

Is your omnichannel approach really just a multichannel one?

 By [Mike Saunders](#)

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Omnichannel is the favourite buzzword in the digital world of late, but not everyone has fully grasped the difference between adopting a successful omnichannel approach, and merely featuring on multiple channels.

There's a huge difference, which lies in the strategy and way of thinking more than in the physical adoption.

Being multichannelled isn't a choice anymore, omnichannel is

Most brands are now multichannelled whether they like it or not - it's purely the result of the times we live in. Your target market is everywhere, and if you aren't 'everywhere' then the simple fact is that you will lose out to competitors who have placed themselves where your potential customers are.

An omnichannel approach, on the other hand, is a deliberate process of making sure that the customer's experience on every one of those channels is aligned with each other, while still being optimised for the specific touch point.

Multichannel addresses the need to be 'everywhere', but sometimes the 'everywhere' approach creates disjointed, siloed brand experiences which frustrate the consumer. Omnichannel is about ensuring that a customer experience starting in one channel is continued through the other channels the consumer chooses, instead of restarting over and over again.

Touch points vs Path to purchase

Another way to explain the difference is to look at multichannel as just referring to the touch points consumers use to interact with the brand, whether it be through the website, over the phone with the call centre, in the shop itself, or on social media. An omnichannel approach rather refers to the path to purchase - how the customer uses and experiences those touch points in their journey to the destination of a purchase.

We live in an excitingly frustrating time for marketers. Customers can no longer be guided along a predetermined path to purchase of the marketer's making, but rather, the customer will approach a brand from whichever angle they themselves choose.

Marketers who try and control this path to purchase, rather than allow consumer's their freedom of movement (and even worse yet, marketers thinking they can manipulate customers into taking a longer path to purchase), will find themselves and their brands missing out at the end of the day.

Consumers are more savvy than ever before, and will soon catch on brands that are trying to control their movements. As always, brands that are working hard to ensure that the customer's experience is the best possible - will ultimately win in attracting customers to their front door.

ABOUT MIKE SAUNDERS

Mike Saunders, CEO of Digitlab, is a renowned Digital Business and CRM Consulting expert acclaimed for his unique ability to blend technological expertise with insightful business strategy. His leadership in digital consulting, combined with his roles as an international keynote speaker and author, has solidified his reputation as a visionary in the digital realm. [View my profile and articles...](#)

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