing communications, this can also help to shorten sales cycles (Sun et al., 2021).

It is critical to understand that not all attribution models are multi-touch. Multi-touch models only evaluate and weigh the impact of multiple touchpoints. The first and final touch models, for example, are examples of single-touch attribution. This is because they only consider the first or last touchpoint before a conversion, rather than every touchpoint encountered throughout the sales cycle (Sun et al., 2021).

4.3.1 Determine the Models and Key Performance Indicators:

Marketers must choose various attribution models to use based on their organization's goals. When choosing the models, considerations such as length of sales cycle and types of campaigns should be factored in. Marketers must then choose their KPIs. These will be the measures used to determine success or failure. Marketers who utilize MTA are often attempting to increase ROI and user experience; therefore, these KPIs must represent what this means for the individual firm (In gene & Pelton, 2020).

4.3.2 Establish the Team

Following that, marketing teams must coordinate with important team members and stakeholders. This would entail working with competent marketing analysts as well as budget stakeholders and creative teams to optimize message based on findings (Juan & Yalong, 2021).

4.3.3 Deploy Marketing Analytics Software

Working with many complicated attribution models necessitates the use of advanced analytics tools to normalize and correlate the data into consumable metrics from which insights may be gleaned. This platform should provide detailed data at the individual level, as well as additional insights that may suggest the motive behind a conversion, such as brand equity or good creative (Chen et al., 2022).

4.3.4 Apply Insights

Once marketers believe they have a thorough picture of how their campaign worked based on the data supplied by their attribution model, they can use those insights to begin course correction in real-time, allowing them to create a more tailored experience (Swoboda & Fränzel, 2022).

4.3.5 Continue to Optimize & Test

This is not a one-time exercise. Rather, marketers should constantly evaluate their MTA data in order to refine and test strategies. Marketers will be able to establish the optimal techniques and marketing sequences to reach their consumers at the correct moment through regular adjustments and tests (Theocharis & Tsioropoulos, 2022).

4.4   LEVERAGING OMNICHANNEL ATTRIBUTION:

4.4.1   Data Collection

Accurate and timely data collection about your customers is critical for the execution of an omnichannel strategy. This data can help you discover when and on what devices your target audience likes to connect with businesses, what sort of message they are more likely to engage with, what items and services they are seeking for, and so on. An omnichannel approach will be propelled by this data. Brands must ensure that they have the tools in place to capture this data successfully across online and offline channels (Sun et al., 2021b). Unified Marketing Measurement (UMM) is a sensible approach to achieve this since it combines the person-level data of multi-touch attribution with the historic, aggregate measures of media mix modelling. Individual preferences, as well as historical trends such as geographical or seasonal aspects that effect interactions / conversions, may therefore be used to guide touchpoints.

4.4.2   Data Examination

The gathering of data is merely the first stage. It is pointless without a staff and a platform that can turn all of this huge data into useful insights. Brands must implement an analytics platform that can distil all of this data in near real-time, allowing teams to course-correct while campaigns are running in order to fulfil customer requirements in the present (Luo et al., 2020).

4.4.3   Customer Journey Mapping

Organizations should construct customer journey maps for each of their target groups before starting an Omni channel campaign. The customer journey map assesses the actions taken by the client between discovering the brand and purchasing from it (Micheaux & Bosio, 2018). Outlining these maps enables marketers to design more focused campaigns by taking into account individual preferences, user experience and interface, and elements beyond the brand's control that may influence the route to buy, such as economic issues (Micheaux & Bosio, 2018).

4.4.4   Brand Guidelines

Organizations must create a brand identity that includes defined message and creative standards. These principles should be followed across all platforms to promote brand awareness and recognition through a consistent message. Another option for businesses to promote an

omnichannel experience is to use brand tracking tools to evaluate and anticipate their brand's health in the minds of consumers (Rodríguez-Torrico et al., 2021).

4.4.5   Optimization / Testing

One of the most crucial aspects of an omnichannel marketing plan is to assess the efficacy of your omnichannel approach on a regular basis. This allows the marketing team to optimize campaign cost, messaging, creative, and other aspects. Today's enterprises should use media planning tools that can perform "what if" scenarios that take into account budget, target audience, numerous KPIs, and media mix, and give a very detailed media plan that can optimize ROI and guide future decision-making (Pereira & Razon, 2020).

4.5   INDUSTRIES APPLYING OMNICHANNEL MARKETING:

As customers gain more power, omnichannel techniques are becoming increasingly common throughout businesses; nevertheless, they are especially prevalent in the following verticals:

4.5.1   Retail

In today's multichannel economy, retail, in particular, has seen tremendous changes. With the opportunity to buy in-store or online, as well as the rise of social media and review sites, retail marketers must centralize how consumers engage with their brand across several channels to ensure a favorable outcome (Hossain et al., 2020).

4.5.2   Healthcare

Healthcare clients often deal with a wide range of providers, from hospitals to primary care to medications. By evaluating data related to the customer journey and engagements, healthcare providers may better cater to people, giving them with the information that is most important to them while limiting any health concerns (Sangal et al., 2022).

4.5.3   Automotive:

Because vehicles are a long-term commitment, car dealerships and manufacturers place a high value on staying top of mind and building client loyalty. Today's advertising may not provide the expected results right away, but if they engage current consumers and pique the attention of prospects, they will have an influence on sales in the long run (Kim et al., 2022). However, the purchase process has evolved, with 80 percent of customers researching automobiles online first.

Furthermore, it is anticipated that 4.5 million automobiles would be sold online by 2020. Having a comprehensive advertising plan that connects buyers across all touchpoints is more important than ever (Kim et al., 2022).

4.5.4   Financial Services

The banking and financial services industry is shifting from a product-focused to a more customer-centric strategy. Organizations must assess how they can create personalized experiences that provide insight into which of the countless services and products would be the best fit for each user based on their individual likes, ambitions, and requirements (Darwitz & Maas, 2018).

4.6   TRENDS IN OMNICHANNEL:

As multichannel marketing grows more popular, various trends have evolved that can assist make these efforts more effective in terms of improving consumer happiness and maximizing marketing ROI. These are some examples:

4.6.1   In-store and online integration

Many customers shop online and then pick up their products in-store. This might be to prevent having to hunt for things in-store or to avoid paying delivery fees. Shoppers today want the convenience of their online experience to be blended with the in-store experience. Almost 70% of online consumers in the United States expect to get news that their item is ready within 2 hours of placing it (Chen & Chi, 2021). When Destination XL became aware of this trend, they linked consumer location data with inventory to assist customers in finding what they were searching for online and picking it up in-store. Additionally, retailers such as Kohl's offer designated parking spaces for customers picking up online items (Chen & Chi, 2021).

4.6.2   Concentrate on the Brand, Not the Channel

Customers feel they are engaging with one cohesive brand or business, independent of the numerous touchpoints that they utilize," according to the Forrester Report: "Retailers are Beginning to Reap the Rewards of Omnichannel Commerce." This implies merchants must assure information and resource consistency across digital and in-store touchpoints – or risk losing customers to competitors that do." Brands must maintain a consistent brand across channels and provide messages that resonate with customers, regardless of platform (Harryhausen et al., 2015).

4.6.3 More Devices for One Purchase

Customers usually start their trip on one device and finish it on another. However, many businesses are failing to manage this aspect of the consumer experience since accounting for all cross-device interactions can be challenging. Failure to account for this shift in patterns might have serious consequences for your bottom line and media spend optimization efforts (Yin et al., 2022).

4.6.4 Customers Benefit from Multiple Channels

Consumers that visit your site on various devices tend to be better those and spend three to four times more than customers who just engage with a single channel when properly tracked (Chakraborty & Chung, 2014).

4.7 KEY TAKEAWAYS:

An omnichannel marketing approach enables teams to reach their customers where they are, with the correct message at the right time. Organizations may provide a unified customer experience that acknowledges past touchpoints along the consumer journey by utilizing omnichannel marketing. This not only raises consumer brand recognition, but also leads to higher engagement, better ROI and sales, and improved customer retention and loyalty (Hickman et al., 2019). Today, enterprises may more easily create an omnichannel experience for customers with the support of modern marketing performance measurement technologies that can provide reliable, person-level information to discover the best media mix, targeting, and more. Organizations may make better informed decisions on how to improve campaigns and decrease wasted ad spend by studying the client journey at each stage (Hickman et al., 2019).

Consumer expectations for auto purchasing are shifting, and dealerships are rising to meet those demands. As previously said, building an omnichannel experience must include how the person interacts with your company. It focuses on the overall experience rather than the channel. With this in mind, there are a few prerequisites for building an omnichannel experience (Hickman et al., 2019).

4.8 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

I. _____ links the owner of a firm with potential clients

  a. Social media marketing

  b. Email Marketing

  c. Pay per click

  d. Search engine optimization

II. _____ marketing includes sending promotional, coupon, and brand awareness initiatives via text messages

  a. Social Media SMS

  b. None

  c. Email Marketing

  d. SEO marketing

III. _____ is a sensible approach to achieve this since it combines the person-level data of multi-touch attribution with the historic, aggregate measures of media mix modelling.

  a. Unified Marketing Measurement (UMM)

  b. SSM measurement

  c. SEO measurement

  d. None

4.9 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

I. Explain the Role of MMM in Modern marketing.

II. How can we leverage Omnichannel attribution.

III. Write a note on trends in Omnichannel.

CHAPTER 5

5.1   OMNICHANNEL CUSTOMER PROFITABILITY

5.1.1   CUSTOMER PROFITABILITY DEFINITION

The concept of **customer profitability** is "the profit made by a business from serving a customer or customer group over a particular period of time, specifically the difference between the revenues collected from and the expenditures connected with the customer relationship in a specified period". **(Billings, McCullough, & Bharadwaj, 2017)**

While retailers and consumer goods manufacturers are spending substantially in omni channel selling capabilities, with mobile frequently at the center of these efforts, new data from JDA Software and PwC indicates that just 16% of organizations' efforts to meet omni channel demand are profitable.

5.2   OMNICHANNEL CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT:

Customers no longer approach businesses in a straight line. Rather, consumers interact with businesses through many **channels,** pausing and restarting their journey along the route. We know that customers perform online searches and browse websites before making their initial phone call, and that an increasing proportion of clients call a firm while also browsing the internet. It is difficult for businesses to synchronize numerous channels at the same time within a single trip and properly manage the customer lifecycle sufficiently to give a tailored, contextual experience every time. Because each client has several unconnected contacts with a firm, omni channel customer engagement is a commercial imperative for those organizations attempting to manage journeys. Best omni channel customer engagement. (Gao & Huang, 2021)

Figure 1. **Omnichannel Customer Engagement (Grimm, 2018)**

5.2.1 Customer-facing Building blocks

Whether you're just starting out in customer service or have been managing a team for a long and want to make sure it's set up for success, we've compiled a list of four building blocks that will help you get there. (Chylinski et al., 2020)

5.2.2 Define 'excellent customer service' for your business

Almost every firm promises to deliver excellent customer service, yet not all consumers have a positive experience, indicating that there is room for improvement. It all starts with defining "excellent." You must specify the quality of service while creating a support department. Once you've defined "excellent service" for your firm, you'll have a benchmark against which to assess your support team. So, what exactly is outstanding customer service? Begin by aligning it with your values in organizations.

5.2.3 Exceed the expectations of consumers

If you want to differentiate yourself from your competition, you must continually surpass your consumers' expectations. What are the average response times in your industry and among your main competitors? How can you compete with that? What degree of service are your prospective customers accustomed to, and how can you consistently exceed their expectations in order to please them over time? When you think in this way, you construct your company's distinct concept of outstanding service, against which others must compete.

5.2.4   Establish your expectations by asking the following questions

- How rapidly do you plan to reply to customers?

- How will your staff interact with clients (tone, language, attitude)?

- How will you deal with disagreements?

- What are you unable to support (if anything)?

- What channels are we going to support?

- Who in the firm is in charge of customer service?

- What are your ethical principles?

Although they are high-level requirements, they can be utilized to develop style guidelines and standards. Your definition will provide you with a baseline to determine whether your support team is meeting your customer service standards.

5.2.5   Include customer service in your customer experience plan

No matter how polite the individual in your contact center is, or how good your frontline personnel is, their experience will be impacted by what the rest of the organization does as well. A customer-focused service department's purpose should be to integrate systems across teams that enable exceptional service so that pleasing customers becomes an inherent result of conducting business rather than an infrequent, heroic achievement. To integrate systems into their teams, support managers can take the following steps:

- **Bring decision-making** to the forefront. Give them the tools and knowledge they need to make better decisions, and back them up.

- **Automate operations** that benefit customers. This guarantees a more consistent client experience and necessitates fewer decisions, saving time for all parties involved.

- **Create feedback** loops to gather actionable feedback from client demands. Make sure your support staff has a system in place to exchange customer feedback with your data product teams, infrastructure teams, and others.

5.2.6   Consider your team

Every day, your customer service team witnesses and responds to the good, terrible, and ugly. So, give them the respect they deserve. They are also the customer's voice, therefore include them in

product and strategy discussions. Celebrate their accomplishments while holding them accountable for their efforts**. (Qizi, D, & Be Nazarova, 2022)**

5.2.7   Back-end Building blocks

5.2.7.1   Understand Your Channels

Understand the mechanics of your channels and the target audiences they serve. Make the different retail formats you want to profit on transparent. Establish precise and realistic end-to-end supply chain cost allocations for each platform to gain an honest knowledge of genuine channel profitability. (Pellegrini et al., 2020)

5.2.7.2   Describe Your Supply Chain Success Story

Understand your company's business plan and properly assess the ramifications for supply chain operations. Begin at the top by converting your market positioning, value proposition, and channel strategy into clear, quantifiable, and relevant multi-channel supply chain goals.

5.2.7.3   Maintain Your Customer Promise

Define your assortment strategy, delivery and return option space, and customer-facing supply chain design. This requires strong coordination with marketing, sales, and supply chain departments. To avoid overcommitting or investing in services that provide no actual or significant value to your target audience, it is vital to discover what customers truly value.

5.2.7.4   Improve Your Business Model

Investigate several back-end operating model choices that might support your goal service offering and put them through numerous simulations. This may need numerous scenario modelling cycles to strike the correct balance between the intended front-end service offering and a cost-effective operational strategy. Conduct a comprehensive cost-to-serve analysis to enable an effective head-to-head comparison of all potential options.

5.2.7.5   Adopt a trial-and-error mindset

Through a suitable number of pilots, test various parts of the operational model on a limited scale. Collect client input, assess outcomes, and adjust as needed before going full-scale. When making significant changes to the operational model, it is especially crucial to have a quick feedback loop (e.g., implementing flexible fulfillment). (Rusanen, 2018)

5.3 <u>OMNI-CHANNEL BIG DATA INSIGHTS:</u>

The method of gathering all of your data from the many channels you employ to provide a holistic view of your marketing success, improve the user experience, and optimize business operations is known as omnichannel analytics. According to a Google survey, 80% of buyers look for items and make purchases using both online and physical channels. And the problem for organizations is to attribute each transaction to the appropriate channel and analyses which marketing activity contributed to it. (Tomomi, Gangway, & Mandala, 2022b)

Omni-channel Big Data insights, the **second pillar** in the customer profitability framework, are an ever-changing environment full of linked and distinct customer and channel operations-related data. Customers are leaving digital footprints and showing their "digital body language" as they become more dependent on technology - personal computers, tablets, mobile and smart phones, the Internet, and social media. When combined with how consumers engage with merchants across all channels, loyalty programmers, incentives, and customer service, this massive amount of consumer data provides businesses with their finest opportunity yet to truly understand their customers. (Saphira, Bernon, Boulais, & Wilding, 2018)

Retailers are more adept at processing enormous amounts of diverse data than at integrating a wide range of data sources and data kinds, and much less skilled at reliably translating data into contextual insights to benefit organizational decision making. This is supported by EKN's study.

Retailers have realized the value and complexity of a wide range of data, despite the fact that their present data use for analytics implies a narrow concentration on transactional and operational data. The ratio of merchants integrating transactional (POS, eCommerce) data (2 in 3) vs social media or mobile data (1 in 4) is vast. Over the next few years, location-based data is expected to rise at an exponential rate. Over the coming year, retailers intend to increase GIS location-based incentives (to bring people into shops), as well as leverage Wi-Fi or other sensor-based technologies to engage customers at the aisle, shelf, or even product level (once inside the store).

Every day, the retail business serves millions of consumers, moves millions of products, and stocks millions of SKUs in thousands of shops. Retailers are used to big amounts of data.

And, by combining customer data from loyalty programmers, point of sale, online transaction platforms, mobile apps, social media, in-store videos, public sources like the US Census, and syndicated sources like Nielsen and IRI, with data from enterprise systems like CRM, retailers have an unprecedented opportunity to develop an intimate understanding of individual customers.

Furthermore, insights from such data analysis can be used to drive customer-centric decisions across retail business functions in order to uncover new retail growth drivers such as localized marketing, precision merchandising, smarter store commerce, B2C and B2B eCommerce expansion, and managing global and distributed supply chains.

Customer insights are critical in enabling merchants to provide what customers want and how they want it, and Big Data and sophisticated analytics technologies are crucial facilitators. However, their ability to excel at incorporating customer insights into key decision-making processes is hampered by a lack of analytics maturity across business functions, a lack of a clearly articulated analytics strategy, and an inability to deliver insights in a contextual and timely manner across channels, particularly using customer mobile behaviors and store presence. (Gao, Fan, Li, & Wang, 2021)

5.3.1   Customer applications – data assembly, collation, aggregation, synthesis by customer attributes:

- POS
- Loyalty
- Mobility
- Social shopping
- ECommerce
- In-store Wi-Fi
- Beacon
- Call center

5.3.2 Enterprise applications - assembly, collation, aggregation, synthesis by customer attributes (Proscenia, Shital, Savuti, Serotine, & Bohuslav Kyi, 2021b)

5.3.2.1 *Merchandising planning and assortment:*

Merchandise planning entails developing a high-level strategy without considering inventory at the product level. (Fraser, 2021)

1. Assortment planning is the process of determining the "assortment" of items to sell during a certain time period, as well as how to distribute those products among multiple locations and/or sales channels in order to optimize revenues. (Fraser, 2021)

In other words, assortment planning is the process of determining which items to sell and where to offer them depending on seasonality and demand in specific places.

For example, a clothing manufacturer may sell swimming suits and breathable textiles in the summer but fleece coats and sweaters in the winter. (Redeker & Kök, 2019)

Order fulfillment:

Omnichannel order fulfilment is a material handling fulfilment strategy and method that regards inventory as being completely available from a single place to all channels (e-commerce, retail replenishment, and wholesale). While the internal fulfilment process may diverge in order to optimize operations, the outbound process diverges only at the point of packing and shipment. [1][2] It enables businesses to provide items to numerous channels from a single site with a single labor and a single inventory. Order size, delivery criteria, packing, shipment method, and regulations for dealing with shortages are all determined by the channel. A predetermined set of criteria can be applied to single-channel facilities. **("Omnichannel Order Fulfillment," 2022)**

- **Demand forecasting:**

Because of changes in customer behavior, demand forecasting must adopt **a multi-dimensional approach** that considers more than simply logistics and efficiency. It must also comprehend and anticipate your consumers' preferences for trying, purchasing, receiving, and returning things. To increase sales and enhance inventory rotations, a more comprehensive analysis paired with probabilistic forecasting approaches is required. There are presently a few forecasting systems that estimate consumer demand using AI models and machine learning. Even these, however, are rarely

capable of handling the complex data structures necessary for omni-channel demand forecasting and inventory planning. Invent Analytics augments basic AI-based forecasting with three additional degrees of sophistication to provide more accurate predictions and plans: demand likelihood, omni-channel integration, and returns forecasting. (Klibi, Babai, Duc, & Omar Abd El Akhir, 2021)

CRM:

An omnichannel CRM should allow you to organize consumer interactions across both offline and online channels. It should be compatible with your loyalty programmed software, in-store analytics systems, customer care systems, and any other important customer touch points. An omnichannel CRM's ultimate purpose is to allow integrated, multi-channel interaction**. (Domański & Filipiak, 2019)**

Campaign management:

A **strong campaign management platform** has integrated campaign automation, which means that every phase of the campaign occurs inside the same interface and does not need users to switch between platforms. It should also allow you to attach numerous pieces of content and collateral to the same campaign (for example, landing pages, banners, webforms, etc.) and manage them all from a single panel**. (Hole, Pawar, & Khedkar, 2019)**

5.4 <u>OMNICHANNEL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT:</u>

When it comes to eCommerce analytics, the keywords have become overused. If you tell a merchant she has to establish a "360-degree vision of the consumer," she'll probably say, "Sure, yeah. "tell me all about it! "While understanding customer behavior across touchpoints is a laudable aim, the tools to attain that goal remain tough, as many have realized. Despite a growing arsenal of big-data tools and social listening platforms feeding ever-more-complex recommendation algorithms, merchants are still failing to glean significant insights that lead to more satisfying shopping experiences — and, as a result, more revenue and loyalty. In 2016, just 41% of digital marketers polled by Adobe/consultancy agreed that they have the human and technological skills in place to gather and use the correct data. Furthermore, customers say that poor data-wielding attempts erode trust in merchant brands: 23% of shoppers were put off by

"incorrect data" in tailored communications, and one in five reported receiving advertising for items they'd already purchased. Regardless of where and how brand interactions occur, it is apparent that retailers must press ahead in their drive to better understand buyers' demands. When searching for products and services online, shoppers no longer distinguish between siloed channels: for example, 43% of consumers prefer retailers who provide consistent service both online and offline, and more than half believe it is critical for merchants to recognize them across touch points and tailor content and offers accordingly. Merchants must modify their organizations — as well as their measures — to meet these demands. Furthermore, greater cross-channel tracking can assist justify investment in online activities that do not always result in direct online sales. After all, the Web is expected to influence 51% of all retail sales this year, dwarfing the 11.8% of revenues directly generated by online purchases**. ("7 Ways to Measure Omnichannel Performance - the Omni Channel," 2017)**

5.4.1 KPIs

5.4.1.1 Awareness

Traffic generation and visit rate are typical omnichannel KPIs for this stage.

The number of unique visitors to a website, store, social channel, and so on is recorded by a traffic generator. Visit rate, on the other hand, estimates how many times a single unique visitor accesses those channels over time.

These important performance indicators are recorded individually in the age of the multi-channel strategy.

However, with omnichannel shopping, the business owner wants to know what a consumer does when she or he comes and revisits contact points before taking another action. (Adivar, Seminole, & Christopher, 2019)

5.4.1.2 Engagement

There are several key performance indicators that might show the effectiveness of a customer interaction strategy.

Some KPIs to consider, according to Al Sambar, include product suggestions and offers per visit, conversion rate on product recommendations, and length of visit.

To begin, recommendations are frequently employed in today's eCommerce to draw clients to not just one, but several things in the catalogue. Another easy measure of a customer's level of involvement with a channel is the length of visit.

However, the conversion rate of product recommendations or offers is the most important criterion that omnichannel businesses should pay close attention to.

It demonstrates how appropriate and tailored the material is to each unique consumer.

One useful feature of this indicator is the ability to display the conversion rate from one channel to another. For example, after completing a transaction at a webstore, a buyer received a discount coupon for a gorgeous outfit.

However, she does not buy it right away and instead travels to a local store to see if it suits her figure.

If the retailer in this circumstance employs a multi-channel approach, the person going to try on the outfit will be a whole new consumer.

An **omnichannel retailer**, on the other hand, may identify that client based on her account. In this case, the dialogue rate between channels is excellent. (Lee, Chan, Chong, & Thadani, 2019)

5.4.1.3 Conversion

Cross-channel conversion rate and Cross-channel basket size are two common omnichannel.

 KPIs used to assess the performance of this stage.

The most frequent and reliable measure for any e-commerce organization is the conversion rate from visitors to customers.

However, the emphasis of omnichannel marketing is on **"cross-channel."**

With this business strategy, omnichannel merchants may track what factors influence final purchase decisions and the patterns of their customers' habits. (Vasiliev & Serov, 2019)

5.4.1.4 Loyalty

The **Loyalty Retention Rate** is more than a simple calculation. A good omnichannel tool and procedure are required for accurate retention across channels.

Other KPI areas that an omnichannel organization might use include supply chain management, channel performance, alternative channels, and pricing. The basic KPIs differ depending on the aims and products of the organization**. (Mainyards, Rosa, & Nessa, 2020)**

- **Automated daily dashboard management**

The Omnichannel intraday insights dashboards give information on your organization's health and key performance indicators (KPIs). The following reports comprise Omnichannel intraday insights.

- **Intraday Monitoring**
- **Insights from conversation**
- **Agent perceptions**

The data provided in these reports is based on talks that began or ended during the past 24 hours. When a supervisor reads the report, it retrieves the most recent data and generates it in real time. If a report in a customer-configured workspace is left open for more than 15 minutes, it is automatically updated. The report auto-refreshes every 5 minutes on a pre-configured Power BI workspace. (Barbosa & Casais, 2022)

5.4.1.5   Intraday Monitoring

The Intraday Monitoring report focuses on the overall health of the contact center and includes essential indicators to help you understand it. This report is divided into two sections. Customers waiting in line and wait durations are among the indicators provided by the Conversation insights section. The Agent insights section includes agent metrics such as agents logged in and handle times.

5.4.1.6   Insights from conversations

The Conversations insights area gives analytics from the perspective of the client. The following is an example of a metric view in Conversations insights.

5.4.1.7   Agent perceptions

The Agent insights area displays information on the health of queues and the status of agents throughout the day. The agent insights area brings together sessions from various channels. The following is an example view of the Agent insights section.

5.5 OMNI CHANNEL ORGANIZATIONAL AND CULTURAL ALIGNMENT:

Omnichannel encounters are utilized to drive rich and connecting with client encounters across businesses. The Omnichannel Organization™ permits you to draw in and associate with your representatives across all touchpoints, both physical and virtual, empowering them to consistently line up with the association's objectives while adding significant worth, any place they are.

– **Cultural Alignment**

Aligning your organization's culture, beliefs, and goals with its employees is a critical component of corporate success. However, a schism between your firm and the team members that keep it running might erode the solid foundations you've worked so hard to establish**. ("The Omnichannel Organization," n.d.)**

– **Organization**

Across sectors, omnichannel experiences are employed to provide rich and engaging user experiences. The Omnichannel Organization enables you to interact and connect with your workers across all physical and virtual touchpoints, allowing them to effortlessly align with the organization's goals while contributing substantial value, no matter where they are. (Ciasullo, Montera, Mercuri, & Mugova, 2022)

5.6 OMNICHANNEL ORGANIZATION ASSESMENT:

Our unique evaluation system is built on a 5-level model that assesses an organization's capacity to be genuinely omnichannel while also supporting agile and flexible work. The five-level concept was influenced by the work of Matt Mullenweg, Mobile Corp, and other field thinkers and shapers. (Leu & Masri, 2021)

5.6.1 CULTURAL ALIGNMENT:
A Unified Organizational Culture Is Required for The Implementation of An Omnichannel Strategy:

Your physical store has launched an online equivalent, but you aren't seeing the predicted increase in sales. Customers are upset when they arrive at the store and discover that the item, they viewed online is no longer available. They like the clean look of your establishment, but their online experience is clumsy and irritating. They're complaining to your in-store reps about your online store since they can't find a means to contact customer support through your website. You're beginning to wonder whether this was a major mistake.

The Problem Is Not Your Strategy, But with Your Culture:

You're experiencing a schism between your culture and your new omnichannel retail approach. There is no way around it: omnichannel (providing a seamless customer experience regardless of how they approach your company) is the way of the future. Customers want to be able to reach you online even if you primarily operate from a storefront. Customers will expect to communicate with you across desktop, mobile, and social media platforms if your entire business is online. Neglecting any of these points of contact will be detrimental to your company. However, adopting an omnichannel approach successfully necessitates a cohesive company culture. Your firm must handle customer service online in the same way that it does in-store. It must have the same vision and mission. Customers will notice the disparity and lose faith in your company if you do not address it. Unfortunately, saying this is easier than doing it.

- **How Can Your Company Get Ready for An Omnichannel Strategy?**

The successful implementation of an omnichannel strategy begins with top-down alignment. It makes no difference how devoted your staff are to an omnichannel strategy if your C-suite provides contradictory signals about how they intend to implement it. Rather than borrowing from comparable (but distinct) firms, develop a strategy that is unique to your organization. Then demonstrate how this approach will be implemented in your business operations and demonstrate your commitment to it at all times**. (Mrazek-Hartmann, Kotze, Numeracy Seminole, & Kohling, 2022)**

5.7 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

I. _____ are utilized to drive rich and connecting with client encounters across businesses.
   a. Omni channel Retail
   b. Omni channel Wholesale
   c. Omni channel encounters
   d. Omni channel customers

II. The _____ report focuses on the overall health of the contact center and includes essential indicators to help you understand it.
   a. Cross Channel Effects
   b. Intraday Monitoring Report
   c. Agent Perceptions
   d. None

III. New data from JDA Software and PwC indicates that just _____ of organizations' efforts to meet omni channel demand are profitable.
   a. 18%
   b. 16%
   c. 20%
   d. 32%

5.8 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS:

I. Write a note on Omnichannel Big Data Insights?
II. Write a short note on Campaign management:
III. What is loyalty retention rate?

CHAPTER 6

6.1 OMNICHANNEL RETAIL

6.1.1.1 OMNI-CHANNEL RETAIL DEFINITION

Omni-channel retail is a business concept that integrates all current channels to provide customers with a smooth purchasing experience. This omnichannel retail approach is enabled by consolidated data management, which blurs the barriers between physical and online channels.

Transacting across numerous channels, such as marketplaces, social platforms, and physical stores, is referred to as omnichannel commerce. The term "omnichannel" has become a trendy buzzword, but it is more than simply another way of expressing "I sell on several channels."

To meet your consumers where they are and create connections that cross channels, a true omnichannel approach must give a consistent brand experience everywhere you sell. It should place a strong emphasis on improving your business model through channel diversity and complete data and system integration.

Customers' expectations are expanding in the retail environment, which can only be met through omnichannel commerce. The advantages of an omnichannel approach are not only immediate, in that you can expose your business to many channels, but they have also become something people want – and even demand**. (Abrudan, Dabija, & Grant, 2020)**

6.2 THE ADVENT OF OMNICHANNEL RETAIL:

The emergence of omni-channel customers fuels merchants' integration of online and offline channels, often known as omni-channel commerce. Furthermore, recent advancements in information technology, such as high-speed mobile internet access, location-based services on the consumer side, and synced data, real-time intelligence on the merchant side, have aided this retail sector transformation. Omni-channel retailing is quickly becoming the industry norm, which requires practitioners and researchers to investigate how to manage both online and physical channels for diverse sorts of merchants (Li, Zhang, & Taya, 2020)

6.2.1 Acquisition and retention of your audience

The multichannel strategy addresses various challenges involving your audience, including audience acquisition and retention, traffic creation online and at physical places of sale, lead generation, and conversions. By increasing the number of communication channels available to your customers, you demonstrate your adaptability. It enables you to interact and please your audience through several media. Who says "pleased customer" doesn't also mean "loyal customer"? The more you provide a better experience to your clients, the more likely they will return to your point of sale. Thus, by diversifying the methods you use to contact your consumers, you can be there for them 24 hours a day, seven days a week. While visiting you, they may follow your news on social media and receive promotional offers by messaging. (Yatskevich, 2022)

6.2.2 Gain a competitive advantage over your competitors

It goes without saying that online marketing is quite competitive. Customers can easily select your competition if you don't reach out to them first, especially with so many alternative buying options. As a result, multichannel marketing helps you to capitalize on possibilities as they come.

Indeed, if your rivals are not present on a given channel, you may jump ahead of them and catch your audience's interest before they can. As a result, by being there when your competitors are not, you will gain a competitive edge. (Berne-Manero & Marzo-Navarro, 2020)

6.2.3 Improved communication:

A multi-channel approach considers the modes of communication that will allow you to fulfil your goals in the most cost-effective way feasible. As a result, your plan must be tailored to your target demographic as well as your budget. (Yatskevich, 2022)

6.2.4 Increases sales and turnover:

Customers, without a doubt, pick the channels via which they want to interact with companies. As a result, they switch from one channel to another based on their current goal.

As a result, the more apparent your advertising is across several media, the more customers you reach and the higher your turnover. (Yatskevich, 2022)

6.3 TAKING MULTI-CHANNEL RETAIL TO AN INTEGRATED NEXT LEVEL:

Retailers require **channel integration** to meet the requirements of today's consumers and benefit on existing and expected internet development. An integrated multi-channel retail strategy should address four important areas: customer relationships, organizational strategy, retail operations, and system and process integration. (Gai, Qiu, Xiong, & Liu, 2018)

The Key Elements of Integrated Multi-Channel Retailing

6.3.1   Customer

According to the "Consumer" report, whereas 50% of customers are interested. In addition to the products they purchase, the remaining half are significantly subsidized whole service and emotional experience have an impact.

Retailers must consequently provide a consistent experience across channels in terms of product, selection, and customer service.

Customers' interactions are altering as a result of 2.0 technology. As they progress through the sales cycle, and the store now has far more chances to learn about your customers These insights are being incorporated into the product development, range selection, and customer experience of successful multi-channel merchants. (Acquila-Natale & Iglesias-Prada's, 2020)

6.3.2   Organization:

An adequate operational model that takes into account the ramifications of multi-channel retailing must be adopted.

This approach should eliminate channel silos and establish a cohesive organization that can offer the benefits to be achieved through an effective multi-channel strategy. (Gere, Gonzalez-Lopez, & Herskovic, 2021)

6.3.3   Operation Excellence

The operation must be set up to meet the demands of clients in terms of product, pricing, range, delivery, and service. This may need the implementation of new supply chain business models. Using the rapidly evolving Web 2.0, the marketing department must establish competences for engaging customers in the sales process. Integrated multi-channel retailers distinguish themselves via superior execution in meeting the demands of their customers. (Leu & Masri, 2021b)

6.3.4   Integrated Technology and Data

A multi-channel store will have a single customer view, a single inventory view, and a single source of product data. To enable this, retailers must use master data management and connected systems. Integration that extends beyond the store to include suppliers and third-party logistics partners will improve the competitive edge even more. A Business Intelligence (BI) tool can help you operate efficiently with this data. Based on our experience working with retailers who have an integrated multi-channel strategy, we believe they are successful and reap significant benefits such as attracting and retaining more customers, creating new revenue streams, and achieving cost savings through economies of scale and efficiencies. They have a huge edge over competitors that have yet to solve the integration problem. (Mirzaei & Saphira, 2020)

6.4   DIFFERENT AVENUES OF OMNICHANNEL:

6.4.1   Marketplaces

One area where omnichannel may shine is in various online marketplaces.

Businesses may get an advantage over their competitors while saving time and money by capitalizing on existing markets and successful enterprises. (Thai chon, Phou, & Weave, 2020)

6.4.2   Amazon

Amazon's omnichannel approach entails integrating many marketing channels. Mobile push advertisements, social media, newsletters, mobile applications, laptop purchases, and chatbots are examples of these channels. Such integration and ease of access improve the whole client purchasing experience. (Watanabe, Akhtar, Too, & Nautanki, 2021)

Perhaps the most famous example of a **successful** omnichannel-enabling **marketplace** is **Amazon.** Starting as a simple, online bookstore, Amazon has grown into the largest online marketplace in the world. By using Amazon as another channel, businesses can gain access to:

Approximately 2.45 billion monthly visitors, nearly three times as many as the next company.

Amazon's fast, reliable fulfillment center, regardless of where you sell.

More than 200 million Amazon Prime members.

One of the largest data gathering centers in the world. **(BigCommerce, 2021c)**

6.4.3 Walmart

Walmart does not require an introduction. As one of the world's leading retailers, adding it into your omnichannel strategy may help businesses expand their reach.

– **On a massive scale:** Walmart.com receives 120 million unique visits every month.
– **Quick delivery and returns:** In-store pickup, free next-day and two-day delivery, and a simple return policy
– **Tools for the seller**: A significant investment has been made in advertising, reporting, and analytics.

Vendors on Walmart.com receive 13 times more visitors per month than merchants on Amazon, making Walmart significantly less crowded with sellers than other marketplaces. In comparison to Amazon, Walmart Marketplace merchants receive around 27,000 monthly visits. (Quach, Barwari, Moudrý, & Quach, 2020)

6.4.4 Mercado Libre

Mercado Libre is organized into five major business groups. **Marketplace** is its platform for users to sell items, Mercado Pago is its payment method for online sales, **Mercado Public ado** is **Mercado Libre's** advertising component, Mercado Shops is a tool aimed to improve the platform's entire ecology, and **Mercado Creditor** is the company's credit line. Marketplace by Mercado Libre is a platform that connects buyers and merchants. Customers can either bid on things or pay a fixed amount for provided stuff. After payment, items are delivered, and users can leave comments. Mercado Libre collaborates with 3,000 legitimate retailers or brands. Mercado Libre also has a real estate and automobile section called Mercado Libre Classifications. Realtors are charged a monthly fee to list houses and vehicles on the Mercado Libre. **(“Mercado Libre,” 2022)**

Ecommerce sales in Latin America are expected to exceed $100 billion by the end of 2022. This area, with its tremendous expansion, should be a crucial factor for any global ecommerce strategy.

Mercado Libre, known as the "Amazon of Latin America," can assist businesses in unlocking the omnichannel possibility across borders.

– Latin America's leading ecommerce platform.
– It operates in 18 countries and serves 65 million customers

6.4.5   <u>Wish</u>

Wish, one of the most downloaded **worldwide shopping applications** with over 120 active countries, offers BigCommerce businesses a free and seamless connection with account management assistance.

This includes a dedicated account manager who will assist with onboarding, listing, merchandising, and impression development. (Ameen, Tahini, Shah, & Adichie, 2020)

6.4.6   <u>Social Commerce</u>

Social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok give another channel for omnichannel businesses. Through digital marketing on social media networks and smartphone applications, businesses may access previously untapped customers.

For example, Facebook has its own marketplace system. Facebook Marketplace, which was once largely utilized by individual users, has expanded to accommodate bigger companies.

The new Meta rebranding by Facebook is particularly crucial for omnichannel firms, since Meta will be connected with the channel metaverse. According to the most recent data, Meta brands reach a total of 3.6 billion individuals per month. By the end of 2021, Facebook alone will have touched an average of 2.9 billion people every month. (Kang, 2018)

6.4.7   <u>Search</u>

With millions of people using Google every day, posting advertisements and listings on Google is an excellent way to promote your brand and products to the appropriate buyers at the right time.

In the previous week, 75% of worldwide consumers used a Google product to assist with their buying.

59% of shoppers polled claim they use Google to research an in-store or online purchase.

76% of shoppers appreciate making unexpected shopping finds. (Haider, Zhuang, Hashmi, & Ali, 2019)

6.5 WHY IS OMNICHANNEL COMMERCE VALUEABLE FOR RETAILERS:

In conclusion, the pace of change in consumer behavior in 2020 has made an omnichannel approach more crucial than ever.

According to a 2020 survey performed by BigCommerce and Retail Dive, 46% of retail executives anticipated to expand their investment in commerce retailing in the future, compared to their expectations before to COVID-19.

"The **immutable facts of retail** are that consumers will always seek better pricing, choices, and convenience," Andrew Lipsman stated in a May 2020 paper on Frictionless Commerce. With the internet having already made significant progress on the first two consumer criteria, the focus is now shifting to convenience."

Finally, an omnichannel approach can contribute to **greater sales** and **profitability.** According to an eMarketer analysis, faster digital experiences, curbside pickup, and touchless checkout boosted shopping frequency and incremental revenues. **(BigCommerce, 2021b)**

6.5.1 Be where your customers are

Omnichannel retail is critical to a Total Commerce strategy because Total Commerce is conducting business wherever your clients are. Again, establishing a multichannel approach that includes omnichannel helps you stay top of mind no matter where your consumers discover you, whether it's through social commerce, marketplaces, direct-to-consumer on your website, or an in-store experience.

Integrating these numerous routes is beneficial. These platforms allow customers to purchase with you wherever they wish to spend their time. Customers may visit your owned physical and online stores after discovering your brand on a marketplace, for example. can draw customers to your owned physical and online store**. (Yatskevich, 2022b)**

6.5.2 Increase the rate of retention

According to Linn works, nine out of 10 customers will prefer a site that provides a seamless buying experience. According to Invest, when omnichannel customer interaction techniques are

used, customer retention rates may reach as high as 89%, compared to 33% for those that use ineffective omnichannel tactics. **(Yatskevich, 2022b)**

6.5.3 Maximize customer life values:

Omnichannel retail simplifies interactions between a brand and its customers. It is much too vital to deliver exceptional customer service while while maintaining brand consistency. According to a Harvard Business Review research, shoppers spend 4% more in physical stores and 10% more online than they do with single-channel enterprises. **(Yatskevich, 2022b)**

6.6 THE CURRENT STATES OF OMNICHANNEL RETAIL:

6.6.1 Statistics

As you go deeper into omnichannel commerce, you'll uncover a slew of facts that make a strong argument for this integrated and efficient method. Companies with strong omnichannel engagement strategies, for example, retain an average of 89% of their consumers. This compares to 33% for companies with poor or non-existent integrated retail strategy.

According to Harvard Business Review research, the more channels a client utilizes while completing a purchase, the more valuable they are to the store throughout the course of their lifetime. Omnichannel customers spend 4% more each shopping trip than their single-channel counterparts. Omnichannel commerce is a highly beneficial business approach. More shopping channels available to a client implies they have more possibilities to make a purchase and spend more money. Those who utilize four or more touchpoints to make a purchase spend 9% more than those who just use one. Overall, multichannel buyers may be worth up to 30% more to merchants over the course of their lifetime than customers who only utilize one channel to make their purchases. (Leu & Masri, 2021c)

When searching to buy a product, people of all ages utilize both online and physical channels. While baby boomers prefer to buy through a single channel, millennials are one of the groups most likely to buy through many channels. Indeed, around 68% of millennials today expect the ease of an omnichannel strategy during their buying trip.

Baby boomers and Generation X aren't opposed to internet purchasing; in fact, Generation X spends 50% more time online each week (six hours) than their elders. However, persons in these age groups are more likely to complete their final purchase in a physical store. Because of their

high level of customer service standards, 84% of baby boomers prefer to acquire things in person. These generations are also more inclined to utilize review sites and ecommerce sites to guide their purchasing decisions.

Because most generations have grown accustomed to researching and purchasing things across several channels, the transition to a fully integrated omnichannel approach will be a natural development for individuals of all ages. This should offer merchants more confidence in implementing an omnichannel strategy.

6.6.2 <u>The customer journeys</u>

Traditionally, the customer journey was brief and straightforward. After discovering a product and engaging with a company, customers would place an order and pay before picking up or having their item delivered. However, things are a little different these days. Customers today expect more choices at every level of the purchasing process. In the year 2000, 66.2% of consumers used two or less touch points before completing a purchase, while just 7.3% used four or more touch points before making a payment. The proportion of individuals who use three to seven touchpoints climbed to 74% in 2015. A typical omnichannel consumer journey today includes perusing a company's website, visiting their physical stores, and conducting detailed product research through user reviews, apps, and social media.

The research stage of the customer journey is extremely crucial as we enter 2019. Before making a final selection, consumers will research several internet channels, such as social media networks, review sites, and ecommerce sites. Furthermore, 55% of customers will visit a physical store before making a purchase. (Darwitz & Maas, 2018)

6.6.3 <u>Future predictions: creating an Omni channel ecosystem</u>

When merchants transitioned from multi-channel retail to a more integrated omnichannel approach, their customers had a lot smoother and more efficient shopping experience. The next step is to progress from omnichannel retail to a fully functional omnichannel retail ecosystem.

Omnichannel commerce contributes to increased customer expenditure and a better purchase experience. Learn how to navigate an omnichannel economy that is linked. Data mining will fuel the future of multichannel retail. Using 'big data' will offer businesses with the information they

need to successfully sell their products and services, as well as providing shoppers with the seamless, integrated experience they demand**. (Cui et al., 2020)**

6.7 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS:

I. _____is a business concept that integrates all current channels to provide customers with a smooth purchasing experience.
   a. Omni-channel wholesale
   b. Omni-channel distribution
   c. Omni-channel retail
   d. Omni-channel shopping

II. Generation X spends _____ more time online each week (six hours) than their elders.
   a. 100%
   b. 90%
   c. 50%
   d. 40%

III. An omnichannel approach can contribute to _____ and profitability.
   a. Lower sale
   b. Greater sales
   c. Loss
   d. All

6.8 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS:

I. What are the components of advent of omnichannel retail.
II. Why is omnichannel commerce valuable for retailers
III. Explain any 2 avenues of omnichannel.

CHAPTER 7

7.1   OMNICHANNEL WHOLESALE

Manufacturing and wholesale distribution enterprises deal with tangible goods. The company purchases raw materials or products and changes them into finished items via process, transportation, or both. Orders are received and delivered to consumers. This conventional procedure hasn't evolved much over the previous few decades, and it remains the major value these businesses deliver to the market. However, technological advancements have made several possible client channels available. Today, how do we communicate with businesses? We connect to the internet. We browse websites, utilize banking apps, and pay our phone bills online. We've changed the way we shop and do business. (Alonso-Garcia, Pablo-Martí, & Nunez-Barrio Pedro, 2021b)

7.2   OMNI CHANNEL WHOLESALING DEFINITION

Omnichannel wholesaling is the **one-touch integration** of operations and physical product flows across all channels to provide a seamless shopping experience.

In other words, Omnichannel distribution is a system that allows clients to execute a purchase and get orders from whatever channel they desire.

On the eCommerce market, the most common methods of distribution are referral websites, adverts, search engines, mobile marketing, social media, and so on. The effectiveness of an eCommerce marketing plan hinges on the capacity to handle all these channels at once. In addition, businesses frequently struggle with how to track calls to enhance sales or which software to use for tracking e-mail marketing.

All of these criteria influence the final business choice - which method of distribution to use at this and later stages of the omnichannel marketing strategy.

Furthermore, it includes not only the transportation of items to businesses and customers, but also backward distribution principles, as customers may return things. (Alonso-Garcia, Pablo-Martí, & Nunez-Barrio Pedro, 2021)

SYSTEM OFF ONWARD DISTRIBUTION

It is distinguished by its origins (points of dispatch), destinations (points of reception), and related linkages. When designing it, consider various types of sources and destinations in the physical structure, as well as possible distribution techniques and modalities.

7.3 SYSTEM OF BACKWARD DISTRIBUTION:

The physical movement of return items as well as the places where things are returned. It covers shipment between customers and stores. (Tran, 2021)

7.4 WHOLESALE CHANNEL MANAGEMENT WITHOUT THE HASSLE

7.4.1 SINGLE FRONT AND BACK EXPERIENCE:

Consolidate your retail and wholesale channels onto a single website with a single back-end. Use a BigCommerce landing page to find new wholesale clients, and when they login, modify your site for their product and price requirements. (Cai & Chen, 2016)

7.4.2 AUTOMATED CUSTOMER GROUP MANAGEMENT:

Assign individual customer groups to wholesale clients to automatically tailor their site experience, including unique pricing, items, re-ordering, and approval processes.

7.4.3 BUILT-IN PRICE LIST FUNCTIONALITY FOR CLIENT CUSTOMIZATION:

With BigCommerce's built-in pricing list, you can customize rates and discounts down to the unique SKU for each individual customer. New price lists may be easily assigned to client groups or specific wholesale customers. (BigCommerce, 2022)

7.5 OMNI CHANNEL COMMERCE VALUABLE FOR WHOLESALERS

The retail business is ever-changing. Major retailers recognize that the market has become extremely competitive, owing in part to technology changes, demanding customers, and shifting buying habits. Retailers that cannot adapt and respond to these difficulties are finding it difficult to prosper and survive in the sector.

Those who are able to succeed in the sector are those that are strategically responding to and adapting to digital dynamics by providing a better retail experience for their consumers,

constructing contemporary retail supply chains, and, most significantly, utilizing omnichannel retail tactics. Retailers can increase availability, improve sales and traffic, and combine digital touchpoints with omnichannel.

An omnichannel retail strategy enhances the consumer experience and expands the number of channels for customer purchases, whether on mobile, the online, or in-store. The availability of different purchase methods boosts revenues and traffic. Omnichannel customers, in fact, spend 15 to 30% more than single or multi-channel clients. According to a collaborative study conducted by Google, Ipsos Medicate, and Sterling Brands, 75% of customers are more inclined to visit a store if they find local retail information on the web. Omnichannel shopping not only boosts income from online retail, but also brings large visitors to shops, raising revenue even more. (Chylinski et al., 2020)

7.6 WHOLESALE CASE STUDIES

7.6.1 KAP 7

KAP7 International, Inc. is a water polo equipment manufacturer based in the United States. Sportswear (one-piece swimsuits, swim briefs), other garments (t-shirts, leggings), and sporting equipment are among the products available (balls, goals).

Brad Schumacher and Wolf Wigo launched KAP7 in 2004 in California. Schumacher is a two-time Olympic champion and competitive swimmer from the United States. Wigo is a three-time Olympian in water polo from the United States. ("KAP7," 2021)

7.7 FOUR KEY ASPECTS:

1. Extensive inquiries into a small number of instances

• Time-consuming. There were few participants.

2. Examination in context

• Observation in natural settings - away from the laboratory. • How and where is the technology actually used?

3. Various data sources • Observations, interviews, and document analysis

• Blue triangulation for validation. • There might be self-contradictions; investigate further!

4. Emphasis on qualitative data and analysis

• As part of triangulation, quantitative data may be supplied.

• Concentrate on open questions.

7.8 <u>CS OBJECTIVES:</u>

- Exploration

- Recognize difficulties or conditions in order to create new designs.

- Explanation – Creation models for comprehending the context of technology usage

- Describe the use context/situation.

- Description - Record the system, environment for technology use, or the design process

- Exemplification (especially in HCI)

- Demonstrate how a new tool or design is used.

7.9 <u>CASEY'S DISTRIBUTING</u>

Ben Johnson, an ecommerce veteran of 15 years, has coached many firms on how to utilize the web to increase sales. His experience has been sought after by NBC, CBS, and ABC in order to convey the backside of business to a bigger audience. In 2014, Casey's Distributing, one of North America's top sports novelty wholesalers, sought out his advice and GSD mindset. His KPI after obtaining the sale was to lower website expenditures and improve company income for the 27-year-old brand by utilizing a site developed on Magento by a local firm. Ben returned to his tried-and-true ecommerce advice for specific customization needs at a pricing point that makes commercial sense due to security concerns, expensive development expenses, and a lack of functionality: BigCommerce.

Casey's Distributing now works with thousands of resellers across North America, distributing for over 50 manufacturers and 50,000 SKUs. Soon, the firm will release an app based on BigCommerce's API to expand that list of resellers even more, allowing additional BigCommerce customers to expand their inventory and increase sales with the press of a button.

Here's how Ben and Casey's Distributing came to choose BigCommerce as their B2B hub.

7.10 <u>ONLY BIGCOMMERCE COULD PROVIDE THE CATALOG MANAGEMENT SOLUTION WE NEEDED</u>

According to Ben Johnson, VP Operations at Casey's Distributing and President of Macq, LLC.

We looked into Shopify as well, and even built a number of Shopify sites to try them out. We also looked at WooCommerce and Volusion. We looked into Weebly, Wax, and Squarespace. We've tested and implemented practically everything in our 15 years of website creation.

But we knew from the start that BigCommerce was the right fit for Casey's.

The platform's basic interface, which makes it exceedingly simple to upload and add a product to the shop, was critical. Every year, we manage 50,000 or more stock codes that require frequent adjustments. We required a catalogue management system that would allow us to do so at a reasonable cost and with minimal effort.

That box was ticked by BigCommerce. BigCommerce allows you to take the needed information, add your own custom fields, and then utilize spreadsheets to upload and download full product listings in minutes. You may easily upload any product as long as you know the column headings.

7.11 <u>FROM MAGENTO TO BIGCOMMERCE IN UNDER 1 MONTH</u>

According to Ben Johnson, VP Operations at Casey's Distributing and President of Macq, LLC. It took us around a week to construct BigCommerce for Casey's Distributing, then another two weeks to have it all tested and approved by the team. We converted them from an old, obsolete website to a BigCommerce, mobile-responsive, extremely modern site in less than a month and at a very low cost.

The entire experience was so positive that my internet development company, MaxQV.com, has become a BigCommerce partner. We have several BigCommerce clients and recommend it to anybody who asks. (Rodriguez, Watson, & Piccoli, 2021)

7.12 PARTNERS FOR A SECURE WEB AND PROTECTION FROM DDOS ATTACKS

According to Ben Johnson, VP Operations at Casey's Distributing and President of Macq, LLC. Our migration from Magento proved to be really prudent, especially given the circumstances. We've received a slew of BigCommerce security reports regarding DDoS assaults all around the internet, and Magento sites appear to be the most often targeted.

It gives us a sense of security to know that we don't have to watch the servers being assaulted by the bad guys. BigCommerce handles everything for us.

When you host a Magento build on a public server, you don't always have that level of security, and you certainly don't get that level of communication. ("Chevron Pointing up Icon," 2014)

7.13 THE CURRENT STATE OF OMNI CHANNEL WHOLESALERS

7.13.1 STATISTICS

As company owners and marketers strive to give a consistent experience across all platforms, omnichannel consumer interaction is becoming increasingly popular.94% of retail organizations currently connect with customers across several platforms.

A recent poll found that 61% of American consumers prefer internet purchasing to visiting physical locations. And don't forget about the Millennial generation in the United States, who are actively buying through all internet media.

 ("Omnichannel Statistics for Marketing and Customer Experience 2022," 2022)

7.14 7 IMPORTANT OMNICHANNEL MARKETING STATISTICS 2022

Omnichannel marketing seeks to improve the buying experience of customers by merging different offline and internet channels. This is about not just utilizing numerous channels, but also making the most of them by leveraging them at the appropriate moment and in a high-impact way.

1. As a result, it's not only a question of bringing your offline marketing activities online and vice versa; it's also an issue of bridging the gaps between all of these channels. So that you can provide the consumer with a consistent experience.

Now, let's look at the top seven omnichannel marketing statistics for 2022.

2. According to the Harvard Business Review, 73% of customers prefer to purchase through numerous channels. Similarly, 7% of customers only purchase online, while 20% only shop in-store.

3. Google discovered that multichannel clients are worth 30% more than those who exclusively purchase through one channel. It demonstrates that omnichannel customers may increase income.

4. E-commerce will account for 23% of global retail revenues by 2022. This number was 15.3% in 2017.

5. Nearly 80% of customers favor omnichannel methods due of the seamless communication experience.

6. 90% of retail executives feel that a unified omnichannel approach is critical to corporate success.

7. According to Harvard Business Review study, multichannel customers spend 10% more online and 4% more in-store than single-channel customers.

8. According to the Think with Google indicator, omnichannel initiatives increase additional shop visits by customers by 80%. (Ben Mimoun, Lancelot Melgen, & Slama, 2021)

7.15 7 IMPORTANT OMNICHANNEL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STATISTICS FOR 2022

The consumer experience is critical in online retail. The February 2016 paper covers omnichannel strategies and approaches using data from the 2015 E-Commerce Impact Study. While the great majority of survey respondents reported selling items across several channels, "the vast majority

of merchants cannot claim that distinction." According to the survey, just 15% of online shops provide a good overall, seamless experience for customers. This proportion, however, is larger for businesses that sell through both high-touch and low-touch **channels. To** improve, merchants must streamline their customer data from all sales channels, use consumer insights across sales channels, and provide consistent customer service across channels.

Let's look at the top 7 omnichannel customer experience statistics.

Companies with multichannel client involvement saw a 9.5% year-over-year increase in yearly income, compared to 3.4% for those without. Similarly, good omnichannel firms enjoy a 7.5% year-over-year decrease in cost per contact, compared to a 0.2% year-over-year decrease for poor **organizations**. (Group Aberdeen)

Companies with strong omnichannel customer interaction retain 89% of their buyers, compared to 33% of **organizations** with a terrible omnichannel customer experience. (Group Aberdeen)

Customer data is stored across channels by 77% of excellent omnichannel **organizations**, compared to 48% of weak omnichannel companies. (Group Aberdeen)55% of businesses do not have a cross-channel strategy. (From the CMO Club.)

Organizations who use omnichannel consumer interaction approaches retain 89% of their customers on average, compared to 33% for businesses that do not use omnichannel customer engagement techniques. (Group Aberdeen)

49% of customers make at least one weekly purchase from their **favorite** omnichannel companies (Marketing Land)

48% of buyers will disclose information in exchange for **customized** services (Deloitte) ("Omnichannel Statistics for Marketing and Customer Experience 2022," 2022)

7.16 <u>WHO USES OMNI CHANNEL WHOLESALE</u>

7.16.1 <u>AMAZON</u>

Amazon has wonderfully responded to Omnichannel by integrating all of their operations and providing customers with a smooth experience whether they are online or in shops. Amazon prioritizes the consumer experience. They use data to personalize and respond to interactions

across all platforms. It entails linking consumer data and meeting customers' desires through any channel they chose. Amazon is the ultimate game changer when it comes to implementing Omnichannel into delivery. By investing years and millions of dollars in the delivery system, the corporation has enabled one-hour Prime Now delivery in numerous areas, as well as same-day or next-day delivery on millions of goods. Customers have been quite satisfied since they all want to receive their products as fast as feasible. (T, 2020)

7.16.2 <u>TOPSHOP</u>

Topshop is a high-street business located in the United Kingdom that sells trendy clothing for both men and women. They are working hard to make their Omnichannel experience as frictionless as possible. This stylish apparel firm makes the most of its digital presence by displaying fantastic magazine content, trendy look books, and the most recent fashion ideas on their websites and mobile devices. In addition, their Topshop on The Go app works well, allowing customers to scan a barcode and instantly view local store locations, best sellers, and available stock. Topshop not only provides a superb user experience on mobile devices, but they also deliver a fresh new taste of fashion by showing 6 billboards in London, Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Liverpool, and Glasgow that reveal graphics anytime a Twitter account uses their hashtag "#LFW." The nicest part was that all of the billboards were within a 10-minute walk of a Topshop location. Following the lavish event, the business claimed a 25% boost in sales across all billboard categories. (Alexander & Cano, 2018)

7.17 <u>THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY</u>

The way a consumer interacts with a brand in 2021 has evolved dramatically. Marketers must map journeys across several touchpoints and ensure that they operate flawlessly. This is crucial to an omnichannel approach. According to a new 2020 analysis by Arm Treasure Data and Forbes Insight, 75 percent of customers are somewhat or very inclined to buy from a firm depending on their experience. This is true independent of cost or product. In fact, 77% believe that such interactions are equally as essential as the quality of a company's products or services. Understanding and charting the consumer experience throughout the journey has thus become an even more important element of a marketer's work. "Companies must look carefully at their consumer touchpoints, both in-store and online, to discover what their customers value most and

where changes can be made," says Arm, Treasure Data Global Head of Marketing Tom Treanor. (Theocrat, Papagiannis's, & Alaminos, 2021)

According to a recent survey, the most critical criteria for US customers across touchpoints are:

- Speed
- Convenience
- Knowledgeable assistance
- Service that is pleasant

We'll go through the following topics to help you map and build such experiences in 2021:

Channel and touchpoint types in 2021

- How to Create a Consumer Journey Map
- The difficulties to be overcome
- Some instances of best practices

According to a 2021 study of business experts, improving customer experience is their top business objective for the next five years. Let us begin our own journey in this direction.

The engagement with multiple brand touchpoints results in a customer's journey. By 2020, over 90% of retail shoppers will have begun their journey through digital channels.

This is not to say that offline plays no part.

According to one research, 78 percent of marketers thought digital marketing was crucial to their total marketing efforts, whereas 39 percent said offline initiatives were significant.

Consumer touchpoints in the online world include social networking, e-mail, and advertising.

In 2021, mobile will play an increasingly crucial part in online touchpoints. Mobile accounts for more than half of all online traffic, and smartphone analytics research anticipates a 25% growth in mobile traffic by 2025. ("Mapping the Omnichannel Customer Journey in 2021," n.d.)

7.18 <u>MAP TO THE CONSUMER JOURNEY:</u>

The process of mapping all customer contacts with your business is known as omnichannel touchpoint mapping. Each stage of the buyer's journey is identified. It enables brands to view and connect every such consumer encounter. There are several methods for creating such maps, ranging from linked notes to spreadsheets. The procedure begins with study and data collection. Consumer surveys and user testing are two methods for doing this. Consumer profiles can be generated as a result of this. These are your primary customers' **behavioral** and demographic features. Younger first-time users, older devoted users, infrequent users, mostly digital users, and so on.

The next step is to identify all of the touchpoints that they employ based on the primary segments. During the exchanges, research should also reveal customer activities, impediments, and intended outcomes. (George & Wakefield, 2018)

7.19 FUTURE PREDICTIONS: CREATING AN OMNI CHANNEL ECOSYSTEM

7.19.1 <u>PREDICTION 1: RETAILERS WILL CONTINUE TO BALANCE CUSTOMER ACQUISITION AND RETENTION</u>

In 2021, retailers' omnichannel strategy will be focused on two primary issues: customer acquisition (63%) and customer retention (58%). However, in the last year, we've seen a change in emphasis toward retention, particularly as brands and retailers strive to **minimize** client acquisition expenses and depend less on large advertising campaigns to bring in new customers.

While marketing and brand teams will definitely need to recruit new customers to fill their business pipelines, their primary focus will be on performance marketing strategies that allow them to contact consumers in a highly focused manner.

Simultaneously, they will develop more comprehensive retention toolkits that reflect the different customer habits.

Our respondents overwhelmingly supported approaches that provide one-on-one connection between customers and store colleagues: phone/texting features with store associates (56%), virtual styling appointments (34%), and virtual events (30%). As social commerce becomes more

popular in the West, we should expect to see a broader range of businesses and merchants explore these strategies and seek to scale them through livestreaming. (Esposito, 2022)

7.19.2 <u>PREDICTION 2: DIVERSIFICATION OF FULFILLMENT SERVICES WILL BE KEY TO OMNICHANNEL SUCCESS</u>

Because no two clients are same, everyone has varied shipping and fulfilment requirements. Some people's habits and preferences will change depending on the scenario or moment in time. Retailers must establish diversified fulfilment networks that incorporate both internal infrastructure and third-party partners to suit these various circumstances.

Many respondents (61%) said they were investing more in their fulfilment ecosystem and that having numerous ordering and delivery choices was crucial to their omnichannel brand strategy in our 2021 study.

This is unlikely to change very soon, since customers have learned to anticipate the convenience and flexibility that comes with several fulfilment alternatives. Retailers will instead concentrate on sharpening their investments and ensuring the correct balance of internal competencies and trusted solution partners.

Rapid delivery or swift commerce is one essential topic to keep an eye on. While this sector has grown with new suppliers — and a lot of VC financing — it has also witnessed some instability recently. Quick commerce is not just difficult and labor-intensive; it is also costly.

As retailers evaluate possible partners, they must balance the risks and advantages of investing in new delivery options, as well as whether consumers actually desire them. (Esposito, 2022)

7.19.3 <u>PREDICTION 3: AUTOMATION WILL HELP RETAILERS TACKLE WORKFORCE CHALLENGES</u>

The store has evolved into a focal point for omnichannel fulfilment. In fact, 60% of merchants **utilize** actual brick-and-mortar locations as their last storage site before to delivery. The same proportion of respondents (60%) say they assign shop staff to choose items and conduct order prep activities — and another 18% say they plan to do so before the end of the year.

However, merchants can no longer rely entirely on their employees to execute these jobs, especially if **labor** shortages persist.

Following the "Great Resignation" or "Great Rethink," merchants must guarantee that they are providing a climate that promotes employee success. That involves providing them with the tools, technology, and time they need to accomplish their tasks properly.

Individual stores will be able to better **organize** their resources as a result of automation, and personnel will be able to focus on servicing customers and executing jobs that require particular attention to detail. The challenge for retailers is which method is best for them. While some businesses have successfully used robotics, others are concentrating on automated job management and **prioritizing** software.

In order to **optimize** growth, more retailers are turning omnichannel. Every brand's route and strategy to omnichannel, however, is unique. This survey's 2022 edition will be out soon, so it will be fascinating to observe how omnichannel priorities and investments have changed. In the meanwhile, download the 2021 report and delve further into the newest results! (Esposito, 2022)

7.20 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS:

I. Omnichannel wholesaling is the _____ of operations and physical product flows across all channels to provide a seamless shopping experience.

a. Three-touch integration

b. Five-touch integration

c. Two-touch integration

d .One-touch integration

II. Customer data is stored across channels by _____ of excellent omnichannel **organizations**, compared to 48% of weak omnichannel companies.

a. 87%

b. 79%

c. 77%

d.57%

III. KAP7 International, Inc. is a _____ manufacturer based in the United States.

a. Heat polo equipment

b. Air polo equipment

c. Water polo equipment

d. None

DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS:

I. Compare the system **off onward** distribution with the system off backward distribution.

II. Write a note on automated **customer group** management.

III. Write a note on KAP 7.

CHAPTER 8

8.1   <u>OMNICHANNEL E-COMMERCE</u>

Omni channel ecommerce is referred as sales method that employs numerous platforms and emphasizes on providing a uniform buying experience to consumers regardless of whether the purchase is done through in-store or other online platforms (Risberg, 2022).
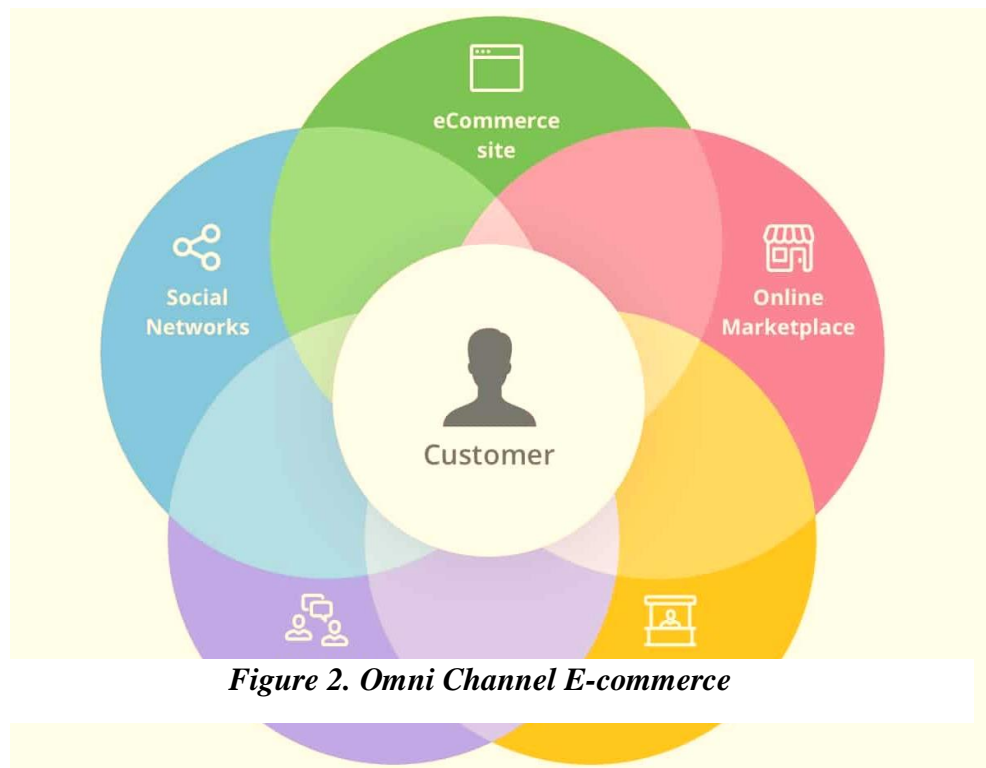
Figure 2. Omni Channel E-commerce

Figure 2.. Omni channel E-commerce

https://www.revechat.com/blog/omnichannel-ecommerce/

8.2   <u>DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OMNI CHANNEL AND MULTI-CHANNEL E-COMMERCE:</u>

Multichannel ecommerce is associated with selling things through several platforms, both offline and online. One communicates with consumers through social media, the websites, mobile, applications, and physical interactions. However, the networks are not linked, thus the experience

is not comparable. Customers demand the same service across all platforms, which is where Omni channel comes in (Risberg, 2022).

Omni channel ecommerce aims on providing a uniform purchasing experience regardless of the channel selected by consumers. Because all channels are linked, companies can anticipate what consumers want and provide a tailored experience across all channels (Risberg, 2022).

8.3   The Benefits of Multichannel Ecommerce:

Both multichannel and Omni channel ecommerce entail the use of various channels to interact customers throughout the consumer experience. Multichannel, on the other hand, is more channel-focused, whereas Omni channel is more customer-centric.

Multichannel commerce raises the exposure of your brand across several customer touchpoints. It enables users to personalize and focus their approach on a single channel, which increases performance responsibility (Wagner et al., 2018).

8.4   Drawbacks of multichannel ecommerce and multichannel commerce

In addition to the benefits, multichannel has certain drawbacks. A multichannel approach frequently enforces current channel silos since each channel is addressed individually, with its own approach, performance measures, and consumer experience (Wagner et al., 2018).

With multichannel ecommerce, a brand's Facebook strategy will be independent from its approach on **Amazon or its D2C site**, thus a customer travelling between various channels as they approach closer to a buying decision will have a disconnected experience.

Every time people land on a new channel, they'll feel as if they're beginning from scratch, with no sense of familiarity or comprehension of their individual tastes — much like visiting someone's home numerous times and having to reintroduce yourself each time (Wagner et al., 2018).

Multichannel ecommerce produces data silos in addition to strengthening channel silos that conceal a brand's awareness of its consumers. Whether vital user information is locked away in a walled garden like Facebook or housed in a separate consumer data platform (CDP) or consumer

relationship management system (CRM), these silos make it more difficult for organizations to gain a comprehensive view of their consumers (Wagner et al., 2018).

8.5 Benefits of Omni channel Ecommerce and Omni Channel Commerce

To provide a more integrated consumer experience, users must first comprehend where a consumer is in their journey and how they've already involved with your brand through various channels, and then combine all of these perspectives to unify their knowledge across all of these touchpoints and result in more effective conversions (Belvedere et al., 2021).

A modern customer utilizes an average of six touchpoints during their purchasing experience, which means they acquire data from various sources before deciding whether or not to purchase your goods.

Consumers may discover the furniture business on Instagram, but they will double-check Google Shopping for availability and price before purchasing their new sofa or end table from your physical store because they need to touch, feel, and see the item before making such a large buy (Belvedere et al., 2021).

All of these activities are linked with Omni channel ecommerce, and a consumer will have a consistent experience irrespective of where they contact with your business.

According to research, people who interact with the business smoothly across numerous platforms are more likely to become repeat buyers.

8.6 <u>Drawbacks of Omni channel Ecommerce</u>

Why aren't more firms embracing Omni channel? It provides clear benefits for both businesses and customers. For one thing, without the proper platform partner, it's tough to accomplish and sustain (Belvedere et al., 2021).

Companies that join the Omni channel world must optimize their IT stack to bring all of their consumer insights together in order to obtain a 360-degree picture of all consumer interactions.

Today, it is difficult to recognize clients across platforms and channels in order to create strong and united consumer profiles, to apply analysis tools to know what consumers desire, and to implement this data in near real-time and context - specific ways as they move rapidly across numerous offline and online channels When the consumer journey was more uniform, it was much easy for companies to customize their experience and deliberately move them farther down the funnel. That is no longer the case. Omni channel ecommerce today necessitates organizations becoming more competent at consumer classification and recognizing where consumers are in their journey in order to give tailored, holistic content that resonates to them in this environment (Belvedere et al., 2021).

8.7 <u>PLATFORM FOR OMNI CHANNEL ECOMMERCE WITH SMART SOLUTIONS:</u>

Many substantial benefits accrue to Omni channel ecommerce companies. Having an Omni channel ecommerce platform has an influence on the business by providing excellent Omni channel customer support and increasing brand reputation. Brands that provide an Omni channel ecommerce platform may provide amazing solutions to their clients while also experiencing great advantages to their organization. (Sousa et al., 2021)

Omni channel platforms may provide a comprehensive and up-to-date user interface between organizations and their customers. The platforms provide automation, configuration, and AI technologies that increase customer connection at all levels in order to create a digitally productive discussion amongst all users. The platforms are the most recent technological advancements in instantly connecting with consumers across all available digital platforms, and they enable a long-term business plan to decrease operational expenditures, encourage a team that serves customers, and is always attentive to customers (Hu & Zhou, 2022).

Omni channel platforms have the potential to alter the way organizations connect with their customers on a daily basis. The main idea was to provide a better user experience and engage with them on the platform they choose (Hu & Zhou, 2022).

There are various benefits to utilizing Omni channel systems. What you should search for is an all-in-one   strategy

paired with other well-known ecommerce systems that link to your physical business, such as inventory, platforms, production, and shipping connections.

8.8   BestOmni channel Platforms:

8.8.1   Shopify

Shopify is a multi-channel cloud-based corporate program designed for small and medium-sized businesses. Merchants may use software to design, set up, and run their businesses via various distribution channels such as internet, smartphone, social networking, marketplaces, brick and mortar sites, and pop-up stores (Shopify, 2017).

8.8.2   Magento's

With an order fulfillment system that enables customizable, economical, and cost-effective delivery, Magento connects online and in-store and promotes a smooth consumer experience. Magento's Order Management tools allow you extend your ecommerce channels and provide the best shopping experience possible. You may also buy from a PC, a POS, or a tablet from anywhere (Magento Extensions & Themes for Your Online Store | Marketplace, n.d.).

8.8.3   BigCommerce

BigCommerce offers business features as well as an open architecture and app ecosystem. With a gorgeous ecommerce site that is perfectly integrated to your brick-and-mortar organization, they provide the best option for selling online and in person (BigCommerce, 2013).

8.8.4   NetSuite

NetSuite is a cloud-based software package that includes accounting and enterprise resource planning (ERP), human resources, professional services automation, and Omni channel marketing. Accounting and financial reporting, retail administration, ecommerce, product control, and more applications are available. (Amini Alazani & Abkari, 2020)

8.8.5   Cin7

Cin7 is linked to inventory management, which has been simplified. It provides retailers, wholesalers, and small manufacturers with a single solution for keeping orders in sync with inventories across all stock locations and sales channels. Cin7 combines over 450 platforms and

services, including ecommerce, online marketplaces, third-party logistics (3PL) warehouses, shipping, accounting, sales & marketing, and inventory forecasting tools. It also has integrated POS, warehouse management, B2B sales, and EDI for selling to big retailers such as Amazon Vendor (Cin7 | Connected Inventory Management System, n.d.).

8.8.6 Progeria

Progeria is a platform that can collaborate with you to combine your channels and strengthen ties with other merchants by offering the smooth customer experience that customers have come to expect while safeguarding sensitive product pricing information.

8.8.7 Catalog

Catalog is a multi-channel digital trade platform that intends to bring together retail businesses and electronic distribution channels. Catalog enables a company to create an ecommerce platform, a mobile app, and a B2B site where customers can place orders and commodities may be hosted in multi-vendor markets.

One-to-one advertisers may use the Catalog Field Sales platform to entice customers with a digital inventory and place orders on the go. With a tablet-enabled application that allows them to evaluate items, monitor samples, and explore customer purchase history, Catalog's retail associate interface supports retail showroom staff.

8.8.8 Cloud Commerce Pro

Cloud Commerce Pro is a cloud-based ERP listing platform that assists you with back-office activities like as Order Management, Stock Control, Dispatch, and CRM. Cloud Commerce Pro is an ideal management system for selling more things in more places while keeping your back office organized. (RADHIKA, 2020)

8.9 CHALLENGES IN OMNICHANNEL E-COMMERCE

8.9.1 Brick-and-mortar store stock vs online stock

Many firms also show their merchandise in real places online. In-store supply fluctuates, and things may be sold out in-store while they were previously sold online. This is not usually the ideal strategy because it depletes their online transactions. Reduce the availability of "best-selling" products on your online stores to solve this problem. (H. R., Aithal, & P, 2020)

8.9.2   <u>Inadequate infrastructure</u>

When a company decides to execute an Omni channel strategy, its present technology is sometimes inadequate to support an Omni channel operation. (Banerjee, 2018)

8.9.3   <u>Collaboration with the right partners</u>

Having the finest logistics, shipping, and e-commerce partners is critical to the success of any Omni channel strategy. Learn about the many sorts of e-commerce partners. (Kumar, 2020)

8.10 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS:

I.   _____ is associated with selling things through several platforms, both offline and online.
   a. Multichannel business
   b. Omnichannel operation
   c. Multichannel ecommerce
   d. Experienced Persons

II. NetSuite is a _____ software package that includes accounting and enterprise resource planning (ERP), human resources, professional services automation, and Omni channel marketing.
   a. Shopping base
   b. Cloud-base
   c. Both of these
   d. None

III. Having the finest logistics, shipping, and e-commerce partners is critical to the success of any _____.
   a. Company
   b. Businessman
   c. Omnichannel strategy
   d. Multichannel strategy

DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

I.   What is BigCommerce. Explain.
II. Write any two drawbacks of omnichannel ecommerce.

III. Define omnichannel ecommerce.

CHAPTER 9

9.1 OMNICHANNEL DISTRIBUTION

9.1.1 **DEFINITION:**

Omni channel distribution is the one-touch integration of operational and actual products streams across all platforms to deliver a smooth customer experience. In other terms, Omni channel distribution is a method that allows clients to execute a buy and receive orders through any medium of their preference. In a nutshell, Omni channel distribution is an approach in which retail, wholesale, and online channels mix to provide businesses with a unified experience across different channels (Ailawadi & Farris, 2017).

On the eCommerce marketplace, the most common methods of distribution are referral sites, adverts, browsers, mobile advertising, social networks, and so on. The capacity to handle all of these platforms at the same time is essential for the sustainability of an eCommerce marketing plan. In addition, businesses frequently struggle with how to track calls to enhance sales or which software to use for tracking e-mail marketing. All of these elements influence the ultimate business choice - which method of distribution to use at this and later stages of the Omni channel marketing plan (Belvedere et al., 2021). Furthermore, it includes not only the transportation of items to businesses and customers, but also backward distribution principles, as customers may return things.

9.2 IMPORTANCE OF OMNI CHANNEL SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

An Omni channel approach has never been more crucial for any business, because most consumers now want it to provide a smooth, customer-centric buying experience. To adopt this distribution technique, a robust Omni channel supply chain management platform is needed. The supply chain

must provide buy alternatives and product delivery to the consumers' preferred sales channels, such as sites, smartphone apps, brick and mortar stores, and more (Yan et al., 2019).

The point to effectively handling this process and providing a positive consumer experience is to use an inventory control system that enables user to handle product lines for each distribution platform as centralized inventory, instead of the conventional approach of maintaining stock levels as separate warehouses (Yan et al., 2019).

A comprehensive warehouse management system with real-time inventory visibility and order management is critical to the operation's sustainability. Furthermore, centralized inventory management will improve the distribution center's productivity and save business (and the clients) money.

9.3   ECOMMERCE VS. OMNI CHANNEL

Ecommerce fulfillment and Omni channel distribution are terms that are used interchangeably; however, they do not relate to the same sort of distribution. A completely online store has no physically storefronts, but an Omni channel firm contains both online and physical retailing aspects that are handled as one unit. Because of the increased range of delivery and pick up choices, Omni channel fulfillment has an edge over traditional ecommerce. The ability to fulfill orders through numerous channels is enticing to your consumers. It's also highly possible that all of your rivals have adopted an Omni channel strategy, providing shoppers with more alternatives and an improved client journey. As a result, if business don't provide Omni channel distribution, then risk falling behind. Having an Omni channel fulfillment solution is no longer a choice; it is a need (Risberg, 2022).

9.4   TYPES OF OMNI CHANNEL DISTRIBUTION

Omni channel distribution can be divided into two types:

9.4.1   Forward distribution system:
 It is distinguished by its origins (points of dispatch), destinations (points of reception), and related linkages. When designing it, consider various types of sources and destinations in the physical structure, as well as possible distribution techniques and modalities (Asmara & Zewdie, 2021).

9.4.2   Backward distribution system:

 The physical movement of return items as well as the places where things are returned. It includes delivery between customers and stores (Asmara & Zewdie, 2021).

Furthermore, we may divide the distribution into six fundamental groups based on the client process (Wan, 2022):

- **Purchase online and pick up in store**. When a consumer places an order online and then picks it up at your shop (to check if the items they bought are really compatible with them or not)

- **Drop-shipping online purchases** When a consumer places a purchase order on your website, you must ship it to a certain location.

- **Purchase in-store, delivery to your door.** When a consumer purchases things in your physical stores and requests that you deliver them to their desired location (mostly their home address)

- **Ships from the shop**. When you transport things from one location to another.

- **Drop-shipping** is the process of transferring merchandise from a warehouse to another location (a store, a home address, etc.)

- **Buy online, return in-store.** When a client purchases a product online, but does not like it and decides to return it to your physical shop (and maybe get another product in your physical stores)
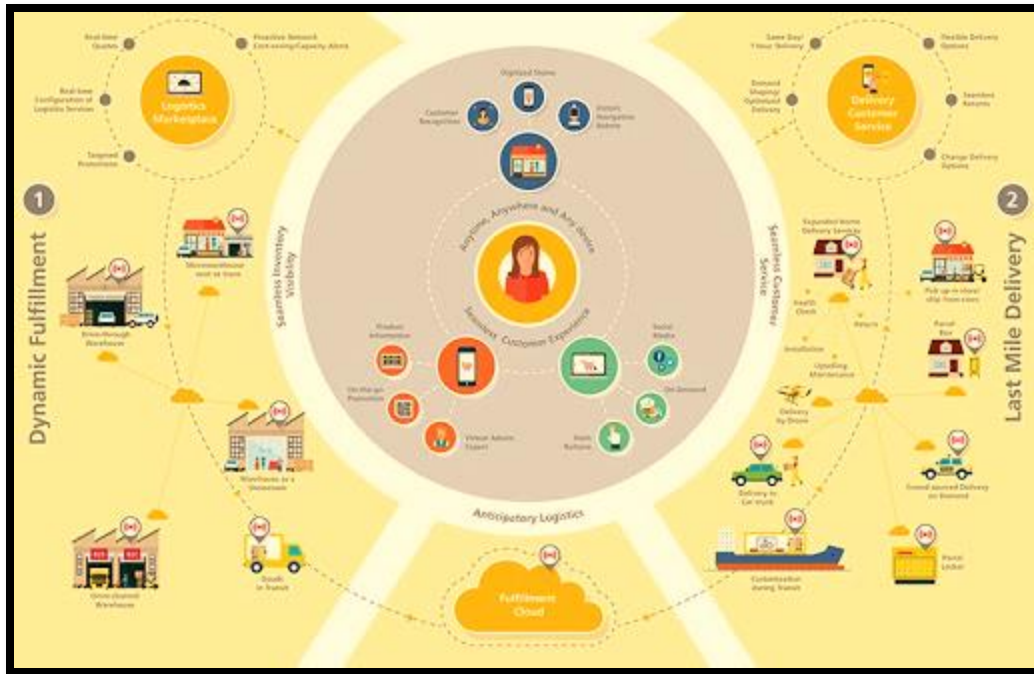
Figure 3. Omni Channel Distribution Model

https://www.magestore.com/blog/omnichannel-distribution/

9.5   CHALLENGE COMPANIES HAVE WITH THEIR OMNI CHANNEL DISTRIBUTION

Following are the challenges in Omni channel Distribution (Cui et al., 2020):

1. Lack of Inventory visibility (On-hand and In-transit)
2. Segmented supply chain technology
3. Channel Specific Process
4. Optimization of freight rates
5. Reverse logistics

9.5.1   Lack of Inventory visibility (On-hand and In-transit):

Inventory visibility relates to a company's capacity to comprehend its inventory, its state, and where it is maintained. Customers also rely on inventory visibility to locate and purchase items at any of your locations (Berman & Thelen, 2018).

Inventory consists of commodities, components, and raw materials for sale or use in the manufacture of new products. Inventory is classified into four types: completed items, raw materials, work-in-process and maintenance, repair, and operations (MRO). When employed as a verb, inventory refers to the process of counting commodities. Inventory is also known as stock in the retail industry. Maintaining visibility across the supply chain enables firms to better satisfy consumer demand while lowering expenses. Customers can follow items at the manufacturing facility, warehouse, retail shop, or in transit using supply chain visibility (Berman & Thelen, 2018).

Figure 4. Growing benefits of Inventory Visibility

Inventory visibility is perhaps the most significant challenge to effective Omni channel inventory management. Users can't access data for proper analysis or assure clients that things would be back in stock on all channels if you don't have it.

When it comes to developing into new platforms, inventory visibility is a common factor. It's the component that must be included within a central network to ensure that one never miss a beat across ecommerce platforms (Barratt et al., 2018).

Figure 5. Inventory Visibility Challenges

Major corporations and entrepreneurs alike have relatively limited visibility into merchandise in transit, which has resulted to an increase in demand for real-time freight visibility solutions. Leading omni-channel logistics systems provide insight not just into shipments and vehicles, but also into orders and stock-keeping units. These systems also have optimization and cooperation capabilities, which promote communication and data and information sharing between trading partners (Barratt et al., 2018). Leading systems have begun to include machine learning capabilities and exploit a larger collection of data sources — including weather, traffic, location, and social networking — to allow predictive capabilities and generate more accurate Estimated Times of Arrival.

9.5.2   Segmented supply chain technology:

Segmented supply chain strategy is averse to the operation of an Omni channel method. Your online business and physical storefront should be located in the same software system. Otherwise, you'll have supply chain gaps that cause a lack of visibility.

Many distribution and fulfillment challenges may be traced back to supply chain gaps, such as providing clients with an inaccurate "out of stock" status or causing delivery delays. This is especially true in an era where customers want quick gratification and wield complete power, forcing providers to give top value at the lowest possible cost.

Traditional supply chain tools are incapable of keeping up with today's digital business world, much alone keeping you competitive. Your company's supply chain cannot function without unifying software. Your inventory channels expand as your company grows. As this occurs, the chance of inaccurate data increases. Essentially, you lose inventory visibility quickly.

Connectivity is the cornerstone to a successful Omni channel strategy. Your physical shop and online store should be located in the same Omni channel inventory management platform. Otherwise, users will encounter gaps such as a lack of inventory visibility.

A gap in your supply chain can cause a variety of fulfillment issues, ranging from clients seeing an inaccurate out of stock status to a delivery delay. And, because consumers drive the desire for quick gratification, they may easily put an end to your business as well. Your supply chain simply cannot function without a unified software solution. (Bravado, Illés, & Bányai, n.d.)

9.5.3   Channel Specific Process:

The next challenge for firms is to focus on channels separately.

How can a store achieve complete customer happiness if its numerous supply chain operations are not firing on all cylinders? The answer is that they cannot.

Your supply chain must be connected across several channels, including your own shop, merchants, and other online sales platforms. The synchronization of sales channels will aid in the acceleration of order fulfillment operations.

Furthermore, implementing Omni channel will allow you to utilize spaces in a variety of ways. Warehouses may be converted into showrooms. Ikea, for example, employs this technique to create a highly cost-effective supply chain.

Some channels have specialized order placement methods. To be successful in Omni channel fulfillment, a company should implement all of these procedures to optimize how customers use different channels and to improve customer experience. (Wollenburg, Holzapfel, & Hübner, n.d.)

9.5.4   Delivery Speed:

That had to be absurd, given that delivery speed is both an advantage and a disadvantage of Omni channel distribution.

According to retail professionals, the most significant problem for meeting distribution needs is developing and improving modalities of client delivery. The necessity of boosting delivery speed stems from the fact that most consumers want their orders to be delivered the same day or no later than two days. This means that processing shifting order quantities between the distance channel and the retailers, as well as responding to precise delivery times, is critical. (Fisher, Gallino, & Xu, 2019)

9.5.5 Reverse logistics:

Reverse logistics is a sort of supply chain management in which items are returned from customers to vendors or producers. After a client receives a product, operations like returns and recycling necessitate reverse logistics.

Figure 6. Reverse Logistics

https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/reverse-logistics-omnichannel-retailers-key-value-vinay-nagareddy

The return process for any goods should be as simple as the first delivery. Consumers expect to be able to return things purchased online in-store or by mail in this new Omni-channel world. Companies who do not provide this level of convenience are unlikely to garner repeat business. Establishing a solid reverse logistics infrastructure is critical to providing excellent customer support within an Omni-channel logistics framework.

9.6   THE ITS LOGISTICS OMNI CHANNEL SOLUTION:

As ecommerce grows, Omni channel distribution is permeating the retail industry, and the freedom it affords consumers is a significant contributor to total customer happiness. Businesses that offer quick shipping and flexible pick-up and delivery choices are leading the way. At ITS, we understand how difficult it may appear to handle the intricacies and diverse

service requirements that come with fulfillment to these many channels. (Kimbro, Norrman, & Eriksson, 2018)

To fulfil customer demand, omnichannel logistics synchronizes inventory, logistics, and distribution across sales channels. The retailer, manufacturer, distributor, and wholesaler are all involved in the supply chain. Sales and shipments are maximized using omnichannel logistics. With Flo ship, you can guarantee that all of your logistical needs are satisfied, and with our digital platform, you can easily track shipments and big orders while maintaining open contact as needed. If you want to learn more about our services and how our omnichannel approach works, you can chat with our specialists! ("Omnichannel Logistics and What You Need to Know about It | Flo ship," 2022)

9.7 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

I. Omni channel fulfillment has an edge over _____ ecommerce.

   a. Low Ecommerce

   b. Traditional Ecommerce

   c. Nontraditional Ecommerce

   d. High Ecommerce

II. _____ is a sort of supply chain management in which items are returned from customers to vendors or producers.

   a. Forward logistics

   b. Backward logistics

   c. Reverse logistics

   d. I reverse logistics

III. _____ distinguished by its origins (points of dispatch), destinations (points of reception), and related linkages.

   a. Backward distribution system

   b. Forward distribution system

   c. Complete distribution system

   d. Incomplete distribution system

9.8 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

I. Explain channel specific processes.

II. Explain segmented supply chain management.

III. What is Drop shipping.

CHAPTER 10

10.1 OMNICHANNEL AND INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

10.1.1 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION:

Digital transformation does not mean the same thing to every company, and approaching it as a one-size-fits-all process may be burdensome. There are four major forms of digital transformation that businesses can consider including into their own transformation plan. It is crucial to understand that digital transformation is not always a single, black-and-white destination in the form of a product or service, but rather demands a long-term commitment that might alter during the trip. (Brinckerhoff, 2022)

Figure 7. Global Digital Transformation Market (Insights, 2021)

10.2 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN INTERNATIONAL MARKETS:

In recent years, digital transformation has become an integral part of the lives of all enterprises, and as a result, the literature has given close attention to it (Warner and Wager 2019). There are several definitions of digital transformation; nevertheless, there is no single standard definition. In general, the literature defines Digital Transformation as the use of digital technologies to facilitate key business improvements and, more specifically, as an organizational strategy for creating

differential value (Curia & Pashmina, 2018c) and improving communication and information exchange globally (Coviello et al. 2017). This is made possible by the adoption of new digital technologies such as big data, artificial intelligence, and 4.0 machines, all of which contribute to gaining a competitive advantage (Vial 2019), even with the customization of new products/services (Shahi and Sinha 2021) and the implementation of cost-effective processes (Chawla and Goyal 2021). This is increasingly changing the way businesses conduct themselves (Rothberg and Scott 2017).

Because internationalization necessitates the gathering of knowledge, the understanding of new cultures, and significant financial commitments, it is extremely difficult to grow, particularly for SMEs. In this sense, the implementation of digital transformation might be the tipping point in aiding SMEs' internationalization. SME internationalization should be viewed as a chance to improve both organizational and business performance. According to Wood and McKinley (2020), internationalization allows "the possibility of bringing new goods, services, or organizational approaches to a market."

While it is true that internationalization represents a way to increase sales by making the firm's products/services available to customers in foreign markets and to gain a competitive advantage from an economic standpoint, it is also true that it is frequently associated with a high level of investment which may represent a significant barrier to the internationalization of SMEs (Curia & Pashmina, 2018).

Increased usage and investment in digital technology, in this sense, leads to higher levels of internationalization and growth. As a result of the lower costs and risk of failure brought about by digital transformation, organizations are more likely to begin an internationalization process. With its instruments, digital transformation has reduced the obstacles to market information collection and cross-border communication (Lee et al. 2019). This implies that new digital technologies have expanded the capacity to forecast market demand and personalize products and services, allowing enterprises to lessen the cultural divide between themselves and their customers' countries (Park, Kim, & Kim, 2019).

Nonetheless, owing to modern technologies such as e-commerce, businesses may create a one-of-a-kind client experience (Ip miller et al. 2022; Matarazzo et al. 2020). As a result, digital

transformation has had a significant influence on firms by offering a third option between the dyadic options of internalization/hierarchy and outsourcing/market (Matarazzo et al. 2020).

Digital transformation, in particular, presents the opportunity of establishing a market in which technology and human capital assets complement and interact. Only in this circumstance could digital transformation be used to its full potential. This means that businesses should implement an omnichannel strategy that integrates the online and offline environments (Ciasullo et al. 2019). The definition of omnichannel strategy is "the synergetic management of the multiple accessible channels and customer touchpoints in such a way that the customer experience across channels and channel performance are optimized". A physical store, word of mouth, an online publication, or internet research might all be touchpoints. (Curia & Pashmina, 2018b)

The omnichannel approach creates a situation in which the product is available across several channels that are no longer distinct or independent of one another, but instead interact to provide a unique and enhanced experience for customers (Du et al. 2019). Until far, the literature has concentrated on the notion of omnichannel in retailing and customer viewpoints. On the one hand, omnichannel retailing is the issue to which the whole research field has given attention. From the retailer's standpoint, it concerns logistics services, which have become a critical aspect in the transformation process of omnichannel retailing and retailing supply chains.

Scholars, on the other hand, have concentrated on key interaction points that characterize the decision-making process, from search to purchase, from the perspective of consumers. The omnichannel environment is built via focus groups, expert interviews, economic decision-making models, machine learning, and other methodologies (Chen and Li 2021). As previously demonstrated, omnichannel research have focused on various and unique views, rather than addressing omnichannel as a definite strategy of behavior in this context. As a result, there is a need for a comprehensive examination of the omnichannel strategy, which is critical for the internationalization of SMEs. ("Digital Transformation in International Markets and International Omnichannel | Encyclopedia MDPI," n.d.)

10.3 <u>TYPES OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION:</u>

10.3.1 <u>PROCESS TRANSFORMATION:</u>

Internal processes may be revised by businesses to save costs, increase quality, and shorten cycle times. Adopting cloud connection assists in connecting various processes and places. Implementing robotic process automation, for example, may revolutionize manual processes in procurement, supply chain management, and other administrative functions. By digitizing your logistics network and supply chain and integrating machine learning and artificial intelligence, you can discover and mound data patterns into actionable insights. (Ishfaq, Davis-Sramek, & Gibson, 2021)

10.3.2 <u>BUSINESS MODEL TRANSFORMATION:</u>

The goal of business model transformation is to radically alter how firms provide value to their consumers. For example, Netflix transitioned from sending DVDs to online streaming, but Blockbuster did not, which ultimately led to the latter company's demise. Technology OEMs are also shifting away from the traditional sales and support model and toward Xia's, where the "X" might represent hardware, storage space, or apps. With the freedom to choose the technology that best meets their needs, technology businesses may reconfigure their go-to-market strategy and assist their clients' digital transformation initiatives. Customers' purchase habits frequently indicate their preparedness for a different form of engagement. (Freshman & Parida, 2018)

10.3.3 <u>DOMAIN TRANSFORMATION:</u>

Typically, organizations use new technology to reinvent their goods and services. They might sell existing services to a new consumer group or create whole new technology-enabled solutions. For example, renting out equipment rather than selling it allows you to reach a hitherto untapped market of clients who may only use your technology momentarily. Companies that sell industrial equipment, for example, can expand by offering digital solutions to their present client base and consumers who use other equipment. CNH Industrial, a producer of commercial, construction, and agricultural equipment, created its own fleet telematics solution to assist owners in optimizing operating and maintenance operations and connecting them to the company's dealer network for repair.

Adopting a digital-first mindset allows firms to implement agile processes, build a leaning toward testing and learning, and encourage decentralized decision-making. A successful transformation

to a digital-first culture, on the other hand, necessitates rethinking attitudes and procedures while also embracing new skills and capabilities.

A common mentality shift is shifting from controlling output to concentrating on customer service and innovation. Often, the cultural shift comes spontaneously when internal teams embrace digital procedures and see the value of altering organizational norms through other transformation. (Brinckerhoff, 2022)

10.4 INTERNATIONAL OMNICHANNEL MARKETING FROM WORLD'S TOP BRANDS:

10.4.1 DISNEY:

Disney is one of the entertainment industry's pioneers, continually advancing with technology and time. They have the scale, resources, and audience; thus, Omnichannel Marketing is a must. The ability of such a large corporation to make the transition appear smooth is a credit to its market reputation. It has set the standard for others to follow. It nails its omnichannel approach down to the smallest detail. It all starts with your first visit to the attractive, mobile-responsive website of the entertainment behemoth. Even their trip-planning website works well on mobile devices, which is unusual. Disney has long been known for its attention to detail.

You may book accommodations and plan your holiday commute with the Disney Experience service. With the introduction of the Magic Band Program, this gadget may be used as a hotel room key, a picture storage device for photographs and memories with your favorite Disney characters, and to order meals. You may also keep your trip moving by identifying your favorite vacation destinations and estimating the waiting time at each one with Fast Pass integration.

With such a complete experience, Disney checks all the boxes and leads the way by focusing on the basic concepts of Omnichannel Marketing - least effort from the consumer, tailored content, and seamless customer experience across platforms. (RS, 2019)

10.4.2 STARBUCKS:

Starbucks offers a reward programmed that has contributed to its position as the number one destination for coffee enthusiasts. An examination of the app reveals that the business has completely embraced omnichannel marketing. Starbucks' rewards app is an example of

omnichannel marketing. You may acquire a free rewards card through the app that you can use for any transaction. It allows you to check and refill your card through phone, online, in-store, or app. Once completed, the update is reflected in real-time across all channels.

You don't have to worry about not having enough balance; simply refill your card and the cashier will know it's been updated when you swipe your card. It's that silky! (Gao & Us, 2018)

10.4.3 <u>WALGREENS:</u>

Walgreens has relied heavily on its mobile app for client outreach. Customers may use the app to check their medications and refill them without having to call their pharmacy. They may also set up reminders to notify customers when their prescriptions need to be renewed.

Customers may accomplish everything using the app rather than calling the pharmacy and setting up a prescription. This avoids potential hold periods and may shorten the time required for in-store pick-ups. Though hardly ground-breaking, Walgreens has laid the groundwork for a smart pharmaceutical omnichannel experience. (Allen, 2020)

10.4.4 <u>SEPHORA:</u>

Sephora consistently ranks high on lists of the finest omnichannel marketing shops due to their seamless integration of online and in-store experiences. While at a physical store, the brand experience is constant with beauty suggestions, knowledgeable salespeople, complimentary makeovers, and, of course, items to test. Customers may utilize their Beauty Bag accounts online to log purchases ("What color was that lipstick again?"), scan products in-store, watch tutorials, manage a wish list, and much more. By providing this experience to their customers, this #1 beauty shop increased mobile orders by almost 100%. (Jayasinghe, Girija, & Arunkumar, 2022)

10.4.5 <u>BANK OF AMERICA:</u>

Many people feel that omnichannel marketing is solely for retailers (e-tailers). However, this is changing as omnichannel becomes a way of life for customers (and will soon become one for marketers too). Fintech firms, in particular, must provide a consistent experience to their consumers, whether it is a real bank transaction, an online transaction, or an ATM withdrawal. For a long time, Bank of America (BOA) has provided its customers with an omnichannel experience, from allowing them to connect to free Wi-Fi and complete banking operations while waiting in a branch to giving tablets while sitting in a kiosk with a bank manager. However, they went a step

further and launched the 'Robo-branch' concept, in which consumers may communicate their complaints with a machine rather than a teller. The interaction, problem solving, and overall experience are all the same. ("7 Amazing Brands That Have Mastered Omnichannel Marketing [New]," 2019)

10.4.6 <u>DUNKIN DONUTS:</u>

Dunkin' Donuts is putting a new spin on its promotional plan, providing live and interactive content across all of its social platforms in the run-up to National Donut Day, demonstrating how social tactics are becoming wider. To raise awareness for the countrywide campaign, the restaurant is using a range of mobile-first strategies to pique consumers' interest and entice them to acquire a free classic doughnut with any beverage purchase this Friday, June 3. Although Dunkin? Donuts has previously promoted National Donut Day through its social media platforms, this year's plan avoids reusing the same materials across all of its accounts and instead focuses on bringing out content tailored to each particular digital channel. (Baron, Chen, & Li, 2022)

10.4.7 <u>STANCE:</u>

Stance is a well-known American T-shirt and underwear company that has integrated mobile services into its business. Stance understands the importance of customer service and has completely embraced the omnichannel approach to both satisfy and attract new consumers.

To improve their customer service experience, the stand needed to reduce client wait time and long lines by allowing consumers to checkout. This allows the brand to serve several clients at the same time. As if that wasn't enough, stance created a user-friendly web-based self-checkout experience. Customers will not have to clutter their phones with apps this way. (Pini & Aquarelle, 2018)

Zurich Insurance Group is a major multi-line insurer with operations in both global and local markets. It employs over 53,000 people and offers a diverse variety of property and casualty and life insurance products and services in over 210 countries and territories. Individuals, small businesses, mid-sized and big firms, as well as global organizations, are among Zurich's clientele.

In Portugal, the organization works with over 1,000 brokers to provide coverage to individuals and small-to-medium-sized businesses. Agents have had internet access to Zurich's corporate information and operations for many years. The idea was to reduce paperwork so they could do

more. However, the technology, which was a screen scraping solution for the back-end AS/400 system, had outlived its usefulness. (Mingier, Kocsis, & Wagner, 2018)

10.5 COVID-19 AND THE IMPACTS ON ONLINE RETAILERS:

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the novel Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has become a global pandemic since March 2020. Surprisingly, the virus was identified in China, and it has quickly spread to a number of other nations. As a result, this epidemic is harming human life, including commercial operations and the global financial situation (Craven, Liu, & Wilson, 2020). The worldwide COVID-19 epidemic, which is expected to last through 2020, has had an impact on shopping behavior. During the COVID-19 epidemic, social isolation forced many people to turn to digital media.

In general, buyers will use advanced data to gather product knowledge before making a purchase. According to data from various nations throughout the world, including the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Canada, and Latin America, internet retail sales are extremely low when compared to offline retail sales. Global internet retail sales account for less than 30% of overall retail sales. As a result, retail sales in physical stores are vast, accounting for more than 70% of overall retail sales. The COVID-19 epidemic is having a minor impact on online retail sales. Prior to the COVID-19 epidemic, the increase in global online retail sales was less than 10% of overall retail sales or 10% to 15% of online retail sales.

During the pandemic, the most significant increase in online retail sales occurred in the second quarter of 2020 and then declined in the third quarter of 2020. During the pandemic, internet retail sales reached a high of more than 35% of overall retail sales. The increase in online retail sales in the second quarter of 2020 was caused by unexpected purchase behavior as customers feared market disruptions due to the worldwide COVID-19 epidemic (Sayyida, 2021).
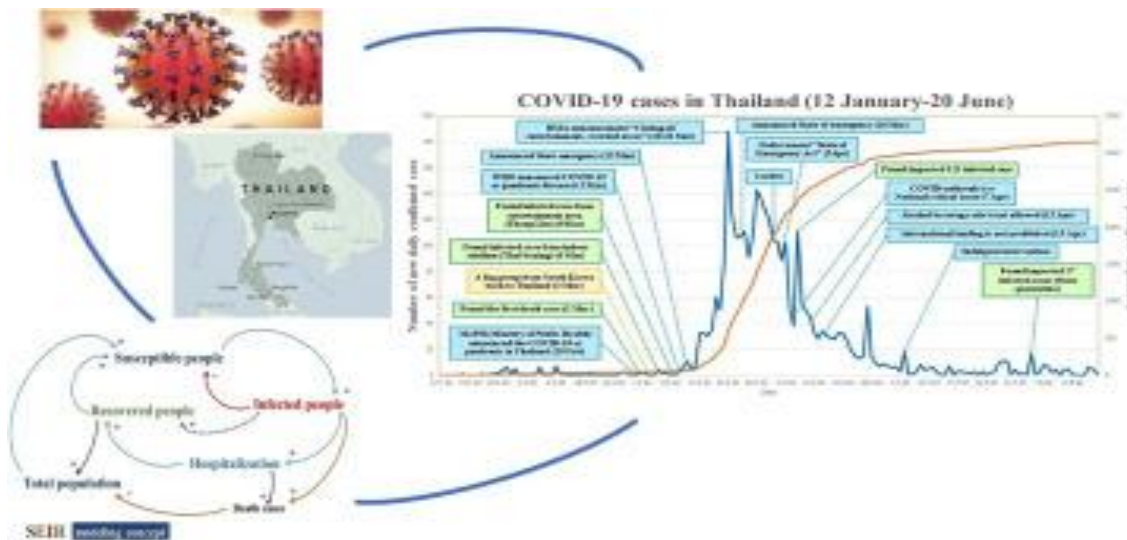
Figure 8. Covid-19 in Thailand (Tantrakarnapa & Bhopdhornangkul, 2020)

10.6 OMNI-CHANNEL SOLUTIONS FOR THE RETAILERS:

During COVID-19, omni-channel approach plays a vital role in reducing lengthy queues at basic goods stores, which has helped curb the pandemic's spread. The strategy ensured that clients recognized the social distance procedure during the product ordering and delivery process. As important supply chain tactics, organizations and retailers should deploy appropriate omni-channel capabilities, such as order management systems, inventory management systems, enterprise data interfaces, and warehouse management systems.

Because of the failure of a multichannel system, the primary supply chain has shifted to an omni-channel approach, which is the most efficient and robust. A solid IMS (inventory management system) and OMS (Order Management Software) are critical gateways to efficient omni-channel strategy, making stock areas effectively open in offline and online customers and determining which stock areas where an order should be fulfilled. However, retailers have not been completely successful in effectively onboarding new clients due to a lack of understanding of the IMS and OMS prerequisites; as a result, they have implemented EDI and WMS (warehouse management systems) as omnichannel strategies to improve the supply chain serving clients.

An omni-channel supply chain strategy aims to provide customers with a consistent shopping experience whether they buy their things in-store or online. The omni-channel approach has been

totally coordinated and empowered by sophisticated technology and the most efficient microservice architectural framework. Retailers for in-store, brick and mortar, and internet goods are all included. Thus, the significant advancement in the omnichannel retail strategy, along with an alarming endeavor to reduce delivery times, has resulted in a fundamental increase in demand for consumers' items.

Finally, due of the rapid advancement of technology and the emergence of the Internet, OMS, EDI, and WMS have grown enormously. As a result, combining various system capabilities frameworks into a single long-lasting system provides significant advantages throughout the disruptive adoption of omni-channel supply chain strategy. Because the client expects an omni-channel arrangement with a consolidated supply chain, flexible system capabilities are critical in managing and building omni-channel supply chains. As a result, supply chain systems should exchange information in order to provide a consistent client experience and loyalty. They should be able to deal with any complications that may arise during the order fulfilment process (Venkatasubramanian, 2021).

10.7 FUTURE OF OMNICHANNEL IN INTERNATIONAL MARKET:

Physical experiences, convenience, personalization, and efficiency are the future of omnichannel shopping. Shoppers are becoming more knowledgeable about their alternatives, and they worry about values and the societal influence of enterprises. As a result, businesses will need to adopt an omnichannel strategy that is likewise centered on addressing the increasing demands of the modern customer.

THE STORE OF THE FUTURE: 5 CRITICAL ELEMENTS

Store technology today is outdated and broken – it can't support even current consumer demands, let alone those of the future. The store of the future needs to support the real-time connection between the consumer, the associate, inventory and pricing, all of which are essential to the omni-channel experience.

The store of the future must be:

MOBILE
Offer new ways of enhancing customer engagement and connecting the physical and digital shopping experience.

RELEVANT
Identify customers when they enter the store and be knowledgeable about their purchase history.

PERSONAL
Leverage the high-touch aspect of in-store shopping by arming associates with information and insights.

UBIQUITOUS
Gather, analyze and disseminate customer, product, pricing and inventory data instantly and across all channels.

SECURE
Ensure the security of customer payment and personal data. If you don't, nothing else matters.

Figure 9. The Store of the future (**"How Omni-Channel Strategies Hold the Baton for Retail Industry | Apparel Resources," 2018**)

10.7.1 Retail is physical and we aren't going back:

Consumer expectations have been and continue to increase, with both disruption from larger shops and the pandemic having a role. The epidemic has highlighted how some shops struggle to connect the links and develop omnichannel experiences.

According to Mayur, this has prompted customers to begin switching, bringing "consumer power" to the fore.

We've seen the democratization of retail take hold as customers acquire more control over their experience as consumer alternatives have proliferated. However, this isn't a new problem; "shoppers have been growing more demanding about it for a long time," according to Wendy. Amazon has played a critical part in this, creating customer expectations and setting the bar for how soon things arrive. So, how else have companies like Amazon influenced customers? It used to be all about obtaining the best deal. However, this is no longer the case. "Now, as shoppers, we all know where to go to get the greatest deal if we want it because it's literally at our fingertips," Wendy explains. As a result, the future of multichannel shopping will be built on ease. Or, "if I want it, I can click," as Wendy so succinctly puts it. (Pangarkar, Arora, & Shukla, 2022)

10.7.2 Consumers want digital experiences to feel personal

Consumers are accustomed to having an in-person experience, and rather than losing it entirely in the digital environment, it is preferable to develop blended experiences through video, screen sharing, and other means.

Not least because, as Wendy points out, "time has become a valuable commodity." Everything boils down to ensuring that buyers spend their time appropriately.

Some Acquire clients who are physical retailers have begun digital transformation in order to prepare for the future of multichannel retail. The Dufresne Group, a furniture merchant, has used Acquire technology for both pre-sales and servicing. (Kleiner & Mitchell, 2018)

10.7.3 Customers want choice, consistency, agility, and personalization

Choice is important when it comes to providing what people desire. Customers have always sought options; it's simply that those options are now more focused on contacting companies through digital media.

Google reports that 98% of Americans move between gadgets in the same day.

Consistency is also vital, as consumers respond negatively when firms do not talk with one brand voice and create a service that is defined by the channel. Finally, this contradicts consumers' desire for adaptability.

Finally, personalization has been and will continue to be an important issue. Consumers expect product suggestions tailored to them, whether provided by an algorithm or a human. (Sheng, Feng, Chen, & Chu, 2021)

10.7.4 Seamless experiences will impact revenue

Customers are purchasing more online and in physical stores than ever before. And the firms who grasp it allow customers to do what they want, putting the customer first.

Google claims that multichannel buyers have a 30% better lifetime value than those who exclusively use one channel.

Wendy feels that physical shops' earlier emphasis on operational efficiency will simply not endure due to "all the different ways that individuals may now purchase." If you try to push people to do

something they don't want to do, they will retreat to the numerous other alternatives accessible to them. The epidemic has taught customers to shop wisely.

This prompts the question: why aren't all businesses attempting to adopt an omnichannel strategy?

To begin with, it might be expensive. Even if you do obtain it, figuring out how to put it in place might be difficult. Companies who do not see the need for change, on the other hand, must know that "there is no turning back on this," according to Wendy. (Kan Sakar, Munir, & Shabani, 2019)

10.7.5 Customers will keep changing

In the future of multichannel retailing, removing the stress from the shopping experience will be critical. And this will occur along two distinct dimensions. Shoppers will wonder if this is a good investment. Is this an efficient use of time?

10.7.5.1 A laser focus on convenience

Shoppers will consider purchasing in the context of their daily lives. It's all part of a larger push toward health and wellbeing. This will continue to expand as buyers place a greater focus on doing what they want in their spare time.

10.7.5.2 Value-based purchasing is on the rise

Younger shoppers, in particular, have strong attitudes about society, community, and the businesses with which they do business. As a result, consumers are becoming more aware of the global influence and the importance of trust. ("The Future of Omnichannel Retailing: Experts Weigh In," 2022)

10.8 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

I. _____ is one of the entertainment industry's pioneers, continually advancing with technology and time.
   a. Starbucks
   b. Disney
   c. Ecommerce
   d. Dara

II. Google reports that _____ of Americans move between gadgets in the same day.
   a. 91%
   b. 98%
   c. 89%
   d. 19%

III. _____ is putting a new spin on its promotional plan, providing live and interactive content across all of its social platforms.
   a. Ecommerce
   b. Companies
   c. Dunkin Donuts
   d. All

10.9 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

I. Explain the future of omnichannel in international market.
II. Write the impact of COVID 19 on online retailers.
III. What do you know about Walgreens.

CHAPTER 11

11.1 OMNICHANNELS IN THAILAND

11.1.1 THAILAND INTERNET USERS:

11.1.1.1 OVERVIEW:

➢ **Number of internet users in Thailand from 2017 to 2020 with a forecast through 2026:**

In Thailand, around 53.62 million individuals have internet connection in 2020. This population is expected to rise to about 60 million by 2026. According to the data, the number of internet users has been steadily growing since 2017.

➢ **Asia Pacific Internet Usage:**

Similarly, since 2014, the number of internet users in Asia Pacific has continuously increased. China had the most internet users in January 2021, followed by India, Indonesia, and Japan. In terms of internet user behavior in Thailand, Thai internet users spend around 10 hours each day on the internet. In 2020, it was also stated that mobile phones were the most often used internet access device among Thai consumers, followed by laptops and desktop computers. (Krarist, 2018)

➢ **Internet user penetration in Thailand from 2017 to 2020 with a forecast through 2026:**

Thailand's internet penetration is expected to be approximately 76 percent by 2020. This figure is expected to rise to roughly 84 percent by 2026. Every year, the country's internet accessibility improves. (Jimsonweed, Uttar, & Rautavaara, 2020)

➢ **Broadband internet user penetration in Thailand from 2011 to 2021:**

The penetration rate of broadband customers in Thailand is expected to reach 19.3 percent in 2021, an increase over the previous year. In recent years, the numbers demonstrate a progressive growth in broadband internet prevalence. (Nama hoot & Jantar, 2021)

Number of households with internet connection in Thailand from 2016 to 2021:

In 2021, there will be around 19.8 million internet-connected homes in Thailand. The percentage of homes having internet access in Thailand has been growing in the last years. Thais are spending more time online as internet penetration rises and mobile internet becomes more widely available.

➢ **Thailand's internet infrastructure**

The internet has grown increasingly accessible in Thailand, as seen by the country's steadily growing rate of internet penetration. This has resulted in rivalry among internet service providers such as AIS, True, and Dtac to give users with wider access to 4G. Furthermore, the Thai government is supporting 5G access in order to strengthen Thailand's internet infrastructure.

> **Thailand's Internet Industry Future**

Thailand's internet users are among the most active in the world, spending the majority of their time online, particularly on mobile phones. Thai internet use is mostly driven by mobile internet penetration. The number of mobile internet users has progressively increased over the years as mobile subscriptions have become more inexpensive and accessible. With increased efforts in the country to improve internet technology, it is probable that additional online services, such as e-wallet services, would continue to rise, along with larger potential growth in the e-commerce industry. (Purewal & TripPak, 2020)

Share of households with internet connection in Thailand in 2020, by type:

In 2020, homes with internet access via 3G mobile wireless connection represented for about 70% of Thai households. In the same year, around 19 million Thai households gained internet connectivity. (Lopez-Sintas, Lamberti, & Sutphin, 2020)

11.2 <u>INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURE:</u>

Share of high-speed internet connection Q1 2021 Thailand, by type:

Fiber optic internet had the biggest proportion of high-speed internet connections in Thailand in the first quarter of 2021, accounting for roughly 97.8 percent, followed by any sort of digital subscriber line (ads). TICC, 3BB, NT, and AWN are some of Thailand's major high-speed internet service providers. (Sultanas & Matombo, 2018)

Share of fiber optic internet connection Thailand Q3 2019-Q1 2021:

Fiber optic internet connections accounted for 93.8 percent of all internet connections in Thailand in the first quarter of 2021. The results reveal that fiber optic connections are increasing steadily, with a large rise in the first quarter of 2021. (Sultanas & Matombo, 2018)

Share of ads internet connection Thailand Q3 2019-Q1 2021:

ads internet connections accounted for around 5% of high-speed internet connections in Thailand in the first quarter of 2021. In recent quarters, the proportion of ads connections has decreased significantly. (Sudtasan & Mitomo, 2018)

Average bandwidth internet capacity Thailand Q3 2019-Q1 2021:

The average bandwidth capacity of International Internet Gateway (IIG) in Thailand was expected to be approximately 2,247.6 gigabits per second in the first quarter of 2021. Submarine cable and landline internet connections are available for International Internet Gateway. ("Thailand: Share of Instagram Users by Gender 2021," n.d.)

Download speed of fixed internet connections Thailand 2021, by provider:

3BB broadband had the greatest download speed for fixed internet connections in Thailand in 2021, with roughly 332.2 megabits per second, followed by True online and AIS. Despite having the fastest download speed, True online had the greatest performance that year. ("Thailand: Share of Instagram Users by Gender 2021," n.d.)

Upload speed of fixed internet connections Thailand 2021, by provider:

True online had the fastest upload speed among fixed internet connections in Thailand in 2021, with a speed of 237.8 megabits per second, followed by 3BB broadband and AIS. True online also outperformed other service providers in terms of fixed internet connections that year. (Sudtasan & Mitomo, 2018)

Average latency of fixed internet connections Thailand 2021, by provider:

True online delivered the best latency experience of fixed internet connections for consumers in 2021, with a latency of roughly 9.8 milliseconds when compared to other internet service providers in Thailand such as 3BB broadband and TOT. True online had the greatest performance for fixed internet connections that year. ("Thailand: Share of Instagram Users by Gender 2021," n.d.)

11.2.1 <u>MOBILE INTERNET:</u>
Number of mobile phone internet users Thailand 2017-2026:

In Thailand, around 53.57 million individuals used mobile phones to access the internet in 2020. This statistic is expected to reach around 60 million mobile phone internet users by 2026.

Furthermore, a poll done in December 2020 indicated that mobile phones, rather than laptops, desktops, and tablets, were the most often utilized device for browsing the internet in Thailand. (Nimmolrat, Khuwuthyakorn, Wien tong, & Trinamool, 2021)

Thailand's mobile internet service providers

In Thailand, three mobile providers provide mobile internet access: AIS, Dtac, and True Move H. Advanced Info Service PCL, or AIS, has the greatest 4G network coverage in the country in 2020. Meanwhile, True Move H provided the greatest streaming performance for mobile internet consumers that year. Mobile phones have grown in popularity.

Thailand's everyday use of mobile applications

According to a poll conducted in the third quarter of 2020, the most popular mobile applications among Thai users were social networking apps. They also regularly utilized chat applications, entertainment apps, and shopping apps. Bualuang banking, a mobile banking software that helps users better manage their financial activities, was the most downloaded free app on Android in Thailand as of July 2021.

Mobile phone internet user penetration Thailand 2017-2026:

Thailand's mobile phone internet penetration rate was approximately 73% in 2020. This number is expected to rise to 84 percent by 2026. Access to mobile internet has grown steadily throughout the country over the years. (Cheapish, 2019)

11.2.2 Number of mobile subscribers Thailand 2011-2021:
The number of mobile users in Thailand was predicted to reach about 120.9 million in 2021, representing a four million subscriber gain from 2020. According to the data, the number of mobile users in Thailand has been steadily rising, with a little decrease expected in 2020.

Thailand's communication market

Thailand's communication market is dominated by wireless, network, and wired communication, with wireless communication leading the market. Thailand's three largest mobile operators are AIS, True, and Dtac. In terms of mobile users, AIS is by far Thailand's largest operator. (Hooking, ภูคงคา, Jhundra-indra, จันทร์อินทร์, & School, 2020)

Thailand's mobile market is expanding.

In 2019, voice and non-voice services contributed considerably to mobile service revenue of roughly 65 billion Thai baht. Nonetheless, income from mobile services in Thailand fluctuated somewhat from the third quarter of 2018 to the third quarter of 2019. (Khemapech, 2019)

11.2.3 Average performance rate of 2G to 5G mobile streaming Thailand 2021, by provider:

True Move H delivered the greatest 2G, 3G, 4G, and 5G mobile internet streaming performance in Thailand in 2021, accounting for 75.4 percent of the performance rate. True Move H had the top worldwide mobile performance within the same time period. (Daeng's, Sirawongphatsara, & Wuttidittachotti, 2021)

11.2.4 Download speed of 2G to 5G mobile internet Thailand 2021, by provider:

With about 62 megabits per second in 2021, AIS mobile offered the best download speed for 2G, 3G, 4G, and 5G mobile internet in Thailand, followed by True Move H. Although AIS had the fastest download speeds, True Move H had the greatest mobile internet performance that year. ("Thailand: Share of Instagram Users by Gender 2021," n.d.)

11.3 CONSUMER USAGE:

Number of internet users Thailand Q4 2021, by region:

The central area of Thailand has the most internet users, with roughly 17 million users as of the fourth quarter of 2021. The number of internet users in the central area accounted for 88.4 percent of the population. (Daeng's, Sirawongphatsara, & Wuttidittachotti, 2021)

Share of internet users Thailand Q4 2021, by age group:

In Thailand, 98.6 percent of people aged 25 to 34 utilized the internet in the fourth quarter of 2021. In comparison, 64.6 percent of Thais aged 50 and up accessed the internet. (EUs was et al., 2021)

Daily time spent using the internet Thailand 2021, by device

According to a Arterioportal research, the average daily time spent on the internet by Thais in the third quarter of 2021 was five hours and 28 minutes via mobile phones. When all devices were

included, the average amount of time spent online every day was about 10 hours. (Abdulkadir, 2021)

Reasons to use the internet among users Thailand Q3 2021

According to a DataReportal research, as of the third quarter of 2021, the most common purpose for utilizing the internet among Thai internet users was to find information, which accounted for 67.6 percent of respondents. Following news and current events, as well as viewing videos, are two of the most important reasons. (Abdulkadir, 2021)

Reasons for not using the internet Thailand Q4 2021

As of the fourth quarter of 2021, 7.5 percent of Thai respondents said they did not use the internet because they were uninterested in using it. Another major issue was that they lacked the ability to utilize the internet. (Abdulkadir, 2021)

Share of internet users Thailand 2021, by activity

In 2021, over 77 percent of Thai internet users went online for communication purposes. Other online activities, such as health tracking and food delivery, have lately become more popular, most likely as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic.

Demographics and activities of Thai internet users

It should come as no surprise that individuals of all ages rely on the internet. When it comes to utilizing the internet, each age has distinct goals. Thailand's Generation Y internet users appreciate utilizing the internet for social media and leisure. While older generations, such as baby boomers, use the internet to seek for info or read books, they also like utilizing it for social media. The internet is becoming increasingly accessible to Thai users, with the ability to affect and change future online actions across all demographics. (Lu, Yeo, Guo, Zhao, & Wu, 2022)

11.4 <u>SOCIAL MEDIA:</u>

Number of social network users Thailand 2017-2026

In 2020, the number of social network users in Thailand was estimated to reach at 52.63 million. This population is expected to rise to about 60 million by 2026. According to the data, the number

of social network users has been steadily rising over the years and will continue to climb in the next years.

11.4.1 Thailand's social media

China had the most monthly active social media users globally in January 2021, followed by India and Indonesia, with Thailand ranked seventh with 55 million members. The penetration rate of social network users in Thailand is expected to reach roughly 53% by 2023, representing the majority of the Thai population. (Paranematic & Glantz, 2020)

11.4.2 Thailand's social media user profile

In the third quarter of 2020, Facebook and YouTube were the dominant social media sites in Thailand, with roughly 94 percent of users on both platforms, followed by Line, Instagram, and Twitter. During the same time period, Thai internet users spent an average of 8.44 hours a day on the internet and two and a half hours on social media. (Nunthiphatprueksa, 2017)

11.4.3 Social media user penetration Thailand 2017-2026

Thailand's social network adoption rate is expected to be over 75% by 2020. This figure is expected to rise to 83 by 2026. Since 2017, social networks have grown in popularity in the country. (Agarwal & Jones, 2022)

11.4.4 Share of social media users Thailand Q3 2021, by platform

YouTube had the biggest share of users among Thailand's major social media platforms in the third quarter of 2020, followed by Facebook and Line. The number of social media users in Thailand is expected to grow in the next years, reaching over 62 million by 2025.

11.4.5 Thailand's most popular social media platforms

In the third quarter of 2020, Thais spent about nine hours on the internet, with around two and a half hours spent on social media. Instagram and TikTok have gained popularity among Thai internet users in addition to YouTube, Facebook, and Line. Both Instagram and TikTok have seen considerable increases in user penetration since 2017. The number of Instagram users in Thailand is expected to exceed 20 million by 2025, more than double the number of users in 2017. TikTok user penetration in Thailand was likewise promising, accounting for over 55 percent of the whole population as of January 2021. (CHATTHARAKUL, 2019b)

11.4.6 Number of Facebook users Thailand 2017-2026

Thailand's Facebook user base is expected to reach 50.75 million by 2020. This figure is expected to rise to over 45 million by 2026. The social network was accessed on a monthly basis by about three billion individuals globally as of the second quarter of 2021. Given that there were over 53 million internet users in Thailand in 2020, nearly all of them used Facebook.

11.4.6.1 Thailand's Facebook use

Thailand's digital population reached 56 million in 2017, including 46 million internet users and 32 million online users. Men and women between the ages of 18 and 34 were the most likely to use Facebook. (Janssen, 2022)

11.4.6.2 Thailand's social media

In Thailand in 2020, social network users accounted for almost 75% of the overall population. Aside from Facebook, YouTube and LINE have strong penetration rates. In general, social media usage has various consequences for e-commerce and company performance. For example, Facebook would act both as information and online commerce channel for digital customers. ("Thailand: Share of Instagram Users by Gender 2021," n.d.)

11.4.6.3 Share of Facebook users Thailand 2022, by gender

According to Napoleon Cat, females made up the majority of Facebook users in Thailand, accounting for around 52.5 percent as of February 2022. During the same time period, Thailand had approximately 60 million Facebook users. ("Thailand: Share of Instagram Users by Gender 2021," n.d.)

11.4.6.4 Share of Instagram users Thailand 2022, by gender

According to Napoleon Cat, females made up the majority of Instagram users in Thailand, accounting for around 61.9 percent of users as of February 2022. During the same time period, there were around 20 million Instagram users in Thailand. ("Thailand: Share of Instagram Users by Gender 2021," n.d.)

11.5 THAI RETAILERS:

11.5.1 Omni-channel

The report is a retail industry analysis in Thailand during the omni-channel retailing age. Currently, the integration of multichannel retailing, also known as "Omni-channel Retailing," is crucial in the

retail business. The phrase "omni-channel" itself involves integrating all retail channels and consumer contact points in order to serve customers' needs must be met in a more effective manner. As physical retail stores merge, digital technologies such as many shops are presently using smartphones and tablets, as well as e-commerce networks updated their company strategy and technologies to provide customers with a smooth purchasing experience their consumers and satisfy their demands in a 360-degree circle to provide speedier responsiveness. At the same time, consumer convenience and a lower lost sales rate are achieved. (Putithanarak, Klong thong, Tavern, & Ngamkroeckjoti, 2022)

The paper examines the retail industry in Thailand within the omni-channel retailing era. Currently, multichannel retailing, also known as "Omni-channel Retailing," is critical in the retail industry. The term "omni-channel" itself is misleading entails bringing together all retail channels and consumer touch points in order to serve customers' requirements must be fulfilled more effectively. As physical retail locations become more integrated, digital technology.

Many stores are now employing cellphones, tablets, and e-commerce networks modified their corporate strategy and technologies to deliver a pleasant shopping experience for consumers connect their customers and meet their needs in a 360-degree circle to deliver faster response. Simultaneously, consumer convenience and a decreased percentage of lost sales are obtained. This study will help omni-channel merchants identify what they need to develop to become more successful in the future. Furthermore, the survey informs retailers on the problems they will face as they transition to becoming omni-channel retailers and have a well-prepared prior, as well as provide insightful data that allows the government understand the tough climate and main risks to retail industry today. The research will divide data collecting into two parts: organizational and personal and the consumer side It will be carried out through qualitative analysis and in-depth interviews. (*A STUDY of OMNI-CHANNEL RETAILERS in THAILAND by MISS KORNWIPA SIRIBUNYANUPARB an INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED in PARTIAL FULFILLMENT of the REQUIREMENTS for the DEGREE of MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM in MARKETING (INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM)*, n.d.)

11.5.2 E-commerce in Thailand

According to JP Morgan's 2020 e-commerce study, Thailand's business-to-consumer e-commerce sector has been gradually rising since 2017 and is currently valued more than $27.7 billion. Growth

will be sustained at a compound annual rate of 7.7 percent through 2023. There is an opportunity for US business-to-consumer merchants to gain a portion of the e-commerce market share.

This expansion is being driven by increased internet and mobile phone use, as well as enhanced logistics and e-payment systems. The COVID epidemic scenario in Thailand has increased e-commerce usage due to the increased convenience and customer confidence that e-commerce solutions bring. Thailand's expanding e-commerce sector is concentrated on mobile apps, with a $15.8 billion mobile e-commerce market predicted in 2020.

The Thai government's "Thailand 4.0" programmer calls for the development of the next generation of digital application platforms to support and encourage online activities such as e-commerce, e-payments, and e-government.

Cross-border e-commerce accounts for over 30% of Thailand's total e-commerce market. Almost half of all internet customers have previously made an international transaction.

Global businesses such as Amazon, eBay, and Agoda remain popular, but local C2C marketplaces and online communities such as We love shopping and Antimarket show to be strong challengers that cater to local interests.

Several reasons, including rising smartphone adoption and fierce rivalry among e-commerce firms, are driving Thailand's online retail industry. (Wongkhamdi, Cooharojananone, & Khalistan, 2020)

11.5.3 Online and Offline Retail in Thailand

Thailand is presently one of Asia's top Internet retail marketplaces, however despite growth in 2013, Internet retail sales in Thailand constituted barely 1% of overall retail sales.

Internet shopping in Thailand is stalling in terms of its percentage of overall commerce, according to market research firm Euromonitor International, and is anticipated to continue at this level through 2018.

Thailand is now one of the major marketplaces for Internet retail in Asia, valued at U$1.054 billion, and is anticipated to increase by 74.9% to $1.843 billion in 2018. However, the larger picture is that Thailand's proportion of Internet shopping is low and will continue to decline.

According to Euromonitor International, the delayed adoption of Internet commerce is mostly owing to significant rivalry from brick-and-mortar based channels. Grocery retailing in Thailand

leads the retail market with 63%, as huge chains actively expand new locations in urban and regional areas.

According to the Thai Retailers Association, overall retail sales are likely to rise as customers restore confidence, with a 6-7% year-on-year increase from 1 trillion Thai baht last year (TRA).

Unfavorable economic and political conditions led to a 4.5% drop in sales of durable products, a 3% drop in semi-durable goods, and a 5% drop in non-durable or consumable items in the first six months of 2014. This reflected lower spending power in the low-income category in the first half, as well as relatively high levels of household debt.

The convenience and specialty store sectors rose by 7% and 4.5% in the first half, respectively, in terms of shop count. The number of hypermarkets and supermarkets increased by 3.5%, while department shops increased by 3%.

The Thai Retailers Association (TRA) anticipates that growth would increase as a result of a stimulus injection by the military rule commencing in October. TRA has suggested that the junta pursue many economic stimulus measures to boost the economy and retail industry, such as cutting Thais' cost of living in sectors like as food, transportation, and gasoline. ("Offline vs. Online Retailing in Thailand," n.d.)

11.5.4 <u>Thai e-commerce trend today</u>

Thailand is the 22nd largest eCommerce market, with a revenue of $10.5 billion in 2021, ahead of Austria and behind Switzerland.

The Thai eCommerce market increased by 28% in 2021, contributing to the global growth rate of 15%. Global eCommerce sales, like those in Thailand, are likely to rise in the coming years. Global expansion will continue in the next years as new markets emerge. East and Southeast Asia, with their increasing middle classes and lagging offline infrastructure, will drive this development.

Thailand is anticipated to beat the world average of 6% with an annual growth rate of 8% between 2021 and 2025. (Kim, 2019)

11.6 OMNI CHANNEL AND THAI CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR:

11.6.1 Thai's customer performance

(Reuters) - BANGKOK, Aug 11 (Reuters) - Thai consumer confidence climbed for the second month in a row in July, reaching a five-month high, helped by stronger economic activity following the relaxation of COVID-19 limits, according to a poll released on Thursday, although the high cost of living remained a concern.

The University of Thai Chamber of Commerce consumer index rose to 42.4 in July from 41.6 the previous month.

Consumer spending is expected to gradually rise later this year as the economy picks up pace, aided by greater exports and a resurgence in the key tourist industry, according to university president Thanavath Phonvichai. According to him, the economy would increase by 3.0% to 3.5% this year, with exports increasing by 6% to 8% and foreign visitor arrivals increasing by 8-10 million.

Prior to the pandemic, there were roughly 40 million international tourists in 2019.

According to Thavash, the central bank's first interest rate rise in almost four years on Wednesday will have little influence on the economy since commercial banks will not hurry to boost their interest rates.

He said that the central bank is projected to boost the key rate by a quarter point at each of the next two sessions this year, bringing the rate to 1.25%. (Reuters, 2022)

11.6.2 Omni channel roadmap in Thailand

It is abundantly evident that retailers no longer require proof that shifting to an omni-channel business strategy is a critical component in increasing consumer loyalty and corporate success. A commitment to providing the best customer experience is at the heart of a seamless shopping experience, but many retailers are still grappling with the challenges of omni-channel transformation because it touches almost every technology, system, and process in the retail ERP, making it a daunting task to manage. (Chingwatanasate, 2019)

11.6.3 Customer eccentricity:

Today's consumers are more aware, empowered, and technologically sophisticated than ever before, interacting with merchants from home, on the move, in-store, and so on. It is critical that you 1) center your strategy on the consumer and 2) sketch out your customer journeys. Simultaneously, you must 3) understand your client's life cycle and maintain a 4) unified customer view across all channels, allowing you to 5) act on insights in a timely and relevant way. (Rosskamp, 2018)

11.6.4 Pricing and product life-cycle consistency:

As customers spend more time researching and comparing items across different channels, businesses must priorities 6) high-quality products and pricing information. The most appreciated component of omni-channel is 7) price uniformity across all channels.

11.6.5 Unified Commerce:

Stock management for 8) Omni-channel fulfilment necessitates centralized channel management. The Order Management System (OMS) has emerged as a critical facilitator of this comprehensive commerce strategy. The more client journeys you wish to provide and the more complicated your fulfilment operations get, the more an OMS becomes a necessary tool. Anecdotal evidence suggests that OMS will 9) assist offer a single picture of orders throughout the company, 10) consolidate inventory as near to real time as possible, and 11) facilitate order fulfilment from physical locations. (Wang & Wang, 2021)

11.6.6 Organizational Alignment:

The final, but most crucial, aspect is organizational alignment, because even with merchants significantly invested in IT, the transformation will most likely fail if it is not supported. Omni-channel activities span several departments, and 12) need top-level involvement. This also means that physical and online organizations cannot coexist, and that 13) silo operations must be dismantled. 14) Create an omni-channel compensation strategy in order to harmonies your sales attribution. Example

Incentivize store employees to sell a product to a consumer through the internet channel if shops are out of stock. This will not happen if they regard the internet as a competitor channel. 15) Realign the IT organization and IT inside the company to support all operational and data processing operations. Finally, the 16) firm must embrace new metrics to assess an omni-channel

business in order to encourage omni-channel consumer behavior. (Ishfaq, Davis-Sramek, & Gibson, 2021b)

11.7 KEY FACTORS OF OMNICHANNEL IN THAILAND:

1. **Understanding The Omnichannel**

Customer Buyer-Controlled Market

Consumers have more information than ever before. Product and service information may be received through a multitude of channels, making it difficult for firms to meet their clients through the channels that are most important to them.

2. **Payment Channels:**

When it comes to the checkout process, technological improvements have resulted in enhanced possibilities and convenience. Consumers are increasingly abandoning cash and credit cards in favor of mobile wallets and other payment tools 83% of consumers believe that firms should consider expanding their electronic payment alternatives for customers. When it comes to checkout, customers want options. Businesses must not only supply innovative and simple payment ways, but also deploy these capabilities in-store, online, and via mobile devices.

3. **Smartphone—The True Omnichannel Device:**

The smartphone has evolved as a crucial consumer engagement tool as a consolidated, transportable information source. According to reports, 80% of internet users own smartphones and use them frequently throughout their everyday lives—at home, at work, and when making shopping decisions. Smartphones' ubiquity and convenience have pushed them to the forefront of the omnichannel environment, underscoring the necessity for a simplified mobile consumer experience.

4. **Multinational and Cross-Border Payment Integration:**

Cross-border ecommerce demand has gradually increased in recent years as online shoppers have grown more comfortable purchasing abroad. Many consumers want the cross-border online experience and checkout to be smooth, as they seek better bargains or greater inventory. Businesses that want to satisfy these demands must have ecommerce capabilities that not only

handle many nations, but also integrate all transaction currencies. Alternative payment options, dynamic currency conversion, and multi-lingual checkout enable businesses meet the diverse needs of a worldwide audience.

5. Customer Service and Data Management:

Customer service and engagement are widely regarded as the most important aspects of a successful omnichannel solution.

Consumers want companies to be easily available, answer to queries in a timely way, and deliver a seamless customer service experience across all channels when they contact with businesses via phone, social media, internet, email, and in-store. A well-executed omnichannel solution may provide the groundwork for a company's long-term development and sustainability.

6. Cross-Channel Security:

Customer service and engagement are widely regarded as the most important aspects of a successful omnichannel solution.

Consumers want companies to be easily available, answer to queries in a timely way, and deliver a seamless customer service experience across all channels when they contact with businesses via phone, social media, internet, email, and in-store. A well-executed omnichannel solution may provide the groundwork for a company's long-term development and sustainability.

7. Agile Strategy:

The customer buying journey has evolved from a linear format to a complicated one that necessitates enterprises diversifying interaction. Mobile technology has made information available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and increased access has increased the need for cutting-edge security measures. Evolving customer wants and industry demands necessitate firms implementing adaptable, scalable solutions that encourage cross-channel collaboration.

11.8 <u>OMNI CHANNEL FOR THAI E-COMMERCE AND SUSTAINABILITY:</u>

According to the study and Thai interview results, all respondents believe that Omni-channel may be a viable Thai e-commerce trend. They may reach out to their clients through social media, marketplaces, and their official website. Most Thai buyers prefer physical stores to internet retailers, even if online businesses have multiple channels with low prices and no delivery costs. The first stage for all Thai online users should be to learn and gain trust via real-world experience. If they employ Omni-channel, which connects offline and online, it means that they will transition from offline to online. (Chingwatanasate, 2019b)

They can then proceed from online to offline when purchasing a thing. Finally, they will be brave enough to order and pay via the web channel in one way or another. In reality, omni-channel may be used to any company area, as well as internal and external system administration for ease of use in everyday life.

The solution for Thai e-commerce trend sustainability is coupling with Omni-channel strategy. For the first reason, each firm should provide information to its people; workers, clients, and colleagues, in order for them to be successful users of Thai e-commerce with the accurate definition of Omni-channel and how to implement this strategy.

The sustainability of e-commerce is not only economic but also emotional and social in order to accelerate Thai e-commerce growth. Second, people can learn more about Omni-channel. Because of Thai culture, Thai lifestyle, Thai marketplace, Thai social media, and other factors, they can function better in the long run.

These may provide flawless seamless customer pleasure, allowing all consumers to prefer to come in the online channel with numerous benefits while still purchasing in store with their natural behaviors.

Integration of online and offline channels, allowing consumer access via their own digital devices such as smartphones, tablets, or computers. Thai businesses who want to enter the world of e-commerce should establish a flexible platform, a range of items, a user-friendly payment system in the Fintech style, and on-time delivery for the logistics system. The Thai people will then

understand the significance of Omni-channel on the long-term sustainability of the e-commerce trend. This is undoubtedly one of the reasons why Thai e-commerce is gaining traction in the Thai commercial industry.

With the Omni-channel approach, Thai customers now have the opportunity to sample and taste online shopping at their earliest convenience. The long-term Thai e-commerce trend may be the best priority for increasing consumer involvement and loyalty. **(Chingwatanasate, 2019b)**

11.9 EXAMPLES FROM THAILAND:

11.9.1 Big C Supercenter

Big C Supercenter is one of Thailand's largest supermarket chains. Fresh fruit, home appliances, inexpensive clothes, and a huge alcohol range are all available at their Ratchadamri shop in Bangkok.

Big C has a lot of cheap things as well as services in the building that may make it a worthy trip. Big C is really on the second and third levels. The ground level is home to a variety of high-street fashion stores, bargain jewelers, a vitamin center, and a bank.

11.9.2 Good to know about Big C Supercenter

On the fourth level, Big C features a mail service, a hair salon, and a children's entertainment center, so you can feel comfortable about letting the kids play while you get things done. The third story is dedicated to low-cost babywear, clothing, and stationery, while the fourth floor is home to the Food Park. If you want to relax, go to the top level and watch a movie. Big C is located on Ratchadamri Road, directly across from CentralWorld. ("Big c Supercenter in Bangkok - Shop at One of Thailand's Largest Hypermarkets - Go Guides," 2022)

Tops Market Thailand

Tops is a Thai grocery store chain. The chain is managed in Thailand by Central Food Retail, a subsidiary of Central Retail Corporation, and was co-founded by the then-parent of Tops Markets LLC in the United States. Tops Supermarket is joined by Tops Superstore, Tops Market, Tops Market Food & Wine, Tops Daily, and Central Food Hall. It is Thailand's largest grocery chain, with 120 locations around the country. ("Tops Supermarket," 2022)

Thai Sports

Thailand first competed in the Summer Olympics in 1952, followed by the Winter Olympics in 2002. Thailand has enjoyed the most success in boxing, with featherweight fighter So luck Casing winning the country's first Olympic gold medal in 1996.Bangkok, the country's capital, has hosted the Asian Games four times, more than any other country or city in Asia.

Thai people are huge sports fans and fanatics. Thailand sports are an important aspect of every Thai person's life. Traditional and indigenous games, as well as modern games, are popular among Thais.

Thailand offers a diverse range of sporting activities. Apart from badminton, football, boxing, snooker, tennis, and bowling, golf is the most popular Thai sport. Games from the past Thai boxing, kite fighting, boat racing, and taro are all popular sports in Thailand.

Golf is one of Thailand's most popular sports. Thailand's pleasant weather allows golfing to be enjoyed all year on the different golf courses located around the country. Because of Thailand's proximity to the sea, deep-sea fishing is a popular pastime. Water sports are quite popular in Thailand. The presence of certain world-class beaches allows for scuba diving and snorkeling. Pattaya, Samui Islands, Phuket, Phi-Phi Islands, and many other islands and beaches provide excellent diving facilities. Boat racing is also a widespread habit in several places of Thailand. Phuket successfully held the 4th Asian Beach Games in 2014.

Horse racing and automobile sports are also popular in Thailand. Almost all of Bangkok's top hotels and resorts provide badminton, squash, and tennis facilities to tourists and visitors. Windsurfing has also grown in popularity at Pattaya's Jomtien Beach. Thai boxing, kite fighting, and taro are three classic Thailand sports that are still practiced today. (Kristina Lakkhongkha, 2020)

11.10 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

I. _____ internet users are among the most active in the world, spending the majority of their time online, particularly on mobile phones.

    a. China

    b. London

    c. Thailand

    d. Brooklyn

II. _____ is one of Thailand's largest supermarket chains.

    a. Big A Supercenter

    b. Big B Supercenter

    c. Big C Supercenter

    d. None

III. The _____ anticipates that growth would increase as a result of a stimulus injection by the military rule commencing in October.

    a. Thai Wholesaler

    b. Companies Association

    c. Customers

    d. Thai retailer Association

11.11 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS:

I. Explain cross channel security.

II. What is agile strategy? Explain it.

III. Write a note on organizational alignment.

CHAPTER 12 :

12.1 SUCCESS AND PITFALL IN MULTICHANNEL AND OMNICHANNEL WORLD:

Previously, multi-channel marketing entailed combining newspaper, magazine, and television advertisements with billboards, store promotions, telemarketing, and direct mail campaigns. However, with the advent of the Internet, multi-channel marketing efforts have expanded to include a variety of digital content. Videos, blog posts, and podcasts can be shared on various platforms such as social media, websites, and email.

Successful multi-channel marketers can quickly identify the channels that their target audience uses, providing a better understanding of how to move from one channel to another while creating robust consumer marketing experiences. ("Creating Success in Multi-Channel Marketing," 2017)

12.2 MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR MULTICHANNEL AND OMNICHANNEL MARKETING:

While we've previously covered a number of ideas for both marketing methods on our site, let's take a minute to go over some of the underlying concepts of both.

STRATEGY #1

12.3 TENETS OF MULTICHANNEL MARKETING:

There are a few things to bear in mind while transitioning from single-channel to multi-channel marketing. Most essential, you must understand which channels your potential clients frequently use. A firm targeting baby boomers, for example, would make little sense to become visible on Snapchat; similarly, a company targeting teenagers and young people would likely fare poorly by concentrating on direct mail marketing and radio commercials to build buzz.

Similarly, think about which channels your target buyers want your brand to be present on. After you've identified your channels, you'll need to customize your message for each device individually. (Hole, Pawar, & Khedkar, 2019b)

STRATEGY #2

12.4 <u>TENETS OF OMNICHANNEL MARKETING:</u>

The tenets described above still apply to multichannel marketing, but there's more. Along with understanding where your consumers are, what they want from you, and improving your presence on each channel your brand is active on, you must also focus on leveraging each of these channels to improve the customer experience. It's not just about being present on numerous channels; it's about adding value to the client through each of these channels.

However, your marketing teams play an important part in your omnichannel marketing strategy. Unlike the multi-channel approach, which assigns a different marketing team to each channel, the omnichannel strategy brings all marketing teams together to collaborate.

In other words, omnichannel marketing aids in the de-soloing of your marketing team, resulting in improved communication among team members and the ability to give a simplified and consistent experience. (Steinhoff, Arli, Weave, & Kozlenkova, 2018)

12.5 <u>PITFALLS OF OMNICHANNEL AND MULTICHANNEL MARKETING:</u>

Implementing multi-channel or omnichannel marketing activities is not without challenges.

In order to help you predict and prevent these traps, let's go through some of the most prevalent one's marketers face.

PITFALL#1

12.6 <u>RESOURCES INTENSIVE VENTURES:</u>

Such marketing campaigns will cost your firm time, money, and energy up front, whether you pursue the multi-channel or omnichannel approach. This is one of the most significant obstacles that businesses encounter when using either type of marketing in the first place.

The more channels you use, obviously, the more resources you'll need to invest in order to do so efficiently. Furthermore, as you become more functional on each channel, this investment will most likely grow (as with omnichannel marketing). Having said that, you should approach each of these projects with a game plan that includes: What you will be doing during the project. An awareness of how much time, money, and effort will be expended an awareness of what you stand to gain from participating in the initiative (both in monetary and other terms)

Without these preparations in place, you risk unwittingly blowing your budget on enterprises that will fail. (BUSHATI, 2018b)

PITFALL#2

12.7 <u>TEAM SILOS AND INFORMATION SILOS:</u>

Data silos and siloed marketing teams are two big roadblocks to delivering effective multi-channel and omnichannel experiences. Because your marketing and sales teams are now operating across several contact points, your organization is prone to being disconnected.

If Claire is in charge of social media and Gerald is in charge of messaging on the website, mobile app, newsletter, and smartwatch app, your brand's message may be haphazard. The larger your team, the more complicated this problem becomes.

With that in mind, you should concentrate your efforts on:

Assuring that all team members realize the significance of communication and staying on the same page

Creating possibilities for such communication to occur

Having a shared point of reference, such as a written content plan

As a result, your marketing teams will not only be able to better deliver their projects to your consumers, but your business will be able to properly comprehend what your customers want from you. (BUSHATI, 2018b)

PITFALL #3

12.8 <u>DEVELOPING CREEPINESS:</u>

Being overly engaged in your customers' life, especially without their consent, carries some danger. According to a 2017 Rich Relevance poll, 69% of US customers believe that using artificial intelligence to automatically purchase things for consumers is much too intrusive. Furthermore, 50% of respondents find chatbots and other technology that mimics human contact to be unappealing. While the current client is more receptive of creative marketing strategies and the like, don't assume this is always the case. What is the solution? Introduce personalization approaches gradually to ease your audience in and measure their comfort level as their customized experience grows. (BUSHATI, 2018b)

PITFALL#4

12.9 <u>FAILURE TO MEET GDPR COMPLIANCE:</u>

Even while omnichannel experiences are widely regarded as "better" than single-channel and multi-channel experiences, you must ensure that you are offering such experiences with the permission of each consumer – especially if you are working with EU-based customers. (BUSHATI, 2018b)

12.10 <u>BENEFITS OF MULTICHANNEL MARKETING:</u>

A successful multi-channel strategy provides consumers with a seamless, personalized experience. Because disjointed marketing can appear sloppy and unprofessional, online shoppers prefer a unified experience. According to a Forbes.com post titled "Shoppers Want Integration, Retailers and Marketers Not Delivering It," "72 percent of consumers want an integrated marketing approach, yet only 39 percent actually experience one," citing a recent My Buys report. Because multi-channel marketing makes shopping easier and more enjoyable for customers, it frequently results in higher conversion rates. According to a Harvard Business School study, retailers who successfully used multi-channel marketing were able to attract and retain more customers than competitors who used only one medium. As a result, marketers should be encouraged to provide a multi-channel personalized experience to online shoppers.

Highlights from several well-known brands that have properly built fully functional multi-channel marketing plans are provided below:

• **Walgreens** discovered that 82% of customers who chatted online with a pharmacist filled their prescriptions in-store. These in-store visits demonstrate the multi-channel conversion of the online shopper to the brick-and-mortar consumer.

• **Disney** uses all aspects of multi-channel marketing, from trip-planning apps and direct mailers to the Disney Parks Moms Panel (an online forum that provides hints and tips for travelling families) and Magic Bands, waterproof wristbands that provide instant access to theme park tickets, credit cards, and hotel-room keys.

• **Starbucks** allows customers to order remotely (online) for quick in-store pickup, and it also offers rewards cards that allow customers to pay with a smartphone app while earning points toward future purchases. (Wick, 2020b)

12.11 BUILIDING A WINNING STRATEGY:

According to a recent Experian study, 89 percent of businesses report difficulty implementing cross-channel marketing plans. Poor data quality, a lack of technical tools, and the inability to connect various types of technology are all issues.

Simultaneously, consumers are moving faster than some businesses can keep up. Google discovered that 90% of people who own multiple devices switch between screens before making a purchase. Businesses must adapt to these changes in order to ensure that brands connect through a variety of channels. ("Creating Success in Multi-Channel Marketing," 2017)

The following are nine points that can help you develop and implement a winning multi-channel strategy:

12.11.1 Know your customers intimately:
Take the time to study your audience so you can create customer relationships if you want to have a successful omnichannel approach. You must understand who they are, where they are from, their objectives and difficulties, the devices they prefer, the material they enjoy, and the channels on which they spend the majority of their time. Use social media listening, as well as consumer

feedback and analytics tools, to collect this information, and gain insights from retail staff who engage with customers. Understanding your recurring customers' purchasing behavior might help you understand which channels are most effective. (Gallino & Moreno, 2019)

12.11.2Upgrade your technology:

Upgrading your technology might really help you better understand your clients. Consider connecting your back-end systems and software so that you can manage all of your channels through a single point of sale (POS), such as Square. This will offer you with a more comprehensive perspective of your organization as well as the necessary insights in one location. For example, you may effortlessly manage inventory across platforms, allowing customers to discover the same things in store as well as online. You'll also be able to follow users across several touchpoints and give conveniences such as remembering passwords, saving payment information, and suggesting relevant goods to provide a seamless experience. (Cai & Lo, 2020)

12.11.3Attribute Your Success:

If you keep track of how your customers interact with your material, you'll have a valuable database full of information on how to engage with and target your customers more effectively.

You may, for example, identify which specific channel resulted in a desired customer action, such as a click or a successful product sale, and then design your future efforts appropriately.

You can see how much engagement occurred on mobile versus desktop, segment your audience depending on their media choices and interests, and alter your media strategy to maximize future performance. (Hong, 2017)

12.11.4Optimize Your Content:

Curate compelling and tailored material to help clients at every point of their purchasing process, from recognizing and understanding a need to researching options, comparing goods, and making a decision. Create a variety of material that meets each of these requirements, such as a humorous Tik Tok video presenting your product, case studies and product comparison guides, and reviews and how-to instructions for your company's products and services.

You must also ensure that your content is optimized for the channel and device on which it is being seen, whether that be Facebook or Instagram, desktop or mobile devices. (Ailawadi, 2020)

12.11.5 Engage with your customers:

Customer relationship management software, such as Square Customer Engagement, centralizes data from every customer contact and makes it available to many departments. This enables you to execute relevant email marketing campaigns, reply to client comments, and manage your own personalized loyalty programmed. Your company may retain consistent, tailored message with clients regardless of the channel through which they contact you. You may also automate marketing and email campaigns to send out particular content when certain triggers are met. For example, welcome emails that are triggered when a new subscriber joins your list, special offer emails that are automatically delivered to customers on their birthdays, or abandoned cart emails that remind consumers that their things are waiting for them. (Lee, Chan, Chong, & Thadani, 2019b)

12.11.6 Keep up with today's on-the-go users:

You are not constrained by time or place. You can contact customers via mobile, desktop, email, and social channels throughout their day - on the way to work, in bed at home, at a concert with friends, on a dinner date, and so on.

Furthermore, you may use real-time location services to optimize hyperlocal geo-targeted customer advertising. (Hong, 2017)

12.11.7 Be Ahead of your competition:

Regardless of the primary obstacle — non-connected technologies, insufficient skills, or fragmented data — businesses must catch up with the reality of how connected, mobile consumers engage across channels.

Brands who use display, mobile, social, and video marketing at the same time see a 500% increase in ROI from their advertising efforts. (Hong, 2017)

12.11.8 Choose your channels:

Start small if you're new to omnichannel marketing. Choose up to three channels and concentrate on a single campaign for a set length of time. Concentrate your efforts on the channels and touch points where your customers and prospects are spending the majority of their time. For example, if your clients prefer Facebook to Twitter and prefer mobile buying to desktop shopping, develop a strong omnichannel strategy for those channels before extending to others.

Another excellent strategy to begin satisfying your consumers is to provide help through many channels, such as email support combined with an online chat widget, in-app chat, and social network messaging. (Singh, Goyal, & Gill, 2019b)

12.11.9 Measure your omnichannel marketing results:

You can't develop and expand your omnichannel marketing approach until you track its results. Test, iterate, measure your outcomes, solicit input from customers, and then apply your findings to scale and grow your plan. Before you begin, decide on your metrics and measurement methodologies. Customer retention, average order value, conversion rate, social media engagement, email opens, and churn rate are all possible KPIs. Bring together multiple corporate activities, such as product, sales, and customer service, to ensure that they interact with one another. Establish key performance indicators with milestones, as well as team responsibilities and objectives, so that everyone is working toward the same goal. Monitoring and speaking about your omnichannel strategy on a regular basis will help you to see where you're excelling and where you need to improve. (Pagani, Racat, & Hofacker, 2019)

12.12 SUCCESS IN AN OMNI-CHANNEL WORLD:

It's simple to characterize omni-channel company success in terms of desired outcomes: happy, loyal consumers lead to higher sales and profits. What is far more difficult is outlining how to get there and actually making it happen.

From the customer's perspective, omni-channel implies being at the heart of the purchasing experience. Customers demand a smooth experience regardless of how they connect with a business, whether online, in-store, or by mobile device.

From the standpoint of the retailer, omni-channel is far more complicated. It entails putting in place a system that continuously provides a great experience for customers and purchasers. In reality, this entails offering numerous purchasing and delivery alternatives, managing channel development, improving supply chains, automating order fulfilment, and other activities.

Figure 10. Transforming the Supply Chain in an Omnichannel World | SUPPLY CHAIN MINDED (DeAngelis, 2016b)

12.13 <u>CHALLENGES OF SUPPORTING OMNI-CHANNEL:</u>

The notion of omni channel is not new. To remain relevant and competitive, retailers in many areas have realized the value of adjusting to customer purchasing behaviors. However, even if a firm is aware of the trend, it may not completely comprehend the obstacles to building a successful omni channel project. Consider these challenges:

12.13.1<u>Order Fulfillment costs:</u>

Omnichannel inventory delivery implies delivering product in the most convenient method for the consumer, which is not always the most cost-effective way for the business. Instead of shipping a

shirt from a distribution center (DC), the item is picked from one retailer and sent the next day to another. (Bayram & Cesaret, 2020)

12.13.2 Margin Stress:

Margins will certainly be squeezed if new techniques to suit consumer demand are deployed without changing back-end procedures and support structure. Every attempt to be more responsive in the absence of well-defined supply chain solutions comes at a cost, and those costs build up rapidly. That can be significantly more expensive, but the buyer is satisfied. (Gao & Us, 2019)

12.13.3 Proliferation of SKUs

Omnichannel is frequently defined as "anytime/anywhere shopping." As a result of reacting to this, more merchandise will be delivered in more areas. (Lim & Srai, 2018)

12.13.4 Speed of order processing

Because next-day or same-day delivery has become the standard, customers anticipate a quick response on all purchases. Reduced cutoff times merely enhance the urgency with which orders must be handled. The competition is ferocious. Retailers must guarantee that inventory is available and under control throughout their supply chain. Gao, F., & Su, X. (2018b).

12.13.5 Order processing precision

Customers also want their orders to be filled correctly. A single incorrect direct shipping might persuade customers to never shop from a store again. And social media can spread that incorrect shipment to other buyers.

12.13.6 Network accessibility

Even with the greatest intentions and preparation, any store may be constrained by existing infrastructure and location. Locations of DCs and shops have a significant role in addressing regional, national, and worldwide customer demands, as well as surpassing the competition. In omnichannel supply chains, order accuracy must be addressed.

12.13.7 Visibility of inventory

Retailers must know where their inventory is in their supply chain and be satisfied that the count is correct in order to match customer expectations.

To fulfil the needs of anytime/anywhere buying, merchants must have complete inventory control. A target demographic's fragile loyalty might be based on presenting a realistic assessment of the inventory status of a desired product.

Following a purchase decision, extensive calculations must be performed to establish the most cost-effective means of delivering a given item to a store, home, workplace, or other location. This is well beyond the capability of any manual or location-based approach. Strategic intelligence must be supported by corporate software applications and support hardware.

This means an enterprise resource planning (ERP) or distributed order management (DOM) system as the central processing brain for order fulfilment for retailers and distributors. Retailers and wholesalers can use central processing and strategic intelligence to measure not only inventory but also store performance.

Store data may be utilized to supplement current information in order to plan orders, shipments, and fulfilment operations. The information flow required for inventory visibility is provided via real-time data, analytics, and reports.

As an example, a customer orders a clothing from a nearby business using a mobile device. The ERP or DOM recognizes that a certain SKU is out of stock at the local shop but available at a DC or two other locations and will find the best route to distribute it. (Ishfaq, Davis-Sramek, & Gibson, 2021c)

12.14 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS:

I. Data silos and siloed marketing teams are two _____ to delivering effective multi-channel and omnichannel experiences:

   a. Low roadblocks
   b. Big roadblocks
   c. Low phase
   d. Low efficient

II. In omnichannel supply chains, _____ must be addressed.

   a. Linear chain
   b. Order accuracy
   c. Customer trust
   d. None

III. Upgrading your technology might really help you better understand your _____.

   a. Business
   b. Clients
   c. Experiences
   d. Shopping

12.15 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTION:

I. What is difference between Walgreen and Disney's.

II. Write a note on the pitfalls of omnichannel and multichannel marketing.

III. Explain the benefits of multichannel marketing.

CHAPTER 13 :
13.1 CHALLENGES IN OMNICHANNEL PLANNING
13.2 STRATEGIC CHALLEGES:

The two most crucial strategic decisions for a company are (a) whether to expand the product offers to new channels and (b) the best method of coordination across the various channels in terms of the supplied variety (s). We then go over each of these two problems individually.

13.2.1 Channel Expansion
The increasingly fast succession of numerous touchpoints characterizes today's omni-channel consumer experiences (McKinsey 2017). These touchpoints may involve channels that the company does not own. Firms face a risk because a portion of the consumer journey is outside their control. Consumers may elect not to (re)visit a firm's channel at any point along their trip; for example, while examining online prices of a product seen in a physical store, the customer may decide to buy it from a competitor's website. One method for a company to mitigate this risk is to expand its presence into other channels. We concentrate on channels that promote exposure to and ordering from the firm's assortment. (Saphira, Wilding, Mena, & Bourlakis, 2017)

13.2.2 Showrooming and Webrooming
To illustrate the possibilities of channel expansion, we will first highlight two types of channel-switching behaviour within customer journeys that are essential to omnichannel shopping. These activities, known as showrooming and webrooming, include moving between offline and online channels between the search and order stages. Showrooming refers to the practice of gathering information at a physical store yet buying the product online. Webrooming is the opposite habit, in which consumers study things online before visiting a physical shop for a final review and purchase. (Sahu, Naved Khan, & Gupta, 2021)

Customers showroom because they expect lesser pricing online or despise waiting in lines (Gensler et al. 2017). Stockouts in stores also encourage this habit. Webrooming, the more popular of the two channel-switching behaviors is motivated by the desire to avoid paying for shipping, the ability to touch and feel the product before purchase, the ability to return the item to the store if necessary, and the desire to avoid waiting for delivery.

Showrooming might be harmful to businesses who have physical storefronts but no (major) web presence. As seen by the bankruptcies of Borders, RadioShack, and, most recently, Toys "R" Us, this may even force a company out of existence. Price matching (only doable with big numbers, according to Business Insider and increasing in-store customer service are two ways to combat showroom behavior (Huffington Post 2017). Furthermore, bigger inventory levels may be required in order to assure fast delivery, which is difficult to match online.

From an assortment standpoint, conventional players might carry unique items that are not available online an approach used by Target and Best Buy. Traditional players' frantic attempt to combat internet shopping has been to reduce the number of outlets in order to remain viable. Established retailers such as Abercrombie & Fitch (CNBC 2018), Barnes & Noble (CNN 2018), Gap (USA Today 2017), Kmart, Macy's, and Sears (NPR 2018) have closed a significant portion of their locations as a result of this approach.

If you can't fight them, you can always (try to) join them. To combat showrooming, several conventional players have entered the online domain. Walmart's strategic alliance with Microsoft to fight with Amazon finest exemplifies this type of business reaction (Microsoft 2018). Firms might also choose to execute their online operations on a pure player's current infrastructure.

The German holding company Media Markt Saturn Retail Group is pursuing this strategy. Both their Media Markt and Saturn web shops in Germany use the eBay platform. The conventional store may easily scale-up its services to internet channels in this configuration, huge internet expertise and taps into consumer categories that aren't (yet) visiting its stores. Kranzbühler et al. (2018) demonstrate that, as long as the outsourced touchpoint is satisfying to consumers, the focal brand is more positively rated when it collaborates with a strong rather than a poor brand.

13.2.3 Reactions of Pure Online Players

If customers browse on an online retailer's website but make their purchases in a competitor's physical stores, they may be in serious danger. Several once pure businesses have opened physical stores as a result of this threat being recognized, including two of the three largest e-commerce companies in the world, Amazon and the Alibaba Group (Forbes 2017a). In addition to purchasing the Wholefoods grocery business, Amazon has created Amazon Books stores and Amazon Go stores without checkout lines. Meanwhile, Balian, one of the top retailers in terms of global store

count with 4700 locations across 200 cities, has partnered with Alibaba to speed up the roll-out of its extremely creative Hema supermarket chain (Adage 2018). (Forbes 2017a).

Pure gamers' forays into the real world aren't just limited to full-fledged shops. The showroom is a well-liked substitute since it offers customers the chance to touch and feel products, get recommendations, and determine their proper size (in the case of clothing, for example). Outsourcing is an option here as well. B8ta, a company founded in 2015, pioneered the retail-as a-service business model (Forbes 2017b). Companies can lease a specific number of square feet and control every part of their in-store marketing communication remotely and in real-time (b8ta 2018). The agreements with the manufacturers of the products and the analytics they provide them regarding customer engagement with their products are how b8ta generates revenue instead of the sales of the products themselves.

They presently operate 70 shop-in-shops (for Macy's and Lowe's) and nine flagship stores around the USA. Pure online competitors establishing up physical channels may experience operational advantages in addition to greater demand. Bell et al. (2017) present empirical evidence for both demand-side (marketing) and supply-side (operational) gains in a study of US-based, online-only retailer Warby Parker putting up showrooms. The showrooms decreased returns while simultaneously raising sales in the trading area. With click-and-collect becoming more popular, stores can serve as pick-up places as well. Additionally, businesses can handle the massive volumes of returns resulting from internet purchases using their physical locations. Dealing with things in-person rather than by mail saves money. Additionally, shoppers value having the opportunity to return an item to a retailer when deciding between them (Gallino et al. 2018).

13.2.4 <u>Blurring the Lines Between Showrooming and Webrooming</u>

The previous discussion on research shopping regards the online and offline channels as separate yet connected ones and uses the term "research shopping" to refer to both showrooming and webrooming. However, consumers' perceptions of the differences between the offline and online worlds are becoming more fuzzier (Bijmolt et al. 2018). Consumers of a later generation treat offline and internet channels equally. This is further fueled by rising smartphone penetration among consumers, particularly in China and India.

Customers may smoothly combine the many channels and steps of the research-to-purchase process thanks to the availability of numerous online touchpoints (web, app, social). Examples

include comparing prices online while inside a store or keeping track of online reviews while assessing things seen offline. Therefore, it is preferable to discuss "omni rooming." Apps that are made to encourage this kind of shopping behavior are being released at an increasing rate. A nice illustration is the Vivino wine app which allows you to browse wine statistics and user reviews by taking a picture of a wine label or list within the app.

Things are becoming hazier on all sides, not just the customer side. Businesses are launching hybrid channels that combine traits from the traditional and internet worlds. For instance, Alibaba and Amazon have implemented a variety of "online" technologies into their physical stores, such as automatic checkouts and QR codes for further product details. The Tall Intersport store in Beijing is a cutting-edge example; by incorporating several technologies from Alibaba's e-commerce platform, the store's boundaries between the offline and online worlds are dissolved. The retail formats are also impacted by these advancements. Typically, internet ordering terminals are installed in showrooms. And as delivery expectations rise, more and more stores are being built with click-and-collect functionality in mind.

As an illustration, IKEA is establishing purported order and collecting points. These shops, which are found in major city centers like London, Oslo, and Stockholm, are considerably smaller than their conventional counterparts but are more convenient for customers. As a result, they only stock a small portion of the retailer's whole product line. The brand-new Media Markt Digital store in Barcelona is an even more extreme example. On the shop floor, it scarcely carries any merchandise. Nevertheless, it acts as a point of collection and can instantly fill orders entered on touch screens for a variety of 5000 SKUs. Robots select the items from the inventory. This obviously alters the idea of an assortment that is simultaneously present and missing.

Pop-up stores are becoming a more popular venture for businesses. These establishments are often much smaller than ordinary stores, ephemeral in nature, and situated in busy regions. In order to test out a physical store model for pure players, engage a new customer segment, and convey a sense of scarcity, pop-up stores are often opened (Shopify 2016). Pop-up shops often only carry a very small selection that is focused on one or a few product lines due to their small size. They can be utilized to assist in the launch of a new product (line). Additionally, they have shown to be a useful tool for businesses looking into international markets.

The world of physical stores might be seen in many respects as a foreign market to pure players. In locations like Berlin and Vienna, Zalando, a top-10 pure player and one of the biggest in the fashion industry, has launched its Zalon pop-up store concept (Zalando 2017). As seen by the example in Fig. 5, pop-ups can be a great fit for both the season (summer) and location (the beach). The so-called virtual (grocery) store is another intriguing route. This approach, which was developed by South Korea's Tesco's Home plus grocery chain, essentially brings the store to the customer. It is made up of shelves with incredibly realistic poster displays that are placed in congested public spaces like subway stations.

Customers can then place an order for home delivery of the chosen items. Because South Korean customers are severely time-constrained due to their intense work schedules, the store was designed to fit the local environment. Around the time of its release, the home plus app—which had 900K downloads—became the most widely used shopping app. The major purpose of the new channel was to increase consumer awareness of home plus's online buying platform. Figure 6 depicts how Dutch grocery company Jumbo modified this idea.

13.3 <u>CHANNEL COORDINATION:</u>

Choosing the desired/feasible level of assortment integration across the available channels is a crucial component of channel coordination. According to Bertrandite and Zielke (2017we visually classify the various assortment integration styles. There is absolutely no overlap between the offline and online assortments in the "no integration" instance. This only seems to make sense when a business uses many channels to cater to extremely distinct consumer segments with distinct tastes. But in the omni-channel world, this seems like a purely hypothetical choice. The two assortments are identical in the "full integration" instance. This appears advantageous since it prevents customer confusion (Bertrandite and Zielke2017).

As an alternative, businesses can practice "asymmetric integration," in which there is some overlap between their offline and online product offerings. Bertrandite and Zielke (2017) find that asymmetric integration results in less choice overload and confusion than full integration in a series of experimental investigations. Asymmetric integration comes in three varieties. The online assortment in the first configuration, denoted by the letter (a), is a portion of the offline assortment. When a traditional merchant or brand opens an online channel, this is frequently the case. They

begin with a portion of their entire assortment in order to keep complexity to a minimum and learn quickly.

There can be further reasons to limit a product's accessibility to the physical channel. For instance, when a business believes a certain product is a key driver of shop traffic and thinks its unique physical presence may produce so-called halo effects. This is in keeping with the conclusion that people make fewer impulse purchases online than they do in a physical store. (2017, Business Insider UK). Another factor might be that some products need in-person explanations that are challenging to give online. These products have a significantly lower likelihood of being purchased and a higher likelihood of being returned without the explanation.

A representative of a major European pure player that just launched physical stores, for instance, informed us that a sizeable portion of pricey televisions are returned. The company has discovered that dissatisfaction with the sound was the primary cause. When a return is performed in-person, the company's salesmen clarify that this is not unique to the featured product but rather a more typical characteristic of televisions. They then suggest adding a soundbar, and often succeed in obliterating the return while simultaneously generating a cross-sell.   In contrast, the second arrangement is used. Here, the online selection includes everything that is available offline, plus more. The lack of offline retail space reducing consumer misunderstanding, and operational efficiency are only a few reasons to accomplish this. The so-called "long-tail impact" is a crucial factor to take into account.

This is in reference to the observation that demand is spreading out over a wider variety of products, which means that a sizable portion of the range only sells very little. It is highly expensive to have these sluggish sellers in stock in every physical store.

Online is useful in this situation. Here, a stock can be maintained centrally (across locations) that is substantially less than the total stock that the individual stores would need to maintain. The most prevalent type of asymmetric assortment integration is this one (Bertrandie and Zielke 2017). The last setup has both channels overlapped but with separate distinct entries. This is true if there are concurrent reasons to keep some things offline but online and the opposite for other products. This form should appear more often than configuration, in our opinion.

13.4 <u>TACTICAL CHALLENGES:</u>

The composition and structure of the collection are two crucial tactical dimensions. While attempting to coordinate across channels, omni-channel businesses often have the freedom to choose these features for each one. The potential for customization (customizing assortment dimensions to the particular consumer) and contextualization (changing assortment dimensions based on contextual aspects like as time, location, and weather) has also expanded with the introduction of online channels (web and mobile).

13.4.1 <u>Assortment Composition:</u>

The marketing and operations literature has given assortment optimization more and more attention over the past 10 years (for reviews, see Mou et al. (2017). However, a large portion of this expanding body of knowledge concentrates on a single physical store channel. We initially go over how a cross channel transfer of techniques and insights could improve the caliber of the assortments in each channel in this section. The coordination of assortment composition across channels is the next topic we cover.

13.4.2 <u>Transferring Methods and Learnings: From Offline to Online and Back:</u>

It is exceedingly difficult to optimize a store assortment's composition on its own. According to others neither academics nor business currently have a dominating solution. The most promising methods for optimizing offline assortments may theoretically be applied in online situations. Surprisingly, there hasn't been much research done to examine the possibility of doing so. This may be due to the additional complexity of online settings, where there are more products and movement of items may be slower than in offline supermarket settings, which are the typical settings examined in the assortment planning literature. The perceived absence of space restrictions in the online environment may also play a role.

Although space online is "free," it is not "free" in distribution facilities. Additionally, a number of shops think that being a curator is preferable to selling everything under the "Amazon model" in the age of over choice. Leading Dutch omnichannel retailer Coolblue (2018), for instance, recently released a video describing how they will be offering fewer products in a number of categories. Coolblue's head of pricing and assortment, Marijn van der Weele, provided the impetus for this action by declaring that Coolblue is devoted to assisting customers in finding the product they

want more quickly and easily. Coolblue claims that by using data, it is already possible to weed out products that are not worth the consumer's attention (and money).

Comprehensive understanding of consumer preferences is a must for effective assortment planning. What attributes of a product do buyers favor, what compromises do they make, and what price range are they ready to accept? The combined information should lead to an accurate prediction model for so-called transferable vs. non-transferable demand (the percentage of a product's sales that other items in the assortment would gain if it were to be eliminated) (sales that would be lost if a particular product were to be deleted). As a result, only data from the order stage of the customer experience is used in these models. Additionally, in order to estimate the model parameters, they rely on a sufficient amount of product rotation. Currently, the majority of online selections merely show variation over time (not across consumers). Furthermore, they could contain a large number of stationary goods. However, internet channels can also gather important data regarding the phases that come before the order stage, most notably search and alternative evaluation. Consumer filtering methods (i.e., consideration set construction methods) and the alternatives that consumers pay closer attention to and possibly directly compare can be studied (i.e., the composition of the consideration set). These data can be analyzed to gain useful information about consumer preferences. For instance, current research has used data from web searches to visualize product competition relationships. Traditional offline choice models, for example, utilize a compensatory model of decision making, which (implicitly) assumes that customers examine all product alternatives while making their decisions. This could be difficult to convince customers of in online contexts because there are many more options.

The estimating algorithm can be improved with additional data to address this issue. Online environments provide the advantage of being able to keep track of the consideration set, which lowers the degree of uncertainty in preference estimations. Online data collection for post-order data is also more convenient. Online settings have more customer reviews than traditional brick-and-mortar stores do. Additionally, it is simpler to link return data to specific clients. As long as any potential discrepancies between the preferences of the offline and online consumer bases are recognized, the lessons from the online channels should be applied to the offline channels. Online evaluations and return information, for instance, can be used to make offline assortments more logical.

Retailers might even encourage customers who make in-store purchases to provide an online evaluation. Online channels (web and mobile) allow for (more) personalization and contextualization of the product offerings offered to a customer in comparison to offline settings. Businesses with an online presence could further the idea of curating by preselecting a portion of their inventory for each individual visitor to their website. This procedure could be aided by utilizing clickstream, order, and return data from prior visits to the focused and other categories. Japan offers a creative example of customization. Acure unveiled their New Generation vending machines few years ago. These machines feature a 47-inch touch screen, a camera, and facial recognition software. The machine uses these tools to make an educated guess about the age and gender of the individual in front of it. The machine shows a specific assortment based on weather (contextual) and consumer demographics (personal).

13.4.3 <u>Coordinating Assortment Composition Across Channel</u>

The cross-channel coordination of assortment composition is a crucial component of omni-channel assortment planning. Here, we go through how to implement asymmetrically integrated assortments tactically, which is the most typical kind of assortment integration. Recognizing each channel's function in the omni-channel journey is the first step in coordinating the assortment mix. When a store acts as a showroom for certain goods, those goods may not sell well there, but their absence may cause customers to put off their purchase (in order to visit a rival store that carries the good) or, worse yet, to make their purchase elsewhere.

When showroom behavior is taken into account while improving the composition of an offline assortment, Dzyuba and Jagabathula (2017) demonstrate that significant profit gains can be made. When online sales are down, it might make sense to take a product off the website or transfer it to a less noticeable spot.

Data must be integrated across a variety of internal channels and touchpoints for cross-channel effects. The most common client journeys must be clearly mapped out. What prevents individuals from purchasing it, if webrooming can be ruled out? Strong competition, poor pricing, or skepticism from customers over the benefits' delivery? The shop steps in at this point. The retailer should give the product additional (space) in the store rather than simply getting rid of it. Its salespeople might keep a record of the questions customers ask about the product in order to determine whether the pricing is accurate or whether further details ought to be given (online). Finding that consumer behavior and preferences may vary depending on the channel presents a hurdle when merging data from many channels, such as online and offline. Dzyabura et al. (2019), for instance, discover differences between how consumers assess products "live" versus online. This suggests that the dependability of market research online evaluations for consumer choices at physical stores may be restricted.

13.5 <u>ASSORTMENT LAYOUT:</u>

Offline assortments typically have a very different layout than online ones, even when correcting for their different size and composition. Physical assortments are frequently arranged according to brand and/or functional characteristics like type (for example, t-shirt vs. sweater in fashion) or package type (e.g., cans versus bottles in supermarkets). On the other hand, online selections appear to be rather disorganized. This seems inconsistent with the (offline) finding that perceptions of variety are higher for organized displays when assortments are large (as they typically are online). However, it's possible that online merchants believe that customers will use filters to drastically reduce the number of options available for closer inspection, negating the need for organization.

Moreover, online assortments typically provide consumers the option to sort the assortment by themselves. Online filtering options, however are far from flawless and sorting options are often restricted to brand, price level, and popularity. These may not always cover the most relevant dimensions for every consumer. In addition, whereas offline assortments are typically organized on multiple dimensions simultaneously (e.g., first brand, then size), we are not aware of such options online. The limited organization of online assortments is surprising as more options for customization exist online than in offline settings. According to Kahn (2017), businesses should

make use of visual design elements like organization structure, categorization, and filtering to aid customers in efficiently processing the vast online selections.

Building on the work by Morales et al. (2017), Redeker and Lehmann (2018) show across one in-store field study and two online lab studies that a higher congruency ("fit") between the assortment organisation and the consumer's internal organization leads to more favorable assortment perceptions (higher variety, lower complexity), which translates to higher conversion rates and satisfaction with the chosen item. Whereas it may be too obtrusive to directly measure internal categorizations during shopping by means of a survey, in an online environment they could be inferred from past filtering, sorting, and browsing behavior in the same, or similar, categories. For instance, suppose a consumer filters t-shirts based on color and/or compares different t-shirts with the same color. When the same customer visits the sweater category in the future, the online retailer could by default organize the sweaters by color.

Besides personalization, online channels also provide opportunities for contextual layouts. An important contextual factor is the device that is used. One may suppose that, depending on whether a smartphone, tablet, or desktop is used, in conjunction with the screen size, a varied assortment layout is preferable. On example, for smaller mobile screens it may be beneficial to present a lesser number of alternatives at once. The choice of what to display on the first screen is crucial because more and more search (and ordering) behavior is occurring on smartphones. It is a hybrid of a composition and layout decision.

13.6 OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES:

A seamless exchange of information and products between channels is possible in an ideal omni-channel setting. But doing so presents numerous operational difficulties, which we shall go through next. Companies must first consider how to promote cross-channel information delivery while aiming for consistency in communication. Next, businesses must consider how to assist customers in making decisions by offering decision aids. Third, they must consider the most effective method of managing

Omni-channel inventory takes into account the possibility or necessity of moving (ordered) goods between channels. Last but not least, it is preferable to return items through the same channel from

which they were originally purchased. Businesses must strike a balance between customer adaptability and operational excellence, ideally achieving both simultaneously. (Jasin, Sinha, & Uichanco, 2019)

13.6.1 <u>Information Provision:</u>

The omni-channel environment makes it difficult for businesses to give customers reliable cross-channel information. It is necessary for this information to be consistent across all channels. The first piece of important information is the cross-channel availability of products. For instance, a product description offered through online channels should be consistent with the information provided on the shelf or by salespeople in store. When selling specific products only online retailers might provide in-store customers with this information by utilizing ordering and browsing kiosks. An inventive example it is the so-called Cloud Shelf in Intersport's cutting-edge Beijing flagship store, which was created in collaboration with Alibaba's Tall. Customers can browse through all of Intersport's offerings, includes those that are not displayed in the shop. Using a QR code, a buyer can place an immediate order for a chosen item. In this scenario, the internet channel would function as both a direct ordering point for products that are only available online as well as an online catalogue for items that can only be purchased in-person. In order to provide information that is genuinely omni-channel, businesses increasingly also specify the places in which these Products and matching inventory levels are available. However, it seems difficult for businesses to give precise inventory level information (Lifehacker 2017). To give accurate information on store-level performance, a dependable IT environment and enough in-store staff are required. Omni-channel customers research and incorporate information about the goods in a company's selection in addition to learning about assortments. By enabling the (simultaneous) use of information available through many channels or even by immediately integrating the information into the focal channel, businesses could satisfy this requirement for information aggregation. For instance, the aforementioned Chinese grocery store chain Hema makes it simple to acquire extra product details via QR symbols. Retailers have begun to use augmented or mixed reality to provide product information, generally through the use of applications that can be used both in-store and at home (Shopify 2018).

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The technology underlying augmented and mixed reality, which either requires the user to don particular glasses or download an app onto their smartphone, might still be seen as being overly intrusive. The "Grocery of the Future" has been opened in Milan, operated by COOP Italia, the largest supermarket company in Italy. It provides a variety of augmented information in the least intrusive manner thanks to a collaboration with Accenture and is based on the work of MIT Professor Carlo Ratti. For instance, big interactive tables are used to display merchandise. The information about the food appears on a monitor above with just a simple hand motion; the augmented labels indicate nutritional value, allergies, and waste disposal instructions. The sensors that read the customer's motions make the augmented experience possible.

Many businesses are aware of O's growing influence. Reviews on websites and platforms under the control of businesses abound. Additionally, businesses are starting to test out giving customers other people's information at the point of sale. Printing the overall review score on the shelf tag is a discrete approach to achieve this. Electronic shelf labels have made it easier to supply and update this kind of information.

13.6.2 Decision Aids

Dough Stephens (2017), who is used to making decisions from considerably bigger sets of alternatives online, shares anecdotally in his book how he and his wife felt completely overwhelmed by the thousands of options when shopping at a store for a bathroom faucet. Stephens attributes this to the absence of information in the store. We talked about solutions to address this void in the preceding section. Another factor that makes choosing online seem much simpler than offline, despite the much larger selection, is the availability of (interactive) decision aids. Online decision aids can be classified into three categories: (1) tools to quickly select the best (sub) category to search in; (2) tools to create a consideration set; and (3) tools to compare the alternatives. The first type might either direct you to a subcategory based on your responses to a

few questions or give a detailed explanation of what each subclass means (for example, the distinction between compact cameras, hybrid cameras, and DSLRs).

The second type comprises interactive options that enable one to quickly focus on a collection of possibilities that may be able to meet the needs of the customer, such as filtering (eliminating alternatives) and sorting (changing the layout). The third and final category consists of the comparison feature found in many online stores. The consumer can compare alternatives on a (restricted) set of attributes by using an alternative by attribute format. Usually, the choice to just emphasize the contrasts is offered. Customers can use this to narrow down their consideration set and choose their preferred alternative.

The key to an effective omni-channel execution is fusing the strengths of each channel. Retailers may, for instance, direct customers to their website or app to make a decision. They may provide a "present-in focal-store filter" on their online platforms. The app or website would use geofencing to determine the store the user is in while applying the filter. Retailers may also translate some of the online decision support tools for use offline. The online comparison matrix for three Kärcher brand pressure washers is displayed in the left panel. A matrix in poster form is displayed in the store above the shelves holding the related products. Decision aids in real contexts can be interactive, much like their online equivalents. It has been observed that digital advisor serves for adhesives and sealants from renowned manufacturer Bison, serves as a suitable illustration. The computerized recommendation agent swiftly zeroes in on the best solution to meet the consumer requirement by asking a number of inquiries, such as the type of material involved. Additionally, it shows where on the shelf to locate the suggested item. With this approach, the advantages of both channels are combined: simple online product selection and immediate in-store availability.

13.6.3 Inventory Management:

Order in-store for home delivery (ship-from a store or a fulfilment center), purchase online pick-up in store (BOPS), research online buy offline (webrooming), buy online pick-up in store (BOPS), and so forth. Retailers made investments in supply chain and in-store technologies as part of the first phase of the evolution of omni-channel, which enabled and supported a variety of omni-channel customer behavior patterns. It has been observed that more than 64% of merchants were using BOPS. In addition, a lot of merchants, including Macy's and Walmart, used their network of stores to fulfil online purchases with choices for same-day and next-day store delivery,

Forecasting, buying, and replenishment choices in retail inventory management have typically been concentrated at two levels: forecasting and buying at the centralized chain level, and forecasting, allocation, and replenishment at the store (or depot) level. The assumption that customer demand and its fulfilment occurred at the same site, such as at one of the physical stores or at an online store and its associated fulfilment centers, has been at the core of practically all predictive and prescriptive modelling. Since each location/channel has its own demand stream, sales data at each have been separated from other locations. This then indicates that the stocks scheduled for each site will be specifically allocated to that demand stream. This fundamental premise is violated by omnichannel customer behavior, making it very challenging to separate the various demand streams. (Jasin, Sinha, & Uichanco, 2019b)

First off, due to showrooming or webrooming behavior, there may be relatively few data recordings. Only the purchase at the store or online channel is observed by the retailer. While the path for click-and-collect is more obvious, the retailer may only be aware of the purchase transaction in other omni-channel behavior scenarios. The retailer interprets the total sales from all forms of flow that terminate at a single location as the store's demand, along with the history of click-and-collect transactions. As a result, it is not at all clear how to predict the actual retail demand and click-and-collect information for each store.

Retailers are also seeking guidance on how to organize the inventory of each store. Should we maintain extra stock to satisfy all omnichannel demand? Duplication of demand and inventories could result from that. Another issue with endogeneity is that it depends on which stores the retailer directs customer demand to and how much inventory the stores have at the time the consumer places the purchase, making ship-from-store demand endogenous. The current tendency in industry has been to push more goods to stores and use them as fulfilment facilities, which is consistent with the majority of commercial counsel. As more merchandise has been moved into stores to cover fulfilment from stores and BOPS, Target is a wonderful example of this development. First off, the inventory at the store may become reduced due to online demand and occasionally may not be enough to meet local offline demand. Second, moving more product to retail locations involves storing less at centralized distribution hubs. At the conclusion of the season, this could result in large inventory imbalances at stores, higher out-of-stocks, higher inter-store transfers, and possibly higher markdowns. (Jasin, Sinha, & Uichanco, 2019b)

Various facets of these difficulties have been the subject of academic investigation. Optimization of the inventory policy is one area of study. Alishah et al. (2017) provides an analytical model in which a retailer chooses how much inventory to carry at the stores and the distribution center for a short life-cycle product and how to ration DC inventory as the season changes. They discover that integrated decision-making produces considerable financial advantages. Govindarajan et al. (2017) take into account a similar issue but put the emphasis on choosing the best store in a multi-store network to fulfil orders from. They create a heuristic that combines the dynamics of fulfilment with initial inventory decisions and find that it performs better than decentralized myopic techniques. The fundamental dynamics of the fulfilment process are typically driven from stores with underperforming inventories.

Concerning the difficulties in predicting the demand streams of the many omni-channel flow types mentioned above, academic research has been mainly mute. The studies on inventory optimization presuppose that the demand distributions for each stream are known. Sadly, without a reliable and effective methodology for forecasting the percentages of customer types for BOPS, store fulfilment, and those willing to accept ship-to-home in the event of a store stockout, making the best initial inventory decisions for the store and DC network remains largely an academic exercise. It can only give us a general idea of the trends we might anticipate in practice, not a solid foundation for operational decision support for retailers. Both scholars and business professionals have much to learn about forecasting omni-channel flows. Additionally, omni-channel behavior offers options that facilitate. (Jasin, Sinha, & Uichanco, 2019b)

Studying retailers' strategic fulfilment decisions among various omni-channel structures and tactical choices inside those structures has been a focus of academic research in another field. According to Gao and Su (2016a), BOPS has the following drawbacks. When stockouts of popular items occur, the website successfully notifies customers, which lowers foot traffic and lowers sales. Using field data, Rabinovich et al. (2018) provide an economic analysis of the effect of the in-store fulfilment option on customers. They discover that eliminating store fulfilment costs causes a sizable revenue loss because the advantages from higher sales income may not be sufficient to make up for the fee loss.

Different product categories may benefit from taking logistics costs into account. The cost of running a store increases dramatically when stores are used as warehouses (store fulfilment). The

price of store fulfilment (accept, pack, and ship) might increase by up to three times. For large items, margin erosion due to higher transportation costs and stores' reduced efficiency in comparison to warehouses may occur. Furthermore, shipping from online DCs to consumers' homes may be much more expensive than using BOPS. According to a recent Walmart announcement, things that are too expensive to ship are no longer available as part of their online selection (The Wall Street Journal 2018). Inventory turns have not necessarily improved as a result of omni-channel integration, according to industry data.

13.6.4 Return Management:

Returns are crucial for gaining a customer's patronage and loyalty. In addition, returns have long been a major barrier for merchants because of the expense of handling and repackaging, reverse logistics, and lost profits. The importance of those difficulties is increased in the online environment where returns make up one-third of all internet. The smaller amount of information about the product's quality, fit, and performance is one of the factors contributing to the relatively high return rates for online purchases, since customers may not have the same access to touch and test the item as they would in a physical store. This is particularly true for experiential commodities (de Borba, Magalhães, Filgueiras, & Bouzon, 2020)

.Forbes (2018) lists a variety of approaches that retailers use to reduce both the return rates and the cost of returns in an omni-channel world. We have discussed physical and virtual show-rooms as a mechanism to reduce the information availability gap and thus serve to decrease the return rates. Gao and Su (2016b) create an analytical model representing consumers information gathering process in showrooms and stores and find that showrooms may not always increase profitability: they may reduce store patronage and thus increase returns and have the reverse effect. Facilitating consumer reviews may be another way to reduce returns. The availability of more reviews and the presence of more "helpful" reviews reduces returns (Sahoo et al. 2018). However, overly positive reviews may actually induce more returns.

Online shoppers typically find that in-store refunds are the most affordable and practical (Gallino et al. 2018). Accepting returns from online sales in-store increases handling costs, but it also has significant advantages: more customers who are willing to buy products in the retailer's categories are more likely to visit the store, which gives the retailer more chances to resell, cross-sell, and upsell to the customer. Using the returns data for analytics on the customer and the product is

another strategic opportunity related to returns. Based on the returns, retailers can spot problematic products and designs early on and for upcoming seasons. Additionally, retailers can develop procedures and tools to assist customers in having a more rewarding shopping experience, reducing returns, and increasing overall satisfaction. (de Borba, Magalhães, Filgueiras, & Bouzon, 2020)

13.7 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION:

I.   _____ are becoming a more popular venture for businesses.
   a. Amazon
   b. Pop up stores
   c. Marts
   d. Daraz store

II.   _____are also seeking guidance on how to organize the inventory of each store.
   a. Wholesalers
   b. Retailers
   c. Both
   d. None

III. A seamless exchange of information and products between channels is possible in an ideal _____.
   a. Live streaming setting
   b. Ideal Omnichannel setting
   c. Customer shopping
   d. Customer experiences

13.8 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

I.   What is return management. Explain it.
II.   Write a note on channel coordination.
III. Write a note on tactical challenges.

CHAPTER 14 :

14.1 OMNICHANNEL COMMUNICATION

14.1.1 OMNICHANNEL COMUNICATION:

Omnichannel communication occurs when a company maps its customers' journeys and provides a consistent experience at every customer touchpoint, from pre-sales to post-sales and everything in between. Omni channel consumer communication transforms interactions and provides a better customer service experience.

Websites, mobile applications, social media, kiosks, and physical stores are all part of a well-executed omnichannel communication strategy. It all comes down to offering individualized assistance by blending reactive and digital communication channels to create a seamless experience. ("What Is Omnichannel Communication? (And Why It's Important)," 2021)
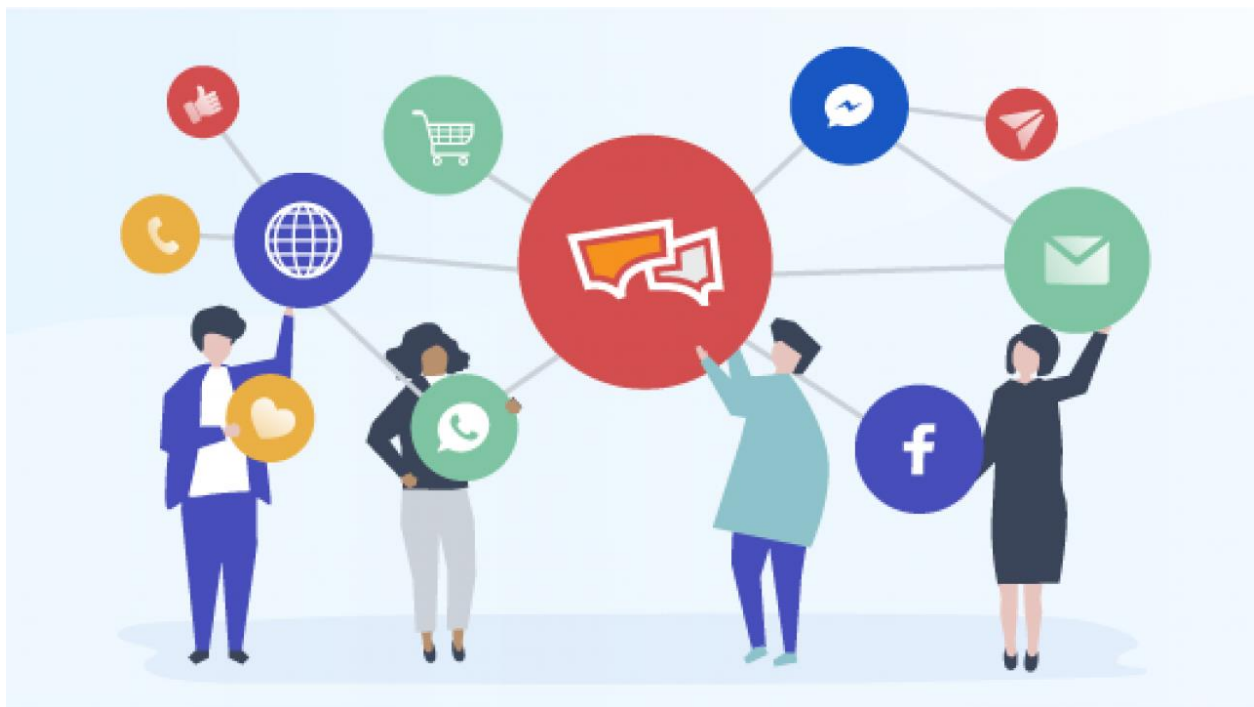
Figure 11. ("What Is Omnichannel Communication? (And Why It's Important)," 2021)

14.2 IMPORTANCE OF OMNICHANNEL COMMUNICATION

The omnichannel communication strategy allows customers to connect with the company through their preferred channel while also allowing for a smooth shift within the same contact. It is the

most effective method for reducing friction in the user experience since clients are directed and provided all of the information they require about your business. ("What Is Omnichannel Communication? (And Why It's Important)," 2021)

14.3 <u>OMNICHANNEL VS MULTICHANNEL:</u>

The primary distinction between omnichannel and multichannel marketing is the main point of your marketing plan. Omnichannel refers to the use of all accessible media channels and is oriented on the consumer, whereas multichannel refers to the use of more than one channel and is centered on the product or service. (Mockus, 2020)

- **The primary emphasis**
- **Customer satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction is described as an indicator of how satisfied consumers are with a company's products, services, and capabilities. Customer satisfaction data, such as surveys and ratings, may assist a firm in determining how to enhance or adjust its products and services.

The **primary goal** of every firm should be to serve its clients. This is true for manufacturing enterprises, retail and wholesale businesses, government agencies, service companies, nonprofit organizations, and any subgroup within an organization. (ASQ, 2019)

- **Insights and data**

Data insights are the in-depth understanding that an individual or organization acquires through examining information on a specific subject. This comprehensive understanding enables firms to make better judgments than would be possible if they relied just on gut feeling.

- **Terms that are related:**

Actionable data insights are particular and relevant enough to drive to actions that can boost efficiency, revenue, and profitability.

Active intelligence refers to having real-time awareness of all aspects of your business based on real-time data meant to trigger rapid thoughts and actions. (Yang, Zhou, Yao, Chen, & Wei, 2019)

- **Making decisions Customer connections**

There are five key phases in the customer decision-making process. This is the process through which customers analyses whether or not to make a purchase. Problem identification, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase choice, and post-buy evaluation are the five phases. (Lucidchart Content Team, 2017)

14.4 THE 5 STAGES OF THE CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING PROCESS:

14.4.1 Recognize the issue

Recognizes the importance of a service or product

14.4.2 Search for information

Information gathering Alternatives evaluation: Compares options to comparable alternatives

14.4.3 Purchase choice

Purchases genuine goods

14.4.4 Evaluation after purchase

Considers the purchase they made

14.4.5 Time to respond

It is not enough to have the technology and competence to implement an omnichannel strategy. According to Steve Deckert, Co-Founder of Smile.io, "simply because consumers are functionally able to perform what they need to do doesn't guarantee you're offering an excellent customer experience across channels." Having an integrated and unified customer experience across all channels is a component of omnichannel marketing. Consumers have more alternatives than ever before, therefore the shopping experience, rather than the traditional distinct value propositions like two-day or free delivery, is what genuinely sells.

So, how can omnichannel businesses give their customers with an exceptional customer experience?

The company's reaction time is a key measure of customer experience levels. When a customer calls, how quickly does he or she get connected to a representative? If they email, do they get a

response right away? How long does it take for them to be acknowledged if they send a message on social media? Consumers anticipate and demand quick responses to all of their questions and concerns. In addition to responding swiftly, people want to move effortlessly across all modes of communication without having to repeat themselves.

14.5 <u>ADVANTAGES OF A MULTI-CHANNEL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:</u>

14.5.1 <u>Consistent customer satisfaction</u>

It is critical to provide excellent customer service across all communication channels. You may provide clients with flexibility by operating across many platforms. It not only reassures them of their determination, but it also demonstrates constancy. In addition to ensuring the consumer has a positive experience. (Gao & Fan, 2021)

14.5.2 <u>Create a customer journey map.</u>

These maps, which can take numerous shapes, offer a condensed picture of an end-to-end consumer experience (infographics, illustrations, diagrams – all that good stuff). A customer journey map depicts all of the areas and touchpoints where customers come into contact with your business, whether online or offline and they assist you in viewing your brand, product, and procedures through the eyes of the consumer in order to envision the literal customer journey along the funnel (Ross, 2018)

14.5.3 <u>Proactive and timely communications</u>

Using proactive communication as a management tactic boosts employee productivity and keeps you ahead of any roadblocks that might stymie project completion. Consider making a purposeful effort to chat to staff even when you don't have anything specific to share. When you communicate with employees on a regular basis as a manager, you can increase teamwork and morale. Building strong relationships that allow for open communication will ensure the success of people and the company as a whole. (Wenninger, 2022)

14.5.4 <u>Follow-Through on Delegated Tasks</u>

You may not want to be viewed as a micromanager, but it is critical to stay informed about the progress of projects delegated to personnel. Checking in with staff before to a deadline will offer information about the status of an assignment. You may discover that an employee needs more

assistance or that organizational impediments are making it tough to complete a job. Proactive communication allows you to be a better manager while also assisting your staff in their achievement. ("Proactive Communication," n.d.)

14.5.5 <u>Observe Body Language</u>

Pay close attention to your employees' body language during one-on-one conversations or staff meetings. If you detect someone giving you a bad feeling, talk to them as soon as feasible. If you approach the encounter with care and concern, you will reaffirm the need of direct and honest communication. This form of proactive communication fosters employee loyalty and emphasizes the need of openness. (Kassim & Hussin, 2018)

14.5.6 <u>Data access centralized</u>

Data is saved in several files in a typical database system. Each customer's data, for example, might be saved in a different file. A centralized database system, on the other hand, keeps all of the data in a single file. Because the data is all kept in the same location, it is easy to manage and find.

With the proliferation of computers, a system to store data and information from many locations is required. A variety of mechanisms are employed in various systems to store and access information over a network channel. These methods are known as database management systems, and they use various protocols to store data and information. (Cui et al., 2020b)

14.5.7 <u>Process of customer service improvement</u>

14.5.7.1 Recognize consumer requirements

The more you learn about your consumers, the more you will comprehend their requirements and expectations. As a result, consider the following:

What we know about each of our consumers right now.

Is this information useful? What more should we know so that we can better match their demands to our products and services? Who else has information on our customers that might be useful to us? Long-serving team members with well-established client connections, for example, may be able to provide additional insights. (Murfield, Boone, Rutner, & Thomas, 2017)

14.5.7.2 Encourage and seek client feedback

There are several methods for learning what your consumers think of your company. Determine which approaches are the most viable and beneficial for you first. These may include:

- Allowing consumers to post testimonials and online reviews.

- After using your product or service, personally ask clients for their feedback. For example, via the phone, in person, or in writing. (Miquel-Romero, Frasquet, & Molla-Descals, 2020)

14.5.7.3 Establish and explain certain service standards

Set some simple customer service standards that everyone on the team can understand and follow. If you want complete engagement, you may also involve the team members in this process.

Consider the following factors while establishing customer service standards:

The tone and language that best reflects your ideals and service principles. For example, formal versus casual linguistic style.

Your primary point of contact with customers, ensuring consistency of approach across the customer experience. (DiFrancesco, van Schilt, & Winkenbach, 2021)

14.5.7.4 Exceed your consumers' expectations to delight them

How frequently do your consumers express their gratitude by obtaining something greater than they expected and of value to them? Surprising your consumer in this way may result in customer gratitude and future loyalty, as long as their fundamental demands are addressed.

To begin, consider honoring consumers' important events and occasions, as well as significant milestones of customer loyalty. Second, a supplement to the goods or service they have purchased. (Difrancesco, van Schilt, & Winkenbach, 2021)

14.5.7.5 Document and disseminate examples of excellent service.

Determine the best method for collecting customer feedback across the organization. You may also add comments from peers and supervisors who recognize a team member providing excellent customer service. You may then use this information to create a toolbox of best practices for your organization.

14.5.7.6 Provide simple and straightforward client service.

Follow your customer's journey, from how they discover and purchase your company's services and goods through billing and after-sales assistance. Look for methods to streamline customer support procedures at each point of their journey, in particular. Consider the following:

- The simplicity with which a customer may locate your company.

14.5.7.7 Customize your client service

Spend time engaging with your consumers to learn about their true needs. As a consequence, you will be able to provide them product or service alternatives that fully fulfil their requirements. This will be extremely beneficial as you work to enhance customer service standards.

Consider how successfully your team members do the following tasks in order to provide personalized service:

- Make your customers feel welcome by greeting them.
- Respond in a manner befitting the customer's personality and lifestyle.
- Make use of your customer's name.
- In order to determine their requirements, ask open-ended inquiries.

14.5.7.8 Make an investment in customer service training.

Select a training provider who will learn about your company and can support your business plan and service standards. A knowledgeable and engaging training provider will be able to assist you and your team in providing personalized, targeted customer service in a long-term manner.

Alternatively, you might create your own internal customer service training programmed to instill the value of customer service, product knowledge, and abilities among team members.

14.5.7.9 Examine client complaints and issues

Investigate the source of your customers' issues and complaints to determine what is wrong and why. A systematic method for storing all client comments, issues, and complaints will be beneficial. Once you've gathered all of the data, go through it and ask yourself:

- What are the emerging patterns?
- When are these complaints most common?
- Customers are voicing their worries and criticisms in various ways.

- What, in general, is failing us down? People, methods, and policies, for example?

10.Make it simple for customers to file complaints

Consider how simple it is for your consumers to express their problems and complaints to you. A simple method will capture the full scope of your clients' experiences, allowing you to significantly enhance customer service. You will also aid in the prevention of future consumer complaints.

Regardless of size, most customer-focused organizations have a straightforward complaint management procedure that is understood at all levels.

11.Learn what's really going on

Shadow team members within the organization to learn what's actually going on. Choose several roles and team members that will provide you with a comprehensive insight of how customer demands are met across the organization.

Then, on multiple occasions, watch and collaborate closely with these employees. This will demonstrate the impact of your systems and procedures on the client.

12.Research your rivals

Allow your employees to observe the degree of customer service provided by your competition. You may also mention organizations who are not rivals but are renowned to provide excellent customer service.

Some of their consumer practices may be applicable to your company. Check out our resource customer service training ideas for suggestions on how to achieve this. (Larkins, 2018)

13.Hold internal customer service review meetings on a regular basis

When set up properly, internal customer service evaluations or forums may give you with some wonderful suggestions for improving customer service. Your employees interact with clients on a regular basis, therefore if they are encouraged to be open and honest without fear of punishments, they will give useful information.

To begin, priorities getting the fundamentals consistently correct. Then, have your employees brainstorm ways to 'add value' or create particular 'wow' moments for your consumers. Once

you've created confidence among team members, balance this with examining consumer complaints or concerns stated in this forum. (Larkins, 2018)

14.5.8 <u>Increased client retention and satisfaction</u>

14.5.8.1 Always offer excellent customer service.

Okay, this may seem self-evident. It's not like any company intentionally provides poor customer service. Nonetheless, many businesses do.

Many businesses design their customer experience journeys based on what they want their customers to accomplish rather than the pathways that customers actually take. Consider firms who are striving towards paperless client billing. They save money on paper, shipping, and labor. This statute requires the customer to set up direct payment through their bank, view a bill via a website, visit a specific pay location, or use automated phone prompts. The corporation saves time, and the client initially provides more of theirs. Companies never win when their customers lose.

14.5.8.2 Spend money on customer onboarding and education.

Customer onboarding and education provide the groundwork for long-term customer happiness and retention. After all of the effort that has gone into acquiring a customer, no company wants to lose a customer because they do not understand how to utilize the product or service.

Onboarding programmers walk clients through the fundamentals and explain key features. A human instruction of the latest features is generally included in the car-buying process. When Google releases a software update, it provides a "what's new" tutorial to the user. Ikea's furniture comes with a step-by-step instruction booklet. Salesforce features a knowledge base for self-service.

14.5.9 <u>Metrics for Customer Satisfaction and Retention</u>

What gets measured gets controlled, as the old saying goes. Track these five indicators at a minimum and distribute the data throughout the organization.

Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) - This statistic serves as a service and quality performance indicator. The figure is given as a percentage, with 100% representing highly pleased consumers and 0% indicating severely unsatisfied customers. Client Lifetime Value (CLV) identifies the most loyal customers by measuring the overall income a firm may earn from a customer over their lifetime. (Murfield, Boone, Rutner, & Thomas, 2017b)

14.5.10 Gather Constant Customer Feedback

The only accurate way to determine whether or not clients are satisfied is to ask them. According to research, even if a contact does not result in a response, simply asking for input can minimize customer attrition.

Customer feedback can be gathered in an active or passive manner. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. To reach clients, businesses must employ a variety of channels. Surveys sent by email, app, website, or phone call are examples of active techniques. Focus groups are another excellent method for gathering consumer views and sentiments. Talking to a customer-facing personnel team or monitoring sentiment and dialogues on social media are examples of passive tactics. Unsolicited feedback can also be gathered by businesses through digital suggestion boxes, review sites, or internet discussion forums. (Christoforou & Melanthiou, 2019)

14.5.11 Create a Loyalty Program

Loyalty programmers that are successful reward a variety of actions. They may offer incentives to customers to test new items, write reviews, or suggest a friend. They also aim to strengthen a customer's bond with a brand. Chewy delivers personalized birthday greetings to pets along with product discounts. On Veterans Day, members of the United States military can get a free supper at Bob Evans. When Chick-fil-A opens a new location, the first 100 customers receive a free weekly lunch for a year. On the anniversary of opening their account, PNC bank personnel recognize clients for their devotion. (User, 2021)

14.6 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS:

I. _____ occurs when a company maps its customers' journeys and provides a consistent experience at every customer touchpoint, from pre-sales to post-sales and everything in between.
   a. Omnichannel wholesale
   b. Omnichannel retail
   c. Omnichannel communication
   d. None

II. _____ - This statistic serves as a service and quality performance indicator.
   a. CSAT
   b. SCAT
   c. TSAC
   d. TCSA

III. The _____ of every firm should be to serve its clients.
   a. Secondary goal
   b. Primary goal
   c. Tertiary goal
   d. None

14.7 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

I. How can omnichannel businesses give their customers with an exceptional customer experience?

II. What are the 5 stages of the consumer decision making process.

III. Write any 2 advantages of multichannel communication strategy.

CHAPTER 15 :

15.1 OMNICHANNEL COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS

Omnichannel communication, also known as omni channel communication, combines the customer experience (CX) across several channels, including websites, mobile applications, social media, and phone conversations. It may be conceived of as a single-point system for collectively improving interactions regardless of the channel employed.

Consider how you communicate with your consumers, whether it's through blogs, live chats, social media, or even catalogues. It might be difficult to provide a consistent consumer experience across many platforms. However, omni channel communication enables quick access and migration without affecting the consumer experience.

By 2022, we will have more omnichannel platforms that work flawlessly and can therefore support a variety of organizations and business styles. These platforms have become a critical component in ensuring that millions of Internet users are constantly appropriately served. Companies have created omnichannel strategies and approaches to enhance. More and better sales were obtained in this manner.

With the introduction of these platforms, several businesses opted to develop new tools. All with features tailored to digital sales and customer service. In this section, we explain what these platforms are, how they may help your business expand, and which ones are the best.

This manner, you'll learn how these may benefit your company and how you can take your service to the next level.

Many of these firms, in particular, are actively competing with one another to establish themselves as the finest in their industry. While many of them share quite similar characteristics, each has its own set of strengths and disadvantages. In this post, we will recommend the top omnichannel platforms for 2022. Furthermore, we will present you with additional possibilities that are also quite appealing so that you may make a selection based on that knowledge. (Trovò, 2021)

DEFINITION

15.2 OMNI-CHANNEL PLATFORM:

An omnichannel platform differs from a multichannel platform in that it enables the integrated usage of many communication channels from a single platform. It is a communication strategy that combines the operations of several service channels in order to provide rapid and effective service.

Companies may therefore grow their service and sales operations in a single move. Customers will be unable to discern any changes between the platforms as a result of this. It is about attracting consumers' attention and messaging through every accessible media, thereby covering various services in an effective, rapid, and easy manner (Hole, Pawar, & Khedkar, 2019c).

15.3 COMPARISON BETWEEN DIFFERENT PLATFORMS

15.3.1 CALLBELL

Call bell is the greatest omnichannel tool for handling social media messaging. These sorts of instruments are generally fairly pricey, making it difficult to locate one that is both reasonable and functional. Call bell includes all of the most important omnichannel platform features, such as managing chats from various social networks such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Instagram, or Facebook, multi-agent chat even with WhatsApp, messaging statistics, activity statistics, agent statistics, and the ability to integrate all of these social networks in one place while also serving customers in the same way, regardless of the specific case.

While Call bell does not have many integrations, the few that it does have are continually being improved, generating new solutions to help you with your company. The customer service is excellent, and the operators are always eager to assist you. Finally, the platform's aesthetics are

simple and attractive to the eye. This technology is without a doubt an excellent investment in social media message management, and it is ideal for small and medium-sized organizations that wish to implement omnichannel strategies for their customer care and sales models. (Akter et al., 2018)

Figure 12. How Sirena apps work (Trove, 2021)

15.3.2 B2CHAT

B2chat is a provider of chat center services. As a result, your company's agents will be able to handle chats from various service channels from a single platform - the standard omnichannel one and also provide CRM services designed specifically for the administration of WhatsApp leads. Furthermore, it may be used to manage various sorts of leads from various social networks, as well as transmit tickets or chats to other agents or departments. It also has built-in chatbots, predetermined responses, and the ability to send notifications.

In terms of cost. B2chat places a high value on WhatsApp, with the costliest plan of the service featuring it entirely, while the lowest plan does not. It should be noted that the plan comes with just two users by default and that each additional user incurs a fee. Customer support is typically decent, with operators responding fast. While it is considered an omnichannel platform, it does not

have a large number of built-in service channels, which might be a disadvantage for your company. (Iglesias-Pradas, Acquila-Natale, & Del-Río-Carazo, 2021)
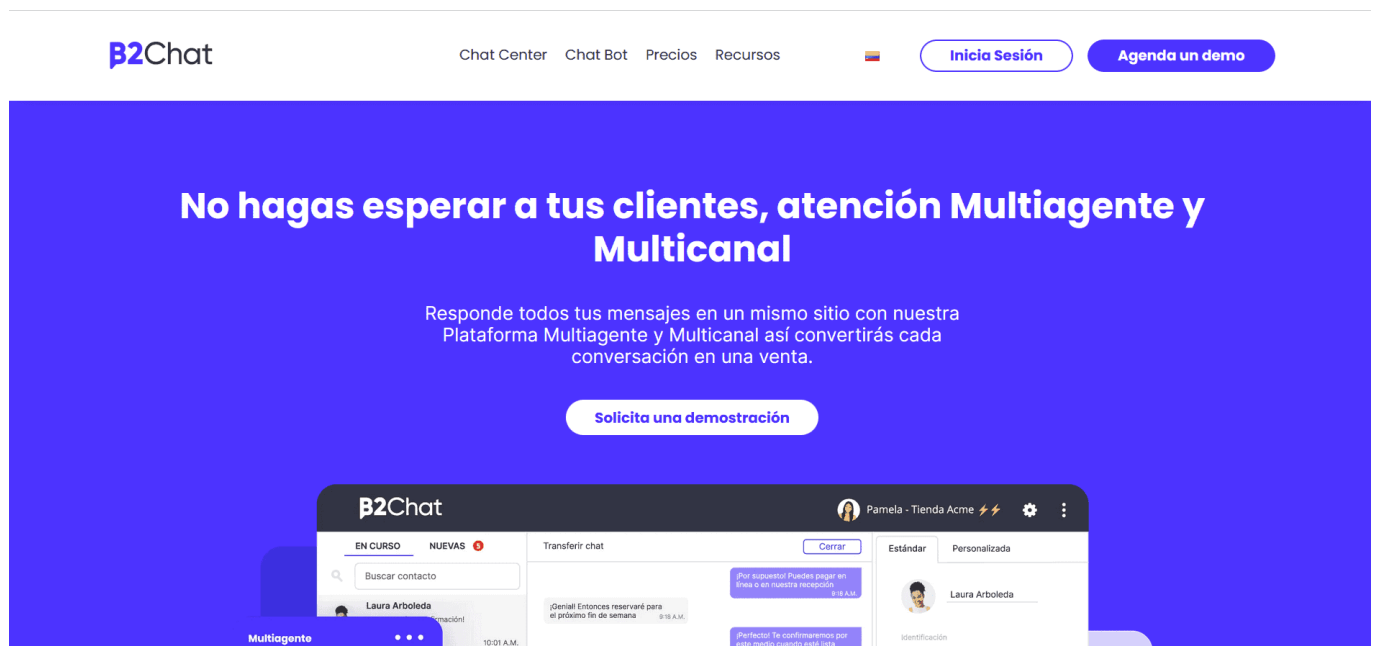
Figure 13. How does B2Chat work (Trovò, 2021a)

15.3.3 <u>ZENDESK</u>

Zendesk is a customer support tool that connects your agents with customers via WhatsApp and other communication channels, making this platform omnichannel, allowing them to visit them from the same tool without having to log into the instant messaging app or other contact pages, such as Facebook or Instagram.

Furthermore, you can track all of your operators' operations so that you can analyze each employee's daily or monthly performance as well as their metrics in terms of messaging and customer happiness.

Furthermore, Zendesk focuses not just on WhatsApp but also on a variety of networks like as Facebook, Instagram, and Gmail, which you can combine to make life simpler and work more practical.

Zendesk may also be used for tech support, sales, and team collaboration. It is a tool for businesses with a medium-high level of development. However, keep in mind that once you've decided on

this omnichannel communication solution, it's highly pricey, and we don't advocate employing it until absolutely necessary. It is an excellent yet pricey gadget that may provide a variety of benefits. (Saar, Junior, Vergili, & Scheibe, 2021)
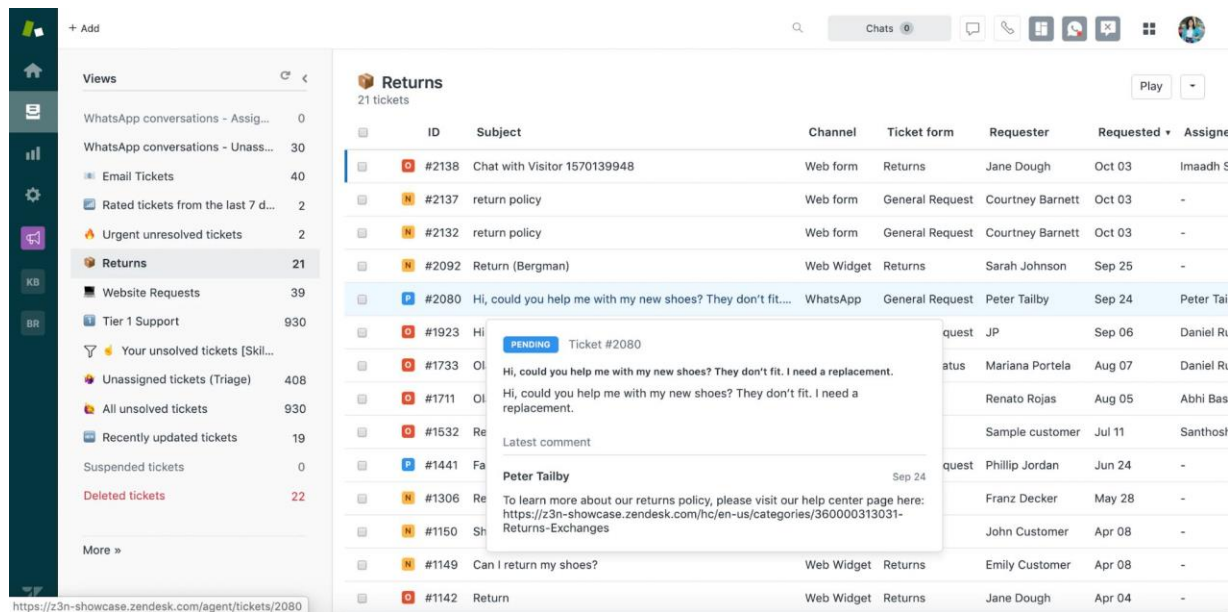
Figure 14. Zendesk Time Tracking + 6 Other Handy Zendesk Feature (Doctor, 2020)

15.3.4 <u>SIRENA</u>

Sirena is a pretty comprehensive and omnichannel program that merges several communication channels and provides connectors for technologies such as MercadoLibre, Google Drive, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook Messenger, and many others. This is Sirena's strongest suit, and it is for this reason that many businesses choose it. However, there are several factors to consider before selecting to utilize Sirena, one of which being the software's complexity. Because the platform has so many connectors, learning how to utilize it gets fairly hard, and the onboarding process feels rather lengthy and tiresome. Always keep in mind that we need solutions that make our clients' life easier, not more complicated, especially when it comes to multichannel initiatives.

Furthermore, the cost is significant, which means that SMEs cannot afford or will find it difficult to finance this solution, as Sirena imposes a surcharge for each WhatsApp message sent in a discussion that lasts longer than 24 hours. or if your monthly SMS limit is reached. Furthermore, support is mediocre, as agents only provide customer service via email and typically take a long

time to respond. It is an excellent service, but with poor customer service and a somewhat expensive investment cost. Although the platform is a milestone in omnichannel, it is still quite difficult to use. (Trove, 2021)

15.4 BEST PLATFORM

15.4.1 <u>CALLBELL</u>

Call bell is an omnichannel technology that consolidates many social networks onto a single platform. It also enables you to connect various customer support representatives or sales representatives. It is a tool that drastically simplifies communication and streamlines customer procedures. It offers measurements and a variety of tools to help you operate more efficiently, especially when it comes to offering a pleasant customer communication experience.

Omnichannel customer service solutions are particularly adept at increasing client loyalty and communication. There are several platforms available today, each with its unique set of benefits.

You may be wondering which of the finest omnichannel platforms of 2022 we recommend after reading about them. This time, we'll tell you about Call bell, the greatest omnichannel support and sales communication platform.

As you can see, omnichannel platforms rule when it comes to customer care. This is because, when compared to traditional media tools, they incorporate additional channels and applications that give the consumer with a totally wonderful experience. It is critical to remember that there are several omnichannel platforms for support, which explains why we will discuss Call bell here.

Call bell is a platform that consolidates the major social networks into a single location (WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook and Instagram). The platform is built and optimized for sales teams, delivering a better user experience; moreover, it provides agent analytics, company metrics, and many sales team capabilities in order to gain more and better conversions.

The pricing is quite reasonable. The assistance and customer service are exceptional. The operators are always there to help and support you. (Trovò, 2021)

15.5 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS:

I.   _____ is the greatest omnichannel tool for handling social media messaging.
   a. Disney
   b. Call bell
   c. Wardrobe
   d. Skype

II.   _____is a provider of chat center services.
   a. Skype
   b. B2chat
   c. Call bell
   d. Daraz

III.   Sirena is a pretty comprehensive and omnichannel program that merges several communication channels and provides connectors for technologies
   a. Alibaba
   b. Sirena
   c. Companies
   d. None

15.6 DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS:

I.   Write a short note on Sirena.
II.   Write a detail note on Callable.
III.   Write a short note on B2 Chat.

CHAPTER 16 :

16.1 FUTURE OF OMNICHANNEL RETAILING

16.1.1 WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF OMNICHANNEL RETAILING?

Physical encounters, ease, personalization, and efficiency are the future of omnichannel shopping. Shoppers are becoming more knowledgeable about their alternatives, and they worry about values and the societal influence of enterprises. As a result, businesses will need to adopt an omnichannel strategy that is likewise centered on addressing the increasing demands of the modern customer.

Let's go further into three key findings concerning retail's future and omnichannel strategy.

Consumer expectations have been and continue to increase, with both disruption from larger shops and the pandemic having a role. The epidemic has highlighted how some shops struggle to connect the links and develop omnichannel experiences. According to Mayur, this has prompted customers to begin switching, bringing "consumer power" to the fore.

16.1.2 The "democratization of retail" didn't just happen.

We've seen the democratization of retail take hold as customers acquire more control over their experience as consumer alternatives have proliferated. However, this isn't a new problem; "shoppers have been growing more demanding about it for a long time," according to Wendy. Amazon has played a critical part in this, creating customer expectations and setting the bar for how soon things arrive.

So, how else have companies like Amazon influenced customers?

It used to be all about obtaining the best deal. However, this is no longer the case. "Now, as shoppers, we all know where to go to get the greatest deal if we want it because it's literally at our fingertips," Wendy explains.

As a result, the future of multichannel shopping will be built on ease. Or, as Wendy so clearly puts it, "if I want it, I can click."

Consumers want digital experiences to feel personal. Consumers are accustomed to having an in-person experience, and rather than losing it entirely in the digital environment, it is preferable to develop blended experiences through video, screen sharing, and other means.

Not least because, as Wendy points out, "time has become a valuable commodity." Everything boils down to ensuring that buyers spend their time appropriately.

Some Acquire clients who are physical retailers have begun digital transformation in order to prepare for the future of multichannel retail. The Dufresne Group, a furniture merchant, has used Acquire technology for both pre-sales and servicing.

Customers want choice, consistency, agility, and personalization

Choice is important when it comes to providing what people desire. Customers have always sought options; it's simply that those options are now more focused on contacting companies through digital media.

Consistency is also vital, as consumers respond negatively when firms do not talk with one brand voice and create a service that is defined by the channel. Finally, this contradicts consumers' desire for adaptability.

Finally, personalization has been and will continue to be an important issue. Consumers expect product suggestions tailored to them, whether provided by an algorithm or a human.

Consistency is also vital, as consumers respond negatively when firms do not talk with one brand voice and create a service that is defined by the channel. Finally, this contradicts consumers' desire for adaptability.

Finally, personalization has been and will continue to be an important issue. Consumers expect product suggestions tailored to them, whether provided by an algorithm or a human. ("The Future of Omnichannel Retailing: Experts Weigh In," 2022)

16.2 SEAMLESS EXPERIENCES WILL IMPACT REVENUE

Customers are purchasing more online and in physical stores than ever before. And the firms who grasp it allow customers to do what they want, putting the customer first.

Wendy feels that physical shops' earlier emphasis on operational efficiency will simply not endure due to "all the different ways that individuals may now purchase." If you try to push people to do something they don't want to do, they will retreat to the numerous other alternatives accessible to them. The epidemic has taught customers to shop wisely.

This prompts the question: why aren't all businesses attempting to adopt an omnichannel strategy?

To begin with, it might be expensive. Even if you do obtain it, figuring out how to put it in place might be difficult. Companies who do not see the need for change, on the other hand, must know that "there is no turning back on this," according to Wendy. (Rodríguez-Torrico, Trabold Apadula, San-Martín, & San José Cabezudo, 2020)

16.3 CUSTOMERS WILL KEEP CHANGING

In the future of multichannel retailing, removing the stress from the shopping experience will be critical. And this will occur along two distinct dimensions. Shoppers will wonder if this is a good investment. Is this an efficient use of time?

16.4 A STRONG EMPHASIS ON CONVENIENCE

Shoppers will consider purchasing in the context of their daily lives. It's all part of a larger push toward health and wellbeing. This will continue to expand as buyers place a greater focus on doing what they want in their spare time.

16.5 VALUE-BASED PURCHASING IS ON THE RISE

Younger shoppers, in particular, have strong attitudes about society, community, and the businesses with which they do business. As a result, consumers are becoming more aware.

Caring: the new KPI in the future of omnichannel retailing

Wendy has even discovered a new KPI to consider: caring. It includes everything from comprehending and remembering the customer to the services offered. It's not the same as trust. "How do you notice me and interact with me so I go away and say, 'It hasn't been such an awful day after all,'" Wendy explained.

In terms of KPIs, return on investment has had its day; now it's time for return on engagement, which shifts the focus from monetary investment to what you gain from the time and resources you employ to engage your clients across many channels.

When it comes to planning for the future, Wendy adds, "if you follow the shopper, you'll see the future." (Ye, Lau, & Teo, 2018)

THE 'PHYGITAL' SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

CASE STUDIES:

Eric Hazan: We are entering the world of "phygital"—physical and digital at the same time, in which there is no physical or digital world in retail, but rather one that is entirely integrated.

Praveen Adhi: Store traffic will very probably be reduced indefinitely. As you notice the change to e-commerce, whether it's five, ten, or fifteen points, some of your consumers are not returning to the shop or are not returning as frequently as they used to. As a result, being able to optimize the value of each journey will be critical.

Kelsey Robinson: I believe that a customer entering into a business in 2030 will feel very connected—that is, affirmations from social media or friends and family who aren't even close by will be interwoven into that store.

Sajal Kohli: A significant portion of resource investment—both human capital and capital expenditure in dollars—must shift away from creating new brick-and-mortar businesses and toward technology.

Hazan, Eric: More than 30 to 40% of cosmetics in Asia are sold online. This will continue to grow in the future. So, 10 years from now, the majority of sales for specific product categories will be online, and physical retail would only have flagships—for "showrooming."

SUSTAINABILITY, COMMUNITY, FUN

Hazan, Eric: In certain nations, such as a handful in Europe, nearly one-fourth of shoppers would move retailers if they didn't believe the things in front of them were sustainable. The concern for and emphasis on hygiene, organic goods, and sustainability is significantly more than in the past. As a result, merchants face an additional degree of complication.

Kelsey Robinson says: Is a shop merely about making a sale? Or is it a location where I can provide community and experiences that correlate with my brand, such as a fitness class or meeting local artists or bands?

Adhi, Praveen: What will entice people to visit the business when they become accustomed to purchasing online? How do you envision increasing brand engagement, increasing product understanding, making it a joyful experience, and removing any friction from that experience?

Sajal Kohli says: You must consider: What are the many dimensions of producing experience? What will your value proposition be? What will be the foundation of your distinction, the true reason why customers will be loyal to your vs not?

Kelsey Robinson: Don't strive to dominate every aspect of the consumer experience. Choose a few locations where your brand can truly shine. ("The Future of Retail: Omnichannel Shopping in 2030 | McKinsey," n.d.)

CRC aims to be Thailand's no. 1 omnichannel platform for customer shopping lifestyle brands:

("CRC Aims to Be Thailand's No. 1 Omnichannel Platform for Customer Shopping Lifestyle Brands," n.d.)

Bangkok, November 18, 2020 — CRC had significant omnichannel sales growth in the third quarter of 2020 as clients began to acclimatize to the omnichannel experience, resulting in a 234% YoY increase over the third quarter of previous year. The fastest increasing categories in the first nine months of 2021 were beauty items (+285% YTD), followed by sports products (76% YTD), home and kitchen (173% YTD), and TV & Entertainment (195% YTD). The four categories accounted for 40% of Central Retail's total omnichannel sales.

With 230-million-baht online sales in one single day, the 11.11 Double Mega Sale results were the established track record for the performance of CRC's omnichannel platform - nearly double the increase of the 11.11 sale event in 2019, and eight times more than normal day sales. During the 11.11 Double Mega Sale 2020, new sale channels such as Chat & Shop and Call & Shop contributed 85 million baht, while offline contributed 475 million baht. More than 7,000,000 people the 1 card points were redeemed in a single day during the sale event, setting a new record for CRC.

CRC's omnichannel sales generated 3% of total sales in 2019, increasing to 10% in 2020, and the business anticipates the omnichannel platform to contribute 15-20% of total sales in 2021.

Nicol Galante, President of Central Retail Corporation PCL, revealed that, following successful sales growth on its omnichannel platform, CRC aims to be Thailand's number one omnichannel platform for customer shopping lifestyle brands, with plans to double its online assortment growth of the existing 1 million SKUs in 2021 and triple its size by 2022. The company also intends to expand the Central App platform, allowing all business divisions to adopt omnichannel and be available on a single platform. Furthermore, it aspires to improve customers' unique omnichannel experiences by merging the best of physical and online purchasing and expanding new sales channels.

CRC intends to expand its leadership in the lifestyle brand segment. Despite accounting for only around 20% of the overall retail e-commerce landscape, lifestyle-branded items are the segment with the highest profit margins. We also think that by focusing on our fundamental goal, we will be able to become Thailand's leading omnichannel platform for lifestyle brands, providing our clients with "the best of both worlds" in both physical and online channels. We believe that omnichannel is the future of retail, and that all stakeholders will eventually invest in the

platform. We are the first to anticipate this future and invest in expanding the platform, and each year, we will do more, be stronger, and improve our customers' omnichannel experience,"

16.6 <u>USE A 3PL TO SUPPORT OMNICHANNEL SUCCESS:</u>

A 3PL can assist you in collaborating with value chain partners to allow seamless data visibility and the development of actionable insights to aid in fulfilment success. An omnichannel strategy cannot be a last-minute addition. It must be a top-down culture revolution spearheaded by internal advocates and supported by third-party logistics partners. Understanding the consumers and what they genuinely value should be the first step in developing a plan. For example, shipment speed may not be as crucial as predictability. As a result, a corporation may squander efforts improving shipping times when what customers truly value is knowing when their package will arrive.

Keep in mind that this is not an attempt to force retailers to become online-only stores. Customers who shop online and in-store spend twice as much as those who just shop in-store, according to study.

As the proportion of online buying grows, it is critical for businesses to develop an omnichannel approach. Few businesses are capable of implementing an omnichannel solution on their own. However, if done correctly, your distribution and fulfilment operations may offer a distinct competitive edge.

Utilize the knowledge of a seasoned 3PL with the technology and experience to assist in the elimination of silos and the development of a single complete picture of your supply chain. In the United States, Warehouse Anywhere has over 10,000 dispersed warehouses. We can provide "pick up in store" and home delivery options more cost-effectively by decreasing the final mile with a decentralized, forward-deployed inventory. Our mobile and online solutions provide comprehensive visibility and control, as well as 100% inventory accuracy. At a look, you'll know how much inventory you have and where it is. You can keep your inventory low while yet delivering excellent customer service. (Kembro & Norrman, 2019)

16.7 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION

I. _____ are purchasing more online and in physical stores than ever before.
   a. Businessman
   b. Companies
   c. Government
   d. Customers

II. A _____ can assist you in collaborating with value chain partners to allow seamless data visibility and the development of actionable insights to aid in fulfilment success.
   a. 2PL
   b. 3PL
   c. 4PL
   d. 5PL

III. A significant portion of resource investment—both human capital and capital expenditure in dollars—must shift away from creating new brick-and-mortar businesses and toward technology

   a. Sajal Kohli

   b. Hazic

   c. David

   d. None

DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS:

I. Write about Hazan, Eric comments.
II. How you can use a 3PL to support omnichannel success.
III. Write a short note on omnichannel retailing.

16.8 CASE EXAMPLES

16.8.1 PMEOLO FASHION-CASE STUDY

Pomelo, which was founded in 2013, is Southeast Asia's premier **Omni channel platform** with a global mindset: on-trend, online, and on-the-go. Pomelo aspires to provide ladies everywhere with their finest appearance at an unrivaled price, with an undeniable sense of style ([Case Study] Affable and Pomelo Fashion, n.d.).

Pomelo Mega Fashion Sale, which takes place on November 11 every year, is one of the brand's major sale events, giving significant discounts, prizes, and special offers to Pomelo buyers.
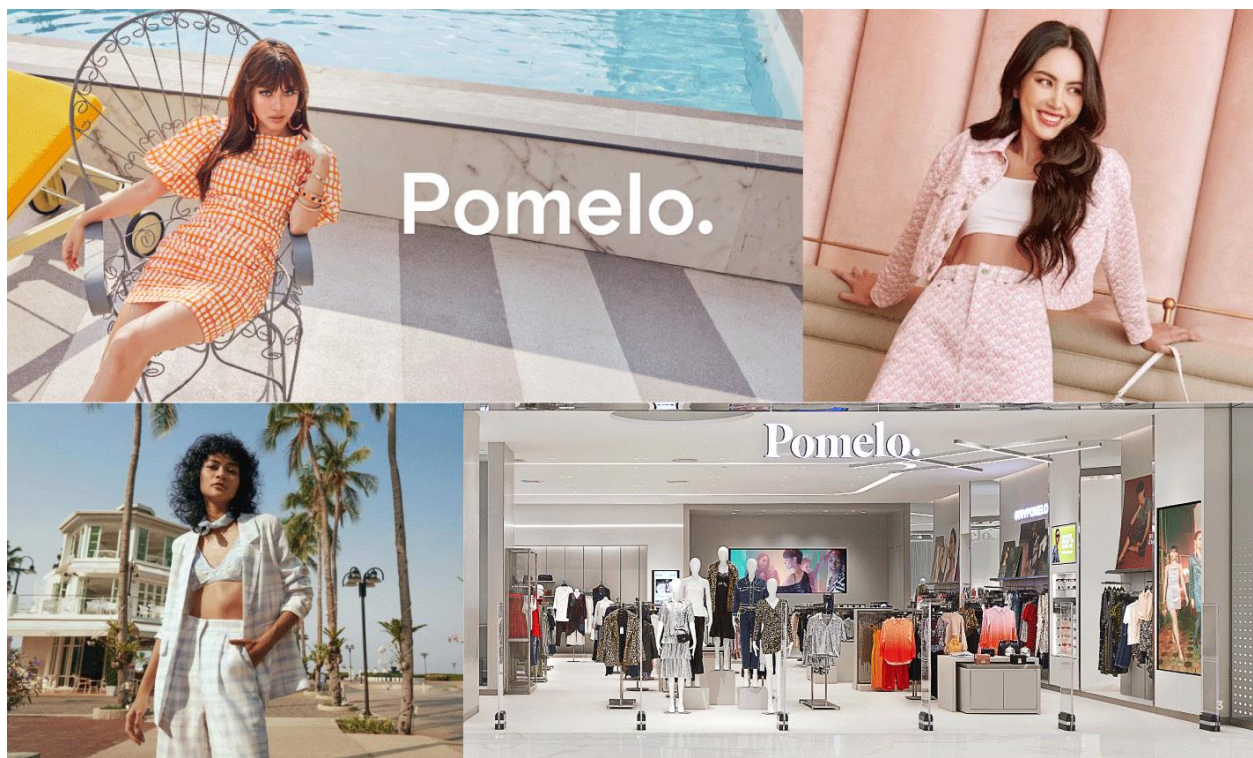
Figure 15. Pomelo Fashion

Pomelo launched a large-scale influencer marketing campaign in four countries in 2020 to promote its 11.11 Mega Fashion Sale, including Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. To promote its greatest sale event, the brand collaborated with 150 social media influencers, making 150+ Instagram posts and 470+ Instagram stories.

Despite working online owing to the epidemic, Pomelo Thailand was able to efficiently manage the campaign with the help of Affable. This is one of Pomelo's finest influencer campaigns in 2020 in terms of performance ([Case Study] Affable and Pomelo Fashion, n.d.).

16.8.2 DOCTOR ANYWHERE-CASE STUDY

Doctor Anywhere, a healthcare company that utilizes an **"Omni channel" strategy**, revealed today that it has secured $88 million SGD (about $65.7 million USD) in Series C investment. Asia Partners led the round, with Novo Holdings, Philips, and OSK-SBI Partners also participating. Returning investors were EDBI, Square Peg, IHH Healthcare, Kamet Capital, and Pavilion Capital (Southeast Asia "Omnichannel" Health Startup Doctor Anywhere Gets $88M SGD, n.d.).

As part of the funding, Asia Partners co-founder Oliver Rippel and Novo Holdings Equity Asia senior partner Dr. Amit Kakar will join the board of directors of Doctor Anywhere. The Series C investment, which the business estimates is one of the largest private rounds obtained by a Southeast Asian health tech startup, takes the company's total funding to more than $140 million SGD.
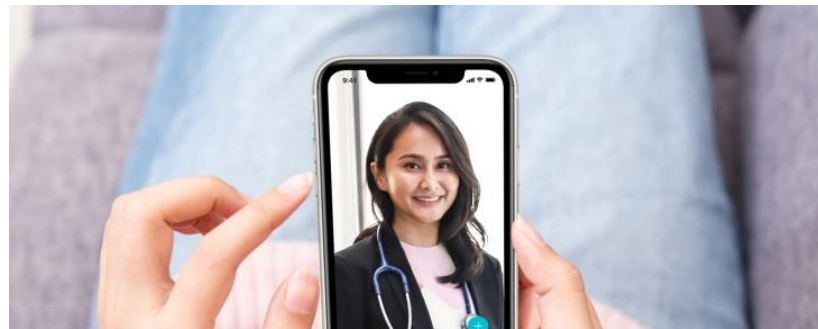
Figure 25. Doctor Anywhere

Doctor Any where's Omni channel strategy means that it offers in-person clinics, home visits, medicine delivery, and an in-app marketplace for health and wellness items in addition to online consultations.

Doctor Anywhere, founded in 2017 by Lim Wai Mun, claims to have over 1.5 million users. It is available in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines, as well as in Bangalore and Ho Chi Minh City, which have recently formed innovation centers (Southeast Asia "Omnichannel" Health Startup Doctor Anywhere Gets $88M SGD, n.d.).

Lim told TechCrunch in an email that when he began working on Doctor Anywhere, viable telemedicine systems already existed in the United States, the United Kingdom, and China, but the concept was still in its infancy in Southeast Asia. Lim, a former investor, started Doctor Anywhere as a side project after meeting elderly people who couldn't leave their homes for medical appointments.

"We rapidly recognized that physical presence is really necessary in order to create trust with people," Lim said of Doctor Anywhere, which began as an online-only healthcare business. As a result, the firm began offering home care and physical clinics.

The COVID-19 pandemic, according to Doctor Anywhere, accelerated the use of telehealth services in Southeast Asia by at least five years. Demand for online medical consultations, drug delivery, and marketplace sales increased (Southeast Asia "Omnichannel" Health Startup Doctor Anywhere Gets $88M SGD, n.d.).

"We have more than quadrupled the size of our network in the last year, from over 1,000 providers at the start of 2020 to close to 2,500 medical professionals across Southeast Asia," Lim added.

In response to the pandemic, Doctor Anywhere developed an online COVID-19 Medical Advisory Clinic last year to give those with suspected symptoms with on-demand consultations. It also collaborated with psychiatrists to develop an online mental wellness module. Lim stated that the firm has observed an increase in demand for mental-health services such as sleeplessness and anxiety.

Whitecoat, Speedo, and Doctor World are among the other telehealth firms in the region. Lim stated that Doctor Anywhere intends to differentiate itself by responding fast to customer questions with new products and "cultivating a mix between technology and human touch."

The funds will be utilized to strengthen Doctor Any where's existing markets and grow into new ones. It also intends to expand its technology infrastructure and big data capabilities for a better online-to-offline user experience, as well as to add new medical specialty modules, reduce pharmaceutical delivery times, and generates tailored healthcare plans (Southeast Asia "Omnichannel" Health Startup Doctor Anywhere Gets $88M SGD, n.d.).

16.9 <u>SINGAPORE AIRLINES: THE UNRIVALED OMNICHANNEL MARKET</u>

Aviation firms, like retailers (or e-tailers), may become masters of the **Omni experience**. Singapore Airlines is a wonderful example of a company that provides a smooth experience to their consumers. They have always been praised for their creativity, and for the time being, they are developing a strong, customer-focused Omni experience. By merging online and physical experiences, this flagship airline is collaborating with AOE integrated airports and shopping complexes. Customers can conveniently purchase, pre-book, improve in-flight options, and earn loyalty with this relationship (Singapore Airlines to Roll out Full Omnichannel Commerce on AOE's OM3 Platform | AOE, n.d.).

Figure 16. Singapore Airlines

Singapore Airlines (SIA) is the first client to use Panasonic Avionics' new Marketplace e-commerce platform, which is a digital system that allows for in-flight ordering of retail and food and beverage goods. The technology also enhances storefront retail and duty-free services by presenting dynamic inventory during flight and it can be used to give sales promotions throughout the consumer journey, in both connected and non-connected contexts (Singapore Airlines to Roll out Full Omnichannel Commerce on AOE's OM3 Platform | AOE, n.d.).

Marketplace will be used by SIA for their Kris Shop omni-channel shopping experience, which will be known as shopping. Retail catalogs will be pre-loaded on the airline's IFE content server, allowing passengers to browse regardless of connectivity condition.

Passengers will be able to browse and buy about 4,000 things in-flight, with the option of having them delivered to their homes or on their next journey.

With real-time inventory changes, SIA can utilize Marketplace to constantly update and customize its retail offering, as well as add future outlets. The offer can also be tailored to each route, cabin, and destination, for example, by assigning various store catalogues to certain routes and cabins to better match the passenger demography. The airline may also utilize the Marketplace e-commerce analytics tools to continuously monitor and improve its performance and guarantee it fits the demands and tastes of its customers.

16.10 SEPHORA: THE MAKEUP MASTER IS ALSO A MARKETING MASTER

Sephora is one of the most popular cosmetics businesses in the country, and they have become masters of **Omni channel marketing**. The organization does an excellent job of generating a consistent brand experience for clients whether they are using the mobile or desktop site or visiting a physical store.

Sephora is well-versed in its customer base. They know what the customers want and will find valuable, and that's where they put their Omni channel marketing efforts. They make it easier for clients to reduce their selections and to keep track of the goods that interest them. The company has a consistent message across its sites, social media, and in their stores (Lowery, 2019).

Sephora consistently ranks high on lists of the finest Omni channel marketing shops due to their seamless integration of online and in-store experiences. While at a physical store, the brand experience is constant with beauty suggestions, knowledgeable salespeople, complimentary makeovers, and, of course, items to test. Customers may utilize their Beauty Bag accounts online to log purchases ("What color was that lipstick again?"), scan products in-store, watch tutorials, manage a wish list, and much more. By providing this experience to their customers, this #1 beauty shop increased mobile orders by almost 100% (Lowery, 2019).
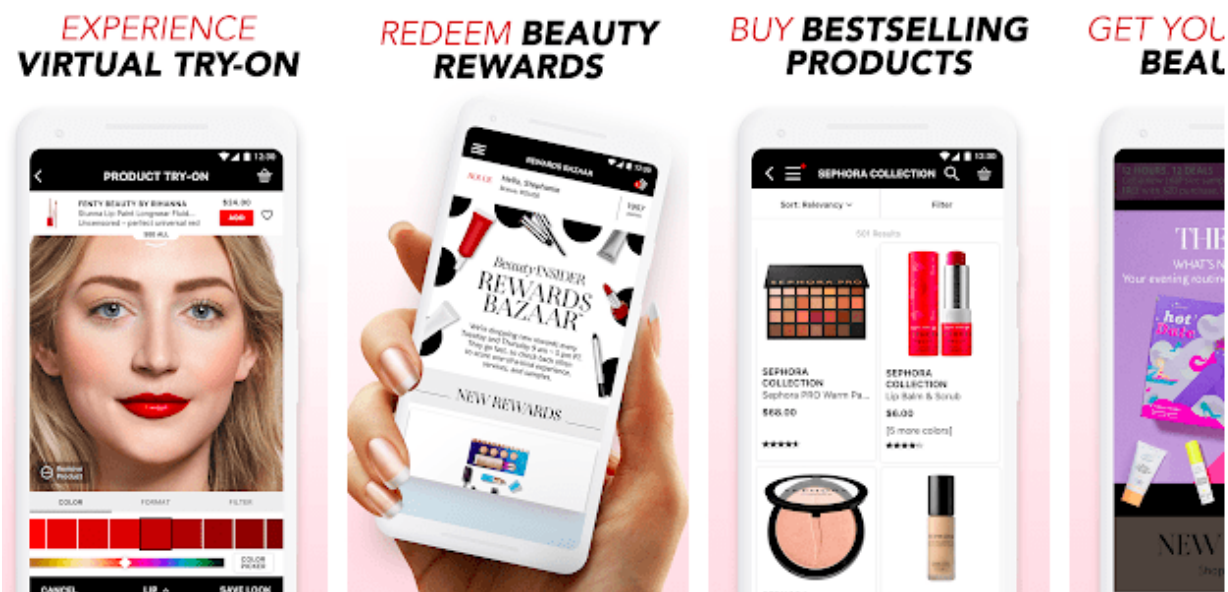
Figure 17. Sephora

16.11 SARAFA BAZAR INDIA – OMNI CHANNEL CASE STUDY

Sarafa Bazar India employs an **Omni channel strategy** to modernize the jewelry industry.

The Indian jewelry trade has long been one of the largest and most well-known for providing the world with the most sophisticated metals and gems. The trade has evolved and embraced a new appearance in sectors like as design, manufacturing, display, advertising, and retail in the twenty-first century. This acceptance process has resulted in several changes to the jewelry industry's traditional methods. Indian jewelers are rethinking their brick-and-mortar business strategies and implementing an Omni channel approach with a stronger internet strategy to boost sales. In fact, technology is assisting people in completing their tasks swiftly and comfortably (Bigly, 2022).

Keeping the same idea in mind, Indian entrepreneur Archit Jain founded Sarafa Bazar India. The concept has combined expertise with common enterprise, redefining established conventions and reworking the operations of the decorative sector.

The entrepreneur has built a portal for jewelers who are producers, wholesalers, and retailers through Sarafa Bazar India, a B2B platform. Through this website, they may be able to speak with more potential customers and exhibit the variety of their options. Despite the fact that the company

offers its products online, physical transactions between the buyer and the seller are carried out to ensure complete transparency. Sarafa Bazar India has provided a transmission using the time-consuming and tiresome conventional method (Bigly, 2022).

16.12 ADDIDAS:

Adidas tailors the client experience across all platforms.

• Within their account, customers may choose their personal style and sports interests, as well as their preferred location.

• Based on browsing and on-site shopping activity, website content and product suggestions are updated.

• Adidas sends a 'happy birthday' email to clients, along with a unique and personalized birthday offer.

16.13 PC WORLD(UK):

For providing Flexible Fulfillment choices, PC World (UK) achieved the highest score in Europe.

• Customers have the option of choosing between click-and-collect and reserve-and-collect. Online purchases can also be returned in-store.

• Customers can pick between same-day and next-day delivery. All orders qualify for free standard delivery.

• Employees may make orders for consumers for home delivery online and check inventory at other businesses.

16.14 BEVER(NL):

In our research of 145 stores, Bever came out on top.

• Bever provides many methods to contact them, responding to various consumer preferences.

• To swiftly address consumer questions, live chat is provided on all pages of the mobile website.

• Bever responds quickly and accurately to store-related issues via email, live chat, and phone.

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