

OMNICHANNEL RETAILING STRATEGY

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ABSTRACT

Omnichannel represents a new perspective in understanding marketing – it is not just about being present on multiple channels, but about their consistent integration and synchronization from a user experience perspective. The main goal of our research was to explore and analyse how consumers understand and use omnichannel in pre-purchase decision-making and then also in the purchasing process itself. We also wanted to find out how often respondents use three different sales channels: website, physical store, and mobile app. The research confirmed that omnichannel is not just a technological upgrade of existing sales channels but represents a fundamental transformation of the way retailers do business and their relationship with consumers. The research also shows that social media plays a key role in implementing an omnichannel strategy.

Key words: Omnichannel marketing, Retailing, Sales channels, Digital channels

INTRODUCTION

Omnichannel management remains a major challenge for brands as customers become more demanding and expect companies to provide them with a superior shopping experience along their journey to the customer. With the proliferation of mobile technologies and social media, this customer journey has become more complex; the simultaneous use of different communication channels by customers is enabling the emergence of new behaviours such as “showrooming” or showrooms and “webrooming” or online rooms (Mosquera, et al., 2017).

The development of mobile applications that are influencing the field of omnichannel is a result of the transition of the smartphone into a key component of the online and physical retail environment. At the same time, shoppers who highly value this practice differ significantly from others in the weight they place on retailers and their demands for omnichannel integration during offline shopping (Lazaris, et al., 2015).

In an omnichannel strategy, retail operations management must adapt to the diverse and fluctuating demands of a market that is increasingly consumer centric. While offering customers a variety of channels, such as online and offline, to search, purchase, deliver, and return a product, omnichannel retail strives to create a seamless and consistent view of physical and data flows between its intermediaries, such as retail brick-and-mortar stores, delivery services, and data service providers (Mirzabeiki & Saghiri, 2021).

OMNICHANNEL MARKETING

Omnichannel marketing means giving customers a consistent brand experience whether they're shopping on a desktop or mobile device, browsing social media, or walking into a brick and mortar store. The goal is to align messaging across all marketing channels so customers feel connected to your brand no matter where they interact with it (Camphouse, 2025).

The use of a customer-centric strategy that provides customers with a comprehensive shopping experience by allowing them to use multiple channels of consumer-to-physical store interaction simultaneously is known as omnichannel marketing (e.g., using mobile Internet access in a physical

retail store to research products and/or compare prices). The blurring of channel boundaries is another differentiator of omnichannel shopping. A seamless experience that increases convenience and engagement and provides a consistent brand experience can be achieved when all channels are integrated, allowing customers to start their journey in one and end it in another. Finally, data integration is also related to omnichannel management. It provides new potential sources of data, especially through social media and mobile channels.

Omnichannel marketing is about delivering a seamless and integrated customer experience across multiple platforms – online, offline, mobile, or social. However, true omnichannel is not possible without the help of innovative technology solutions. With the help of these solutions, companies can connect multiple channels, which also helps to improve and personalize interactions at every touchpoint (Anozie, et al., 2024).

As a result, omnichannel marketing prioritizes the customer and offers a “holistic” shopping experience, where the customer’s shopping process is fluid and not hindered by the channels they use. In this sense, the most important thing in an omnichannel setting is to engage with the brand, not the channel (Payne, Peltier, & Barger, 2017).

OMNICHANNEL IN RETAILING

The omnichannel phenomenon is the result of modern technologies that allow retailers to integrate all the information offered by today’s expanding channels and touchpoints. The term “omnichannel strategy” describes a customer management approach that is applied at every stage of a customer’s relationship with a company. With this approach, the retailer ensures that all touchpoints and channels that customers can choose to communicate with the company at any given time – primarily the physical store, the online channel, the mobile channel, and social media – are coherent and consistent (Mosquera, et al., 2017).

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As consumers use different channels and touchpoints during their shopping journey, modern and future retail must now provide an engaging omnichannel experience to survive. However, many retailers are unable to offer their customers a truly seamless omnichannel experience. Therefore, it is useful to learn from the omnichannel experiences of exceptional stores (Dang, 2022).

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

We used quantitative research, as we wanted to obtain data on their behaviours, attitude and expectations regarding omnichannel marketing in retail through a larger number of respondents. As a research method, we used an online survey questionnaire, which was designed in the 1KA tool. The survey questionnaire consisted of several content sections:

The survey involved 134 respondents, who were recruited using a convenience sample, as they were reached via online channels. There were slightly more women among the participants, namely 83, representing 61.94%, and 51 men, representing the remaining 38.06%.

The age structure of the respondents shows that younger consumers predominate, as almost half of the participants (47.02% or 63 people) are between 21 and 30 years old. They are followed by respondents in the age group from 31 to 40 years old (20.15% or 27 people) and those between 41 and 50 years old (13.43% or 18 people). A smaller share is represented by people up to 20 years old (5.97% or 8

people), respondents between 51 and 60 years old (8.21% or 11 people) and respondents aged 61 years or older (5.22% or 7 people).

Regarding the educational structure, most of the participants have a secondary school or higher education. The largest number of respondents are graduates, namely 47 people (35.07%), followed by respondents with secondary education, 36 people (26.87%), and those with higher professional education, 28 people (20.90%). Higher education, that is, a master's degree or higher, is held by 21 people (15.67%), and the smallest share is represented by respondents with completed primary school, namely only 2 people (1.49%).

In the first question, we asked about three different purchasing channels: website, physical store, and mobile app. For each of these channels, it was possible to indicate how often they choose one of these channels. Figure 1 shows how often respondents choose the website as a place to buy.

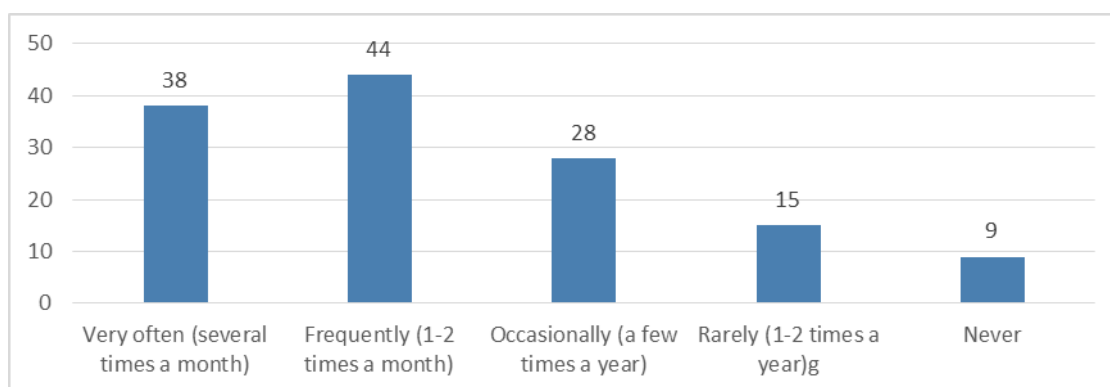


Figure 1: Website as a sales channel

Analysis of data on the frequency of online shopping shows that this channel is relatively popular among consumers. The largest share of respondents shops online frequently, i.e. once or twice a month, namely 44 people. This is followed by the group of those who use websites for shopping very frequently, several times a month, namely 38 people. In total, this means that more than 60% of respondents shop online at least once a month, which indicates a high level of acceptance of this channel. At the same time, a fifth of respondents, i.e. 28 shops occasionally, i.e. a few times a year, which indicates the extent of those who use online stores more occasionally. A smaller share of respondents decides to shop online rarely, only 15, and only 9 respondents, do not use online stores at all.

The results confirm that retailer websites are an important sales channel, with most shoppers returning to them regularly. Websites are becoming a standardized part of the shopping experience, used by consumers for both regular and occasional purchases. How often respondents choose a physical store as their place of purchase is shown in Figure 2.

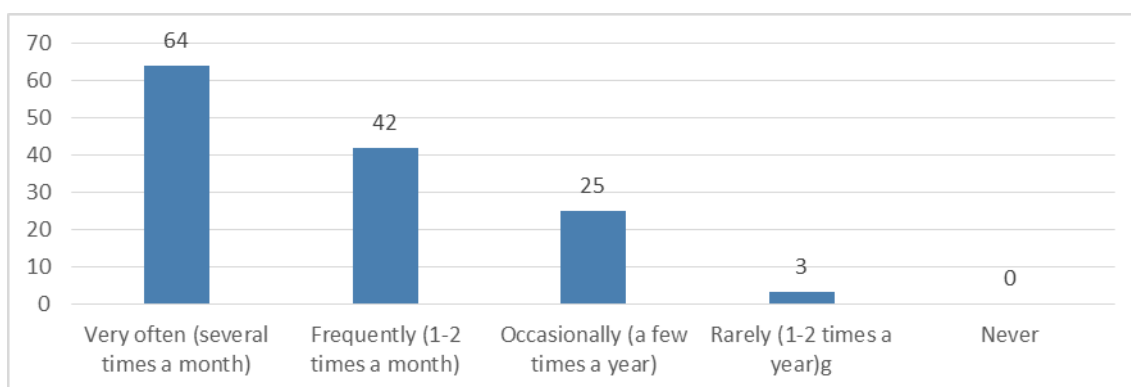


Figure 2: Physical store as a sales channel

Data analysis shows that most respondents shop in physical stores most often. As many as 64 respondents, stated that they shop in physical stores very often, i.e. several times a month. 42 respondents they shop in physical stores frequently, meaning once or twice a month. 25 respondents stated that they buy in physical stores occasionally, i.e. a few times a year, while 3 respondents do so rarely, once or twice a year. None of the respondents stated that they never buy clothes in physical stores.

These results clearly show that physical stores still represent the most important sales channel for purchases, as 106 visit them often or very often, confirming the strong presence of traditional shopping behavior despite the increasing presence of online shopping. Figure 3 shows how often respondents choose a mobile app as a place to make purchases.

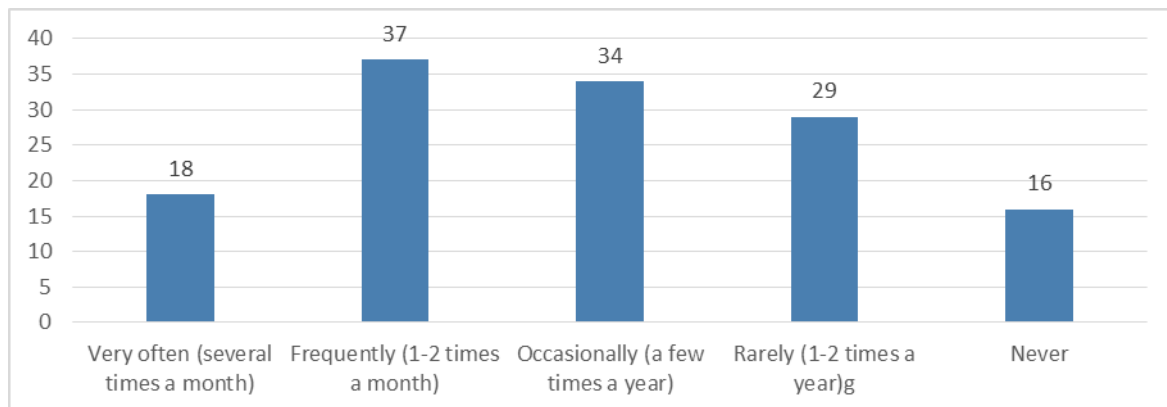


Figure 3: Mobile application as a sales channel

The results of the survey show that 8 respondents shop via mobile applications very often, i.e. several times a month. 37 respondents answered that they shop frequently, meaning once to twice a month. 34 respondents described shopping via mobile applications as occasional, while 29 do so rarely, once to twice a year. 16 respondents stated that they never shop via mobile applications.

The results show that the use of mobile applications for shopping is quite widespread among respondents, as 89 shops in this way often, very often or at least occasionally. Nevertheless, the data show that this channel is not yet dominant, which indicates the possibility of further growth in the future, especially considering the increasing digitalization and accessibility of mobile platforms.

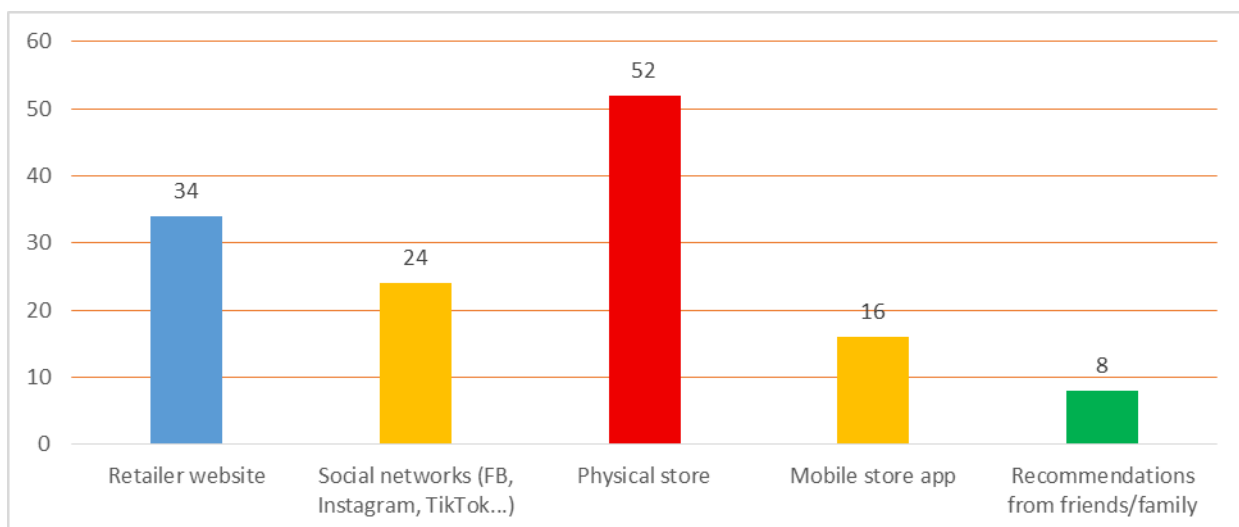


Figure 4: Using pre-purchase channels

The results show that most respondents visited a physical store before making a purchase, namely 52 respondents. The second most frequently used channel was the retailer's website, which was used by 34 respondents. Social networks (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and similar) were chosen as a source of information before making a purchase by 24 respondents. A smaller proportion of respondents used the abundant store applications, namely 16 respondents. Recommendations from friends and family were trusted by 8 respondents.

The results show that despite widespread digitalization, respondents still strongly trust physical shopping experiences, while digital channels and social networks represent an important but slightly less frequently used source of information. We were also interested in how often respondents use different sales channels (omnichannel).

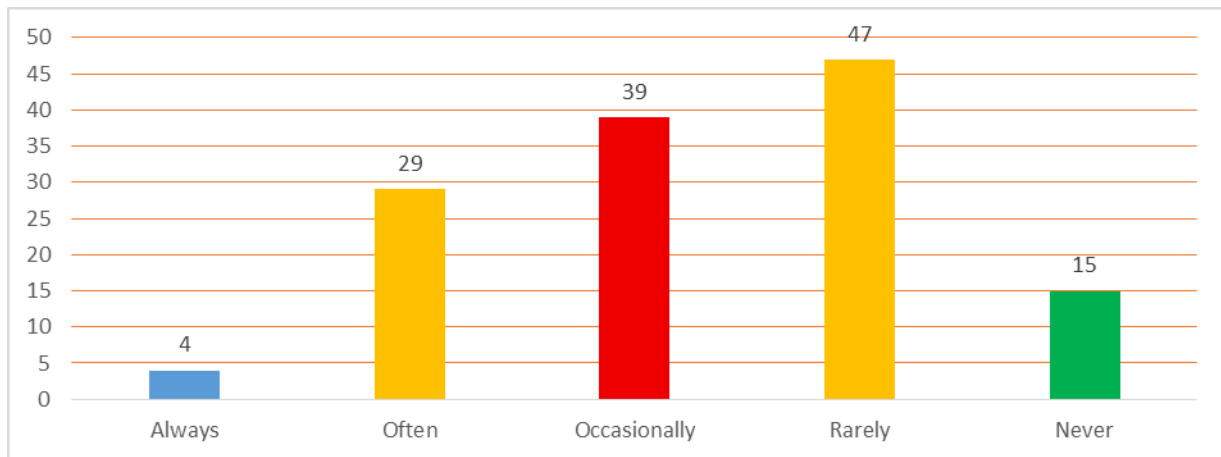


Figure 5: Frequency using omnichannel strategy

The results show that only a small proportion of respondents do this always, namely 4 respondents. 29 respondents often use a combination of channels, while 39 respondents use it occasionally. The largest proportion of respondents rarely use a combination of channels, namely 47 respondents, while 15 respondents never use a combination of channels.

The results show that the majority of respondents do not combine purchasing channels regularly, which suggests that despite the availability of digital channels, physical stores remain an important source for the final purchase, while the integration of multiple channels is still limited.

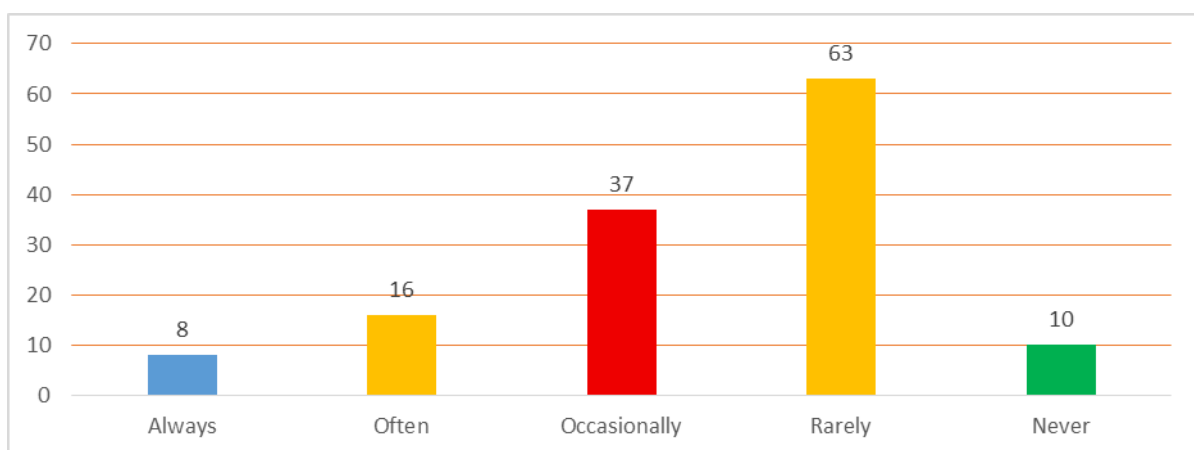


Figure 6: Using omnichannel for a single purchase

When asked about the frequency of using multiple channels (web, physical store, mobile app) within the framework of a single purchase, the results showed that most respondents use this practice rarely. As many as 63 respondents answered that they rarely use multi-channel shopping, while 37 do it

occasionally. Only a smaller proportion turned out to be more pronounced users of the multi-channel approach, namely 16 respondents stated that they do it often, and only 8 respondents always combine multiple channels in the purchasing process. On the other hand, ten respondents never use more than one channel in the purchase process.

The results show that although multi-channel shopping exists, it is still more of an exception than a rule for users, as most tend to use one primary channel, either due to simplicity, habits, or lack of perceived benefits in combining different sales channels.

CONCLUSION

Omnichannel marketing in retail is no longer the future, it is the present. As the research has shown, consumers expect flexibility, personalization and consistency. Companies that do not take these expectations into account risk losing relevance and market share. However, the concept of omnichannel itself is not enough; the quality of implementation is critical. The fact that respondents did not perceive a significant improvement in the user experience clearly shows that retailers must go beyond just being present on multiple channels and provide a truly integrated, seamless experience.

Key success factors include technological maturity with a robust infrastructure and advanced tools, organizational readiness with a culture of collaboration and agility, user focus with an understanding of needs and expectations, and continuous improvement through testing, learning and adaptation. The research confirmed the transformative potential of advanced technologies and the key role of social media, opening up new opportunities for retailers who are ready to invest in digital transformation.

The omnichannel approach thus represents a bridge between the digital and physical worlds, where the focus is no longer on the channel itself, but on the person with their voice, their needs and their expectations. This is the fundamental paradigm that will define the success of retailers in the coming decade. Those who successfully implement omnichannel strategies not only gain loyal customers but also create a long-term competitive advantage that is difficult to replace in the digital age. The future of retail is omnichannel, user-centric and supported by technology. The question is no longer whether, but how well and how quickly companies will adapt to this. At a time when digitalization is flooding all spheres of human life and when the boundaries between the physical and virtual worlds are increasingly blurred, omnichannel marketing is not only a competitive advantage, but a necessity for survival and success in the modern retail environments.

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