

An Introduction to Multi-Channel Marketing



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CHAPTER 1:

What is Multi-Channel Marketing?

There was a time not too long ago when you only needed a few outlets to be able to reach the consumer; a television spot, an ad in the daily newspaper, perhaps a billboard. But in today's digital and interconnected era there are many ways to grab consumer attention: websites, email, blogs, direct mail, PPC, mobile and much more. Businesses hoping to reach their customers have more options than they probably want, and more questions about how to market effectively than answers. Being able to harness these different channels to your advantage is what multi-channel marketing is all about.

Multi-channel marketing is communicating, interacting and selling to prospects and customers across many media channels, including print, broadcast and digital. In simplest terms, it is about giving the consumer a choice.

Using a single channel to reach customers is no longer enough in today's complex digital world. According to Jay Walker-Smith, President of the Marketing Firm Yankelovich, we've gone from viewing about 500 ads a day back in the 1970's to as many as 5,000 a day today. In addition, by the year 2020, more than 50 billion devices will be internet-connected. Multi-channel marketing is quickly becoming the preferred way for businesses to reach their customers - how, when and where the customer wants.

According to Experian Marketing Services, more than 80% of marketers are executing multi-channel campaigns that include three or more digital channels. In addition, in a Consumer Insights Survey, 72% of consumers want a multi-channel marketing approach to help with their purchasing decisions.

There are two ways companies connect using multi-channel marketing. “Direct channels” are where the company proactively reaches the customer via physical stores, catalogs or direct mail. “Indirect channels” are where content is pushed via blogs, newsletters or social media toward their websites, also known as inbound marketing. It is the combination of traditional outbound channels with inbound channels that allow customers to engage on the medium of their choice.

Some examples of multi-channel outlets include:

Retail Store	PPC	TV/Radio
Website	Mobile	Ad
Direct Mail	Print Ad	SMS Text Message
Email	Billboard	Mail Order Catalog
Social Media	Blog	

With so many choices, it’s obviously cost prohibitive for most businesses to market in all channels, but there are things you can do to narrow your options, and manage your budget, for success.

CHAPTER 2:

Implementing a Multi-Channel Program and Best Practices

The first thing you should do is create buyer personas. A buyer persona clearly defines who you are selling to, which will help determine which channels to use. For instance, if one of your personas is a 23-year-old college student, you will probably want to make sure and include mobile, social media, SMS and PPC to your mix. If your persona is a retired 65-year-old, you may want to include direct mail, email, Facebook, television and billboard.

Using an inbound marketing methodology will ensure you are creating relevant content for your personas. Once the persona reaches your website through consuming your content the goal is to convert them into a lead via calls-to-action and landing pages. According to Adam Sarnier, Research Vice President at Gartner, “multi-channel marketers seek to combine inbound marketing techniques with their traditional, outbound approach. Fusing the two together can result in a two-way, mutual interaction yielding results for both company and customer.” Writing a blog that speaks to the needs and interests of the 23-year-old college student from the above example will help engage him and drive him to your website via a Google search so that you can nurture him into a customer. In addition, posting the blog to your social media channels will help expand the reach of your message, and promote it. Then, through your CRM system, automated marketing campaigns allow your sales and marketing team to initiate multi-channel marketing campaigns to those leads in order to enhance lead conversion rates.

Again, you don't want to use just digital or just print. A direct mail piece followed by an email with consistent messaging can amplify your results. According to the Harvard Business Review, on average, direct mail and email together provided noticeably better results for businesses than using direct mail or email alone. Businesses increased their order value by more than \$3 when using the two mediums combined, while also getting a 25% higher response rate.

Data collection and proper interpretation plays a huge role in multi-channel marketing. If you've ever done a direct mail campaign, unless you segmented and personalized your mailing list, you probably didn't get optimum results. People are more likely to respond if you address them by name and engage with them in a relevant manner. One-to-one marketing pieces containing personalized headlines, text, graphics, and offers will increase your response rate, engagement and ROI.

Your marketing database should also be segmented by:

- Past purchase behavior
- Survey responses
- Annual income or revenue
- Geographic location
- Customer lifetime value

Once you have the information you can develop:

- Personalized direct mail campaigns
- Personalized URL landing pages (PURLs)
- QR Codes
- Multi-touch automated marketing campaigns



QR Codes continue to be relevant for delivering traffic. By adding one to your postcard or mailer, your targets can scan with their smartphones and link instantly to a direct, web page. In addition, adding PURLs, or personalized web pages customized to each individual, can enhance conversions. When a contact visits their PURL, they're greeted by their name, along with information and imagery developed with their unique needs in mind. At the same time, you're gathering valuable information through surveys and watching how they interact with the site.

Pertinent information can then be fed to your salespeople or CRM system to help you close more deals. By adding PURLs you can:

- Grab your recipients' interest while conveying personal attention
- Increase response rates by 20-30%
- Provide solid response tracking
- Gather email addresses for future marketing efforts
- Track customer interaction to identify interests
- Increase customer loyalty
- Generate scorching-hot leads

Here are a few best practices you can implement to ensure a success for multi-channel marketing program:

1. Be consistent with your message

The branding and message needs to be the same across all channels, otherwise the consumer won't make the connection from previous impressions they may have seen, and your efforts are wasted.

2. Give the consumer something of value

Customers today control the selling process, so you need to give them a reason to seek your product; don't just tell them how great you are. They can download free e-books, in-store promotions, or apps.

3. Know your customer

Dig deep into your Google Analytics, do in-store surveys, create multiple personas as a means to understand the channels your customers will utilize.

4. Give them multiple touch points

Always encourage your prospects and customers to sign up for emails, engage in social media, and any other type of interaction to capture data for future use.

5. Be Fluid

Multi-channel marketing is always changing, just as your customers' needs and wants change. Don't be afraid to add or replace a channel to obtain the desired results. However, you also need to be patient; success won't occur overnight.

CHAPTER 3:

The Benefits of Multi-Channel Marketing

According to a recent report from Digital Doughnut, in partnership with Episerver, 95% of marketers admit that running a multi-channel digital marketing campaign is important to their business.



Incorporating a multi-channel marketing program can greatly enhance your chances of success. Here are 5 great reasons to start now:

Improved Customer Perception

Customers who see your consistent message across multiple platforms are more loyal and view you as forward thinking. You're giving them more touch points and opportunities to engage with valuable information.

6. Better Persona Alignment

All these different channel options allow you to better target specific demographics and behaviors. Some personas are more receptive to communications via channels like Facebook, mobile push notifications, email, or text messages, while others may prefer print, television or phone calls.

7. Increased Number of Engagement Points

If you're trying to sell a product, what could be better than having multiple ways to engage and convert a prospective customer? The more paths that lead to a sale, the better the odds of making a sale.

8. Save money

With proper multi-channel strategy management, business owners can find the right mix to deliver the lowest CPA (Cost Per Acquisition), thus achieving a faster return on investment.

9. A Great Way to Collect Data and Analytics

Gaining insight about the buying habits and demographics of your customers can be extremely difficult and expensive, but the more channels you utilize in this system, the easier it is to gain this knowledge and understand their buyer's journey.

Here are some statistics speaking to the success of multi-channel marketing:

- 40% of agency clients in the APAC region get more than a fourth of their e-commerce revenue from mobile, and almost 10% get the majority of their revenue from mobile. Multi-channel marketing has been critical in capturing that revenue.
(Econsultancy, How important is multichannel marketing in APAC?)
- 40% of marketers chose paid search as the top driver of online sales, while 26% say display ads and 18% prefer social media. Multi-channel is the best of all worlds.
(Direct Marketing, Multichannel Marketing: Top trends, analysis, news)
- 50% of multi-channel marketers say they “usually” or “always” hit their financial targets.
(CMO by Adobe, Three Issues Hindering Progress In Multichannel Marketing)



CONCLUSION

In order to reach potential customers in this new age of media saturation, a multi-channel approach is not only an effective and affordable way, but is quickly becoming the standard for marketing a business. If you are planning to roll out a multi-channel program, make sure you:

- 1. Learn all you can about your customer by researching and creating personas.**
- 2. Implement an inbound marketing program for lead generation and lead nurturing.**
- 3. Use the right mix of channels for your personas, and don't just do print or digital, use great marketing together.**
- 4. Give them multiple touch points to enable reaching out to you.**
- 5. Add QR codes or PURLs to increase your chances of customer conversion.**
- 6. Monitor your program and make changes as needed; be fluid.**

With proper preparation and execution, you can reach more potential leads and convert more customers at a lower cost per acquisition, than ever before.

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The team members at NextPage are the experts in multi-channel marketing. If you have any questions or for a free evaluation of your business to see if a multi-channel marketing program is right for you, please give us a call at 1-800-660-0108, email us at contactus@goNextPage.com, or visit our website at goNextPage.com.

