



Reverse-Engineer These
**5 Omnichannel Customer Engagement
Tricks** to Streamline Support



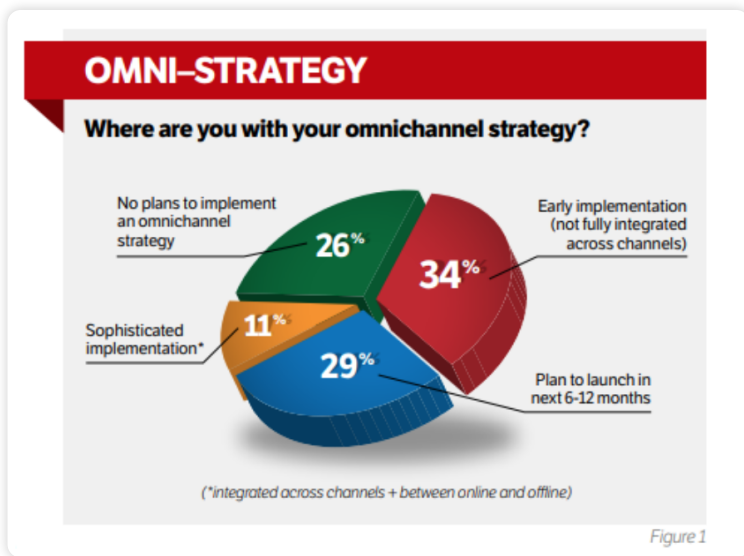
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Introduction

Omnichannel engagement is one of the top priorities for many businesses looking to improve the customer experience they offer.

At this point, however, it's still in the fairly early stages of adoption. While only 11% of companies currently say they have “sophisticated implementation” of a strategy, and 34% have early implementation, 29% say they plan to launch an omnichannel strategy in the next six to 12 months.



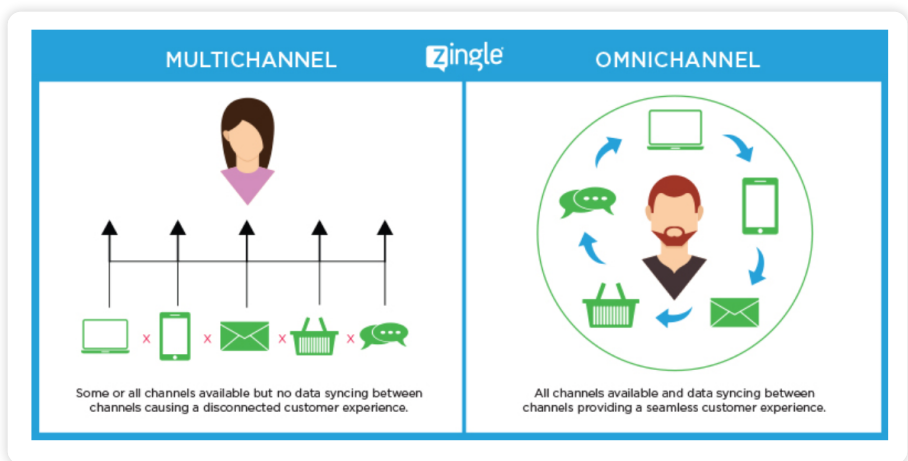
This shift is due in large part to the increasing pressure for businesses to offer excellent buying experiences. In fact, 81% of businesses say they expect to be competing mostly or completely on the basis of customer experience by 2020.

Today's consumers expect the brands they partner with and purchase from to provide a great experience from their first interaction, all the way through the buying process, and even after they convert. And this experience needs to include all of the ways in which they interact with your brand, including both online and offline touchpoints.

Your potential customers should be able to reach you in whatever way is most convenient for them, and receive the same excellent service regardless of channel.

In the past, many brands attempted to keep up with this expectation with multichannel strategies. And while this term is often mistakenly used interchangeably with omnichannel, they're not one and the same.

If you're not clear on the differences between **omnichannel vs. multichannel** engagement, just take a look at the following graphic:



With a multichannel strategy, customers can reach out to a company on a variety of channels like their website, mobile app, email, ecommerce store, and even in-person. But all of these conversations take place entirely independently of one another.

In this setup, there's no connection between these various channels.

So, for example, if a customer calls a business on the phone for assistance, they may not have their issue fully resolved during that first conversation. As a result, they might reach out via email to follow up.

If those two channels aren't connected, the agent who reads their email will have no context for their question, and may need the customer to re-tell the entire conversation they had with the phone support agent in order to help.

From a customer standpoint, it's not hard to imagine how this can be frustrating.

But an omnichannel strategy can eliminate this frustration.

With this approach, data on each customer's previous interactions with your team, purchase history, and other details are synced between all channels.

Your agents can easily access the information they need to pick up right where someone else on your team left off in assisting a customer, regardless of the channels that customer uses to get in touch.

This allows you to deliver seamless experiences and be confident that you're deliver

the support all of your current and potential customers need on every channel you offer.

Still, creating a strong omnichannel strategy requires a bit of strategy and planning. And one of the most important factors to consider is how, exactly, you can integrate the various channels on which your customers connect with your brand.

After all, the omnichannel experience you create isn't limited to support interactions. It should encompass your website, marketing campaigns, and physical store locations.

And one of the best ways to ensure that you're providing a truly seamless experience across each of these touchpoints is to determine the role that various channels can play in driving the results you want on other important channels.

That's why in this post, we'll go over five strategies you can use to integrate each piece of your omnichannel strategy, and make each even effective in driving its intended goal.

Trick #1:
Boost Loyalty With
Better Resources

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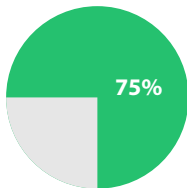
Some brands view their website and support strategies as entirely separate entities.

This is a mistake.

With the right approach, your website can be a powerful support tool that enables your customers to access the information they need to find answers to their questions, solutions to their problems, and troubleshooting ideas for any technical issues.

And many of today's consumers actually prefer finding resolutions this way. In fact, 75% of consumers believe that self-service is the most convenient way to resolve customer service issues, and 67% prefer self-service over speaking with a customer service representative.

Self-service is the convenient way to solve customer service issues



Prefer self-service over talking to customer service representative

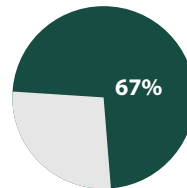


Image Source

This means that by adding comprehensive resources to your website, you can actually provide a better support experience for your customers.

But customer convenience isn't the only benefit of improved self-service tools.

From a business standpoint, **improved customer resources** can also drastically boost your support team's efficiency. When customers are empowered to find answers on their own, this eliminates the need for them to contact your team for help.

As a result, self-service resources can reduce the tickets your team handles by 36%.



This reduces the wait times for customers who do need assistance from your team, and enables your agents to focus on more complex support inquiries.

One great example of a brand doing this well is **Value City Furniture**.

As the company developed their approach to moving customers through the sales funnel, they focused on **building personal relationships with shoppers**.

They also recognized the need to not only answer customer questions that addressed After all, the company's products are a fairly large investment, and one that the shopper will see in their home on a daily basis.

To address the challenges of selling these types of products online, Value City launched a platform called “Easy Pass” that connected data between physical stores and online shopping carts.

This way, if a shopper finds a product online that they like, but aren’t ready to commit before seeing that product in person, they can opt to take the next step in the buying process in the nearest store.

As soon as they arrive at the store, a sales associate can immediately direct them to that same product — and after they see it, they can finalize the purchase either online or in the store.

As a result of this strategy, the company saw a **283% raise in abandonment revenue**, a 190% boost in overall email revenue, and 55% growth in shoppers reached.

Trick #2:
Improve Your
Employee Training

Trick #2: Improve Your Employee Training

Excellent employee training is the first step in building a team that's equipped to offer the level of service and support you want for your customers.

And although every company has its own unique approach to training, there are a few key elements you need to cover in order to make sure your staff are all prepared to succeed in their roles.

These include communication and teamwork skills, the ability to map out and share resolution plans in a clear and concise manner, and a strong ability to exercise patience.

And providing this level of training to your team isn't just beneficial to your customers. In fact, offering excellent onboarding for customer support agents can lead to higher customer satisfaction, more profits, and less employee turnover.



And with a focus on **omnichannel** support, your training can go beyond standard support best practices. You can also give your employees the skills they need to connect with potential customers on multiple channels. For example, **Oasis** is a UK fashion retailer that makes sales on an ecommerce site, a mobile app, and in physical retail stores.

Within their stores, sales associates are each equipped with iPads that give up-to-date stock information on each of the products the brand sells, so that they can help shoppers find the items they want quickly and efficiently.

Then, when a customer is ready to buy, the iPad also serves as a cash register, so that associates can help customers make purchases anywhere in the store. And if a product isn't available in that particular store, the associate can instantly place an online order to be shipped to the shopper's home.

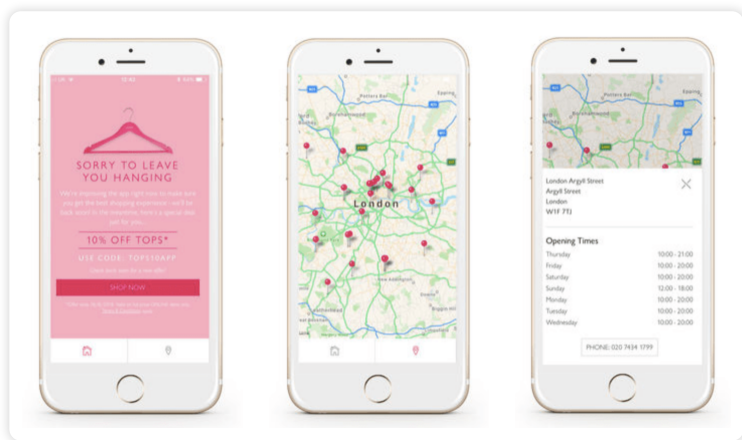


Image Source

Finally, they can encourage each shopper to download the brand's app, to supplement their in-store experience and make purchases even after they leave.

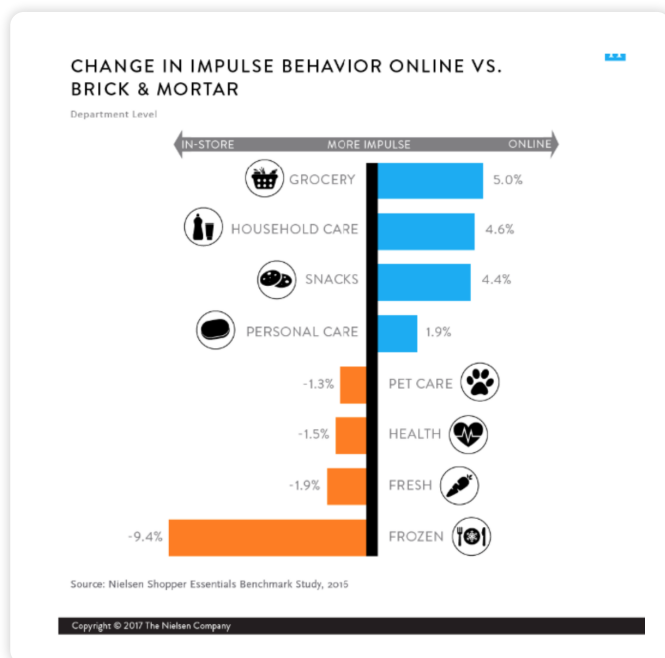
Trick #3:
Build A **Seamless**
Online-Offline
Experience

Trick #3: Build A Seamless Online-Offline Experience

If your business engages with customers both online and off, one of the more challenging parts of developing an omnichannel strategy is figuring out how to connect these two aspects.

Of course, the first step in this process is ensuring that shoppers can get the same products and information regardless of where they're shopping.

But beyond that, you need to be aware of the differences between shopping behavior on each of these channels. For example, [trends in impulse buying](#) vary by channel. And while you may assume that impulse purchases are more common in store than online across the board, that's simply not the case.



In stores, consumers are more likely to impulse buy pet care and health products, along with both fresh and frozen foods.

Online shoppers, on the other hand, are more likely to impulse buy grocery, household care, snack, and personal care products.

But the best way to increase all purchases, regardless of product type, is to provide a seamless shopping experience across both your online and offline channels.

For example, home decor brand [Crate and Barrel](#) offers an app that customers can use to shop and browse products. Then, when they visit a store location, they can scan product barcodes, review product details, search for items, and create wish lists.

After leaving the store, they can access the products and information they saved on multiple devices, to make for an easier shopping experience.

The brand also enhances the shopping experience with their [Crate Design Studio 3D Room Designer feature](#).

With this tool, shoppers can create 3D visualizations of their rooms, styled with [Crate and Barrel](#) products. They can also create 2D floor plans and visualize [Crate and Barrel](#) products in their own homes.

These tools help shoppers not only interact with the brand online and off, but also help them use digital resources to envision products in their own living spaces.

Trick #4:
Personalize as
Much as Possible

Trick #4: Personalize as Much as Possible

One of the biggest advantages of connecting with customers on multiple channels is that it gives you more opportunity to collect data in multiple ways.

And with an **omnichannel** strategy, all of this data is connected — meaning that you can use the information you collect on one channel to personalize the experience a customer has on another. This helps you create buying experiences that are customized the shopper and tailored to their interests and needs.

But the benefits aren't just for customers. In fact, personalization also **many financial benefits** for brands that make it part of their marketing strategies.

Companies who create personalized omnichannel experiences have seen up to 500% increases in consumer spending. Plus, brands who use personalization see an average 50% reduction in acquisition costs.

4x 

E-Commerce is growing **4 times** faster than traditional brick-and-mortar retail.

500% 

500% increase in consumer spending through personalized omni-channel experiences.

79% 

79% of consumers will only use personalized promotions

50% 

50% reduction in acquisition cost when using personalization

So if you have access to customer data, there's really no reason not to use it to improve the customer experience.

One brand doing this well is [Neiman Marcus](#). In fact, the brand won a [2017 IRT Retailer Innovation Award](#) for their approach to using new technology to drive the brand and their shopping experience forward.

For example, the company's Snap, Find, Shop mobile app enables shoppers to take photos of outfits, then uses visual recognition technology to recommend similar products that are available at Neiman Marcus.

It also offers a "Memory Mirror" in stores, which not only gives customers a 360-degree view of how they look as they try on apparel, but also enables them to save and share this view.

Then, based on the information the brand collects (both in the app and during in-store interactions), the brand can provide product recommendations that are tailored to each shopper's taste and interests.

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Trick #5:

Focus on **Building**
the **Relationships**
You Already Have

Trick #5: Focus on Building the Relationships You Already Have

Many brands focus their marketing efforts almost entirely on earning new customers. And this is a mistake.

While acquisition is certainly an important part of any company's marketing strategy, **building strong customer relationships** is ultimately the best way to achieve long-term success.

That's because customer relationships have a direct impact on customer retention — which is an extremely important part of generating a steady flow of revenue.

In fact, increasing customer retention rates by just 5% can increase profits by anywhere from 25% to 95%, and 2% increase in customer retention has the same effect as decreasing costs by 10%. Plus, on average, loyal customers are worth up to ten times as much as their first purchase.



**Profit by 25%
to 95%**

Increasing customer retention rates by **5%** **increases profits** by **25%** to **95%**



**Costes by
10%**

A **2%** increase in customer retention has the **same effect** as decreasing costs by **10%**



**Worth 10x
as much**

On average, loyal customers are worth **up to 10 times as much** as their first purchase

It's clear, then, that it's more than worth your time and resources to put a strategy in place for maximizing customer retention. And you can get creative with these strategies, both online and off.

For example, air freshener brand [Glade](#) created a pop-up museum called the [Museum of Feelings](#), that includes a walk-in kaleidoscope, An LED jellyfish forest, and a cloud room — just to name a few standout parts of the experience.

This exhibition was based entirely on the idea that memories are linked to scents, and designed to create a memorable association with the brand.

And while it didn't highlight any specific products or marketing campaigns, it was certainly an effective approach to getting consumers' attention and getting emotional reactions to the brand that are nearly impossible to create during normal shopping experiences.

So as you look for ways to connect with your customers in memorable ways, consider both online and offline strategies. As long as all of your channels are connected, these experiences can translate into future actions wherever a customer connects.

Conclusion

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Today's consumers expect excellent **omnichannel** experiences — and delivering on this expectation is no longer optional.

If you want to establish a loyal, long-term customer base, you need to provide seamless engagement on every channel you use as part of your marketing, sales, and support strategies.

And part of achieving this goal is figuring out how to best integrate your channels to maximize each one's effectiveness.

First, you can boost loyalty by offering better resources that empower your audience to find the answers they need and troubleshoot any issues on their own.

Then, offer your employees the training they need to not only deliver top-notch customer support, but also get shoppers connected with your brand on other channels.

If your company owns physical retail spaces or storefronts, you'll also need to establish a seamless online-offline connection so that customers can easily move between their interactions with your company.

From there, use the data you collect on each channel to personalize the experience on every channel where a customer engages with your brand.

Finally, focus on using every channel in your strategy to build and strengthen relationships with your existing customers.

Although many brands make the mistake of focusing primarily on acquisition, retention can have an even more significant impact on your success. And an omnichannel strategy is an excellent way to improve it.

With these five strategies, you can strengthen all of the channels in your omnichannel approach — and deliver an even better customer experience than ever before.



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