

3.8: Putting It Together- Multi-Channel Retailing

Online, engaged and connected without interruption, consumers encounter brands and retailers, expecting accessibility, consistency, and service. They easily shift among a host of retail formats and channels—online and offline, in-store and at-home, to suit their needs. And, empowered by technology, they have high expectations for their shopping experience, the speed of fulfillment, and customer service.

Multi-channel retailers work to engage shoppers in a variety of channels. This isn't just about being present where and when these potential customers are ready to buy. Instead, it's about being accessible at every touch-point along the customer journey, regardless of where the shopper is in the path to purchase. It's an elevated level of customer service.

Yet, the complexity of doing this effectively continues to increase as outlets, especially those online, multiply: branded websites, e-commerce sites, apps, social media, and marketplaces. There is a consideration of content management, security, and analysis to ensure that each channel is optimized. Clearly, multi-channel or omni-channel marketing strategy requires organizational discipline and infrastructure. Yet, the value is clear as these marketing strategies allow retailers to be accessible, while offering the consistent service consumers demand.

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