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Market Everywhere: 3 Omnichannel Marketing Tips

By Marci Martin, Business News Daily Contributor | November 30, 2016 12:10 pm EST

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The goal of omnichannel marketing – reaching customers wherever they are, such as on your website, on social media or in your store – is to create a seamless experience for customers regardless of their engagement method. Whether in person or online, the way a customer interfaces with your company should be a positive experience with consistent branding and messaging.

"The average consumer may go in-store to make a purchase, buy an item online, or search for items on their mobile devices and make their purchases that way," said Henry Helgeson, founder and CEO of merchant services provider [Cavan](#). "This means that retailers have to cast a wider net than ever




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provider [Cayan](#). "This means that retailers have to cast a wider net than ever before so they can meet consumers where they prefer to shop. Consumers are also expecting that the experience they have with a store remain the same, whether they're online, in-store or using a mobile device. Omnichannel marketing ensures that businesses, no matter the size, get the competitive edge by providing the best possible experience for consumers."

Robert D'Loren, CEO and chairman of brand management company [Xcel Brands](#), noted that social media has changed everything brands had learned about marketing, and influenced the shift toward omnichannel strategies.

"Static marketing doesn't work," D'Loren told Business News Daily. "You can't engage [with customers] without having a dynamic, authentic voice. Customers are on every screen today, and it's important to have a strong presence on social media."

Meeting the challenges of omnichannel

In a recent study published by [Netsertive and the CMO Council](#) titled "Omnichannel's Missing Link," more than 180 marketers shared their challenges in delivering an omnichannel solution. The study found a large disconnect between brands and local retail partners: 94 percent of the marketers surveyed cited a lack of faith in local retailers' abilities as a main concern.

The study found that local retailers' dearth of marketing knowledge, resources and tools can lead to disjointed customer experiences. It also revealed that brand marketers want control of the customer experience, even if it doesn't mean following customers' preferences. For instance, nearly 92 percent of purchases are still made in brick-and-mortar stores, but only 22 percent of marketers consider local retail partners critical to the marketing process.

In addition, the study found that many brands have a narrow view of omnichannel marketing and instead focus more on social media, digital and

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omnichannel marketing, and instead focus more on social media, digital and email methods and pay little attention to more traditional means, such as local promotions and live events.

So how do you close the omnichannel gap? Here are three things you can do to build up your brand with this end goal in mind:

Leverage your knowledge about customers. Small businesses are particularly good at knowing their customers well and providing a level of service that larger businesses often can't achieve, Helgeson said. For example, a small sporting goods store might know from its customers that an important local baseball camp is coming up. From talking with customers, the business may also know the list of supplies participants need to bring to that camp. With this information, the store can stock the specific bats, balls, gloves and other equipment that players need to buy. More importantly, though, the store can effectively market to consumers and draw sales; they can do this in-store, via mobile, and online through SEO and social media.

Make your culture count. For companies of any size, the culture of the business is one of the most important keys to success. D'Loren said brands must be committed to engaging and serving their customers, and should speak with consumers instead of at them, as marketers used to do. From there, you can layer all your marketing efforts onto a foundation of customer service.

Use technology to your advantage. Remember that omnichannel marketing isn't just for large retailers; businesses of all sizes can take advantage of this method. Helgeson thinks the concept of omnichannel marketing is new enough that small businesses can actually lead the way in the category and compete with larger brands. He advised taking advantage of technological tools such as data analytics programs and social listening software to be even better at what you already do best.

Additional reporting by Nicole Taylor. Some source interviews were conducted for a previous version of this article.