

O X F O R D

Omnichannel Strategy in Healthcare

GUIDE



Welcome to the Omnichannel Strategy in Healthcare Guide

A simple, straightforward guide to help you on your journey through omnichannel strategy transformation



SECTION 1

Omnichannel Strategy

Explore omnichannel strategy, covering key principles, tools, misconceptions, and steps for effective cross-channel customer engagement



SECTION 2

Communication Mastery

Delve into omnichannel communications, detailing the framework, examples, tools, and benefits for personalized, consistent engagement



Laying the foundation for an omnichannel strategy in healthcare

In the high-stakes world of pharmaceuticals, medical technology, and bioscience, the approach to reaching out to healthcare experts and patients is always in a state of evolution. At the center of this is an omnichannel strategy.

This isn't just an upgraded version of multi-channel marketing. It's all about creating a seamless, cohesive experience for customers across their channel preferences, whether that's online or in person.

Creating a successful omnichannel strategy is about weaving a seamless conversation between your company and those you serve—the healthcare providers, their patients, payers, and pharmacists.

In this guide, we'll share our latest thinking and illustrate how you can improve what you're doing right now, even when you're up against tough infrastructural challenges.

Four unbreakable rules of omnichannel excellence

Customer is king

This strategy is all about rolling out the red carpet for the customer, engaging them precisely where and how they need.

Data dictates decisions

Ensure that you always have the latest data to inform your strategy.

Brand consistency is key

It's crucial to keep your brand's message, visual cues, experience, and tone of voice (to name a few) consistent while personalizing its delivery to each channel's requirements.

Tech powers talent

Harness cutting-edge technology, complemented by a team proficient in leveraging it to its fullest potential.

Imagine

...marketing of the future:

A biotech firm has broken ground with some new therapy and needs to reach the right audience to deliver on expectations.

We see a marketing ecosystem that's not just a plan but a living, breathing strategy.

It's a future where strategy and technology intertwine to create exceptional customer experiences and could look like this:

...it's a future where strategy and technology intertwine to create exceptional customer experiences and could look like this:

- 1** Harmonized omnichannel experiences
Our strategy orchestrates all channels, creating a harmonious narrative across platforms and making every touchpoint a memorable part of the brand story.
- 2** Precision AI profiling
Advanced AI algorithms dissect vast amounts of data, offering hyper-personalized strategies that intuitively resonate with everyone.
- 3** Interactive, adaptive narratives
Dynamic, AI driven insights craft unique customer paths. From smart billboards to intuitive home devices, each interaction adapts and evolves, offering a truly personalized experience.
- 4** An evolving strategy
Strategy truly begins to live, continuously learning and adapting, ensuring each connection is not just effective but transformative.

Fusing marketing strategy with omnichannel execution

A clear marketing strategy sets a strong foundation. Teams still need to really think through their situation analysis, source of business, segmentation, behavior change, and compelling value propositions. Omnichannel strategy then aligns and optimizes these elements through audience understanding, content strategy, and customer experience.

Audience Understanding

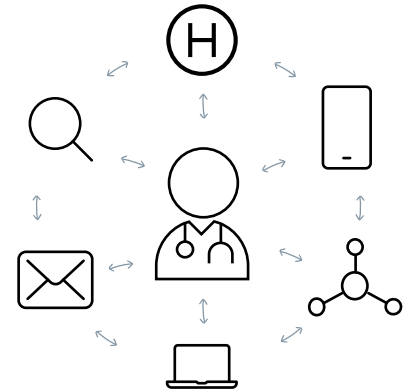
Marketing strategies begin with a deep understanding of the customer; omnichannel strategies use this insight to tailor the conversation across relevant channels.

Content Strategy

A robust content strategy feeds into omnichannel through consistent, tailored messaging that speaks to the needs and behaviors of customers across different channels.

Customer Experience

Marketing identifies which channels are most effective, while omnichannel ensures these channels work together, optimizing the customer experience.



Crafting an omnichannel strategy

Steps and common misconceptions

Building a strong omnichannel approach requires a methodical plan to harmonize organizational aims with customer expectations throughout all touchpoints.

Here are some of the key steps and thinking tools for developing your omnichannel strategy.

STEP	INFORMED BY
<p>1 Customer Persona A detailed description of your priority segment that brings together their behaviors, motivations, needs, characteristics, and the addressable media target.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Segmentation - Targeting Customer Insights - Behavior Change
<p>2 Omnichannel Customer Experience Map The ideal customer experience to achieve the desired behavior change across the most relevant channels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Situation Analysis - Customer Journey - Source of Business
<p>3 Data Integration and Analysis Strategy A clear data capture strategy aligned to the strategic imperatives, KPIs, and desired behavior change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Imperatives - Behavior Change
<p>4 Integrated Content Strategy A high-level overview of current content mapped to the desired experience identifying content gaps for the omnichannel communication strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benefit Ladder - Value Proposition - Communications Strategy - Marketing Mix
<p>5 Measuring and Optimizing Effective omnichannel measurement involves tailoring KPIs to each channel and journey stage, interpreting data for insights, and continuously testing and adapting for optimization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data platforms - CRM - Objectives

STEP 1

Customer Persona

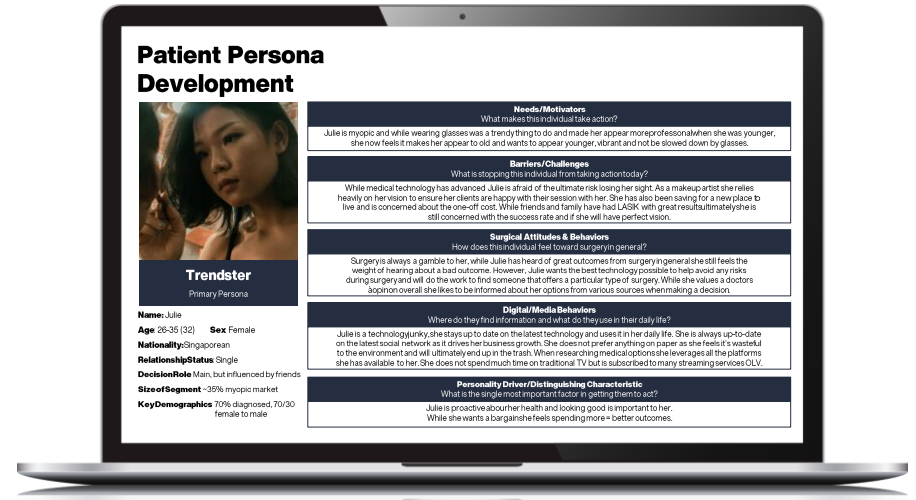
Begin by enhancing your segmentation and targeting with a robust individual that represents a specific subset of your prioritized segment, which should include demographics, interests, pain points, behavioral traits, and channel affinity.

Misconception

Our sales reps already deliver personalized messages.

Reality

Even if sales reps have strong relationships with healthcare professionals, an omnichannel strategy ensures consistent and personalized engagement across all digital and non-digital channels.



STEP 2

Omnichannel Customer Experience Map

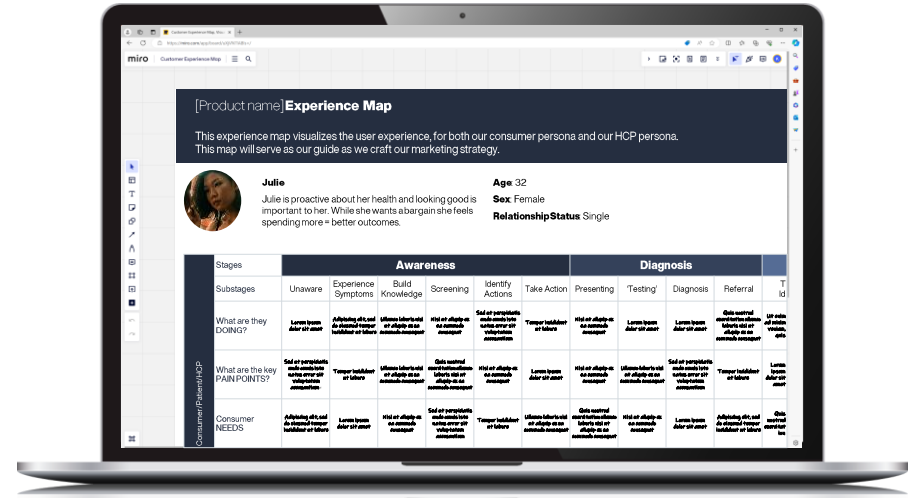
Begin by charting the customer experience, identifying all potential touchpoints. This map should reflect the comprehensive journey that a HCP, patient, payer, or pharmacist takes from awareness to decision and treatment, and identify intersectional moments amongst stakeholders.

Misconception

Omnichannel strategy is too vast to start implementing.

Reality

Start small by integrating a few channels and scale up. Every step towards integration can improve the customer experience.



STEP 3

Data Integration and Analysis

Integrate data from all channels to gain a holistic view of customer interactions. Use analytics to uncover patterns and preferences that will inform content and channel selection.

Misconception

My analytics team and media teams will give me all the data I need.

Reality

To uncover clear insights, you need to think through the data capture within an experience journey, ensuring you can link leading and lagging indicators to business outcomes.



STEP 4

Integrated Content Strategy

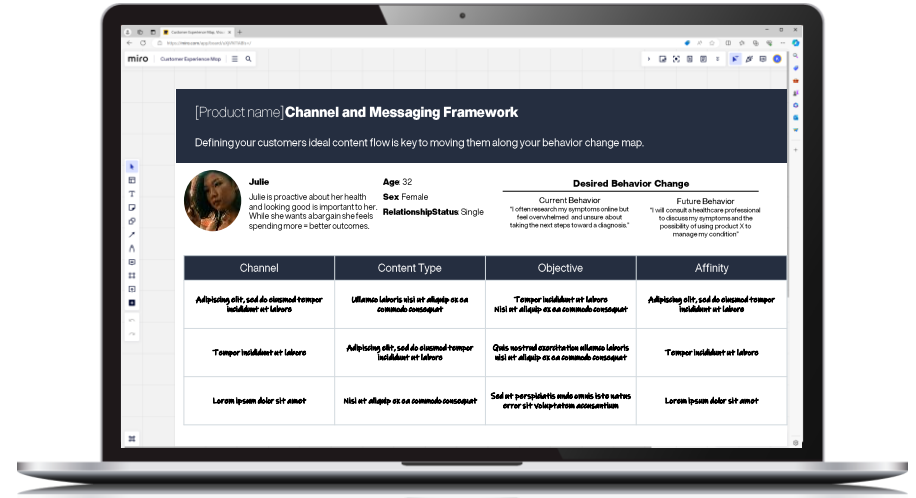
Craft a content strategy that delivers consistent, channel-specific messaging, using deep customer insights that seamlessly integrate into the broader marketing strategy. Consider the last time an unanticipated product became indispensable in your life. It likely became essential because of several tailored interactions across various channels that resonated with you, perhaps subtly influencing your perceptions and decisions without overtly noticeable persuasion.

Misconception

Doctors and patients ignore non-personal interactions.

Reality

Even in the healthcare sector, non-personal channels play a significant role in shaping opinions and decisions when they deliver value and relevance.



STEP 5

Measuring and Optimizing

Establish KPIs tailored to the objectives of each channel and the overall customer engagement rates, conversion rates, customer retention rates, and ROI. Then the challenge is interpreting this wealth of information.

To navigate this, segment KPIs by channel and customer journey stage to pinpoint their impact. For example, engagement rates may be more indicative of success in the awareness stage, while conversion rates are crucial at the decision stage. Employ A/B testing to understand what resonates with your audience, and use control groups to measure the incremental impact of your omnichannel strategy.

Data interpretation should lead to actionable insights. If certain channels underperform, delve into the 'why'. Is it content, timing, or the channel itself? Adjust and re-test, keeping an eye on long-term trends rather than short-term fluctuations. Remember, a successful omnichannel strategy is agile, adapting to new data and customer feedback continuously.

Misconception

Measuring omnichannel success is just about tracking standard KPIs across all channels.

Reality

Effective measurement in omnichannel requires tailoring KPIs to each channel and customer journey stage and interpreting data to gain actionable insights. It involves continuous testing, adapting, and understanding the nuances of each channel to optimize the overall strategy.



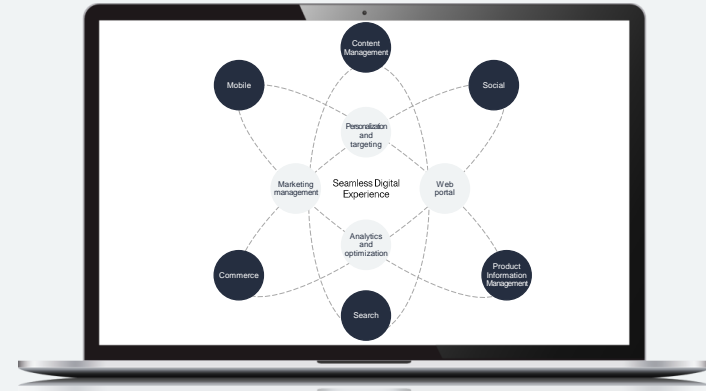
Omnichannel Digital Experience Platform

The fusion of marketing instruments with an omnichannel structure forms a great partnership. Consider how analytical data from market segmentation and customer patterns are used to build a content management system that continuously circulates customized material through various outlets. Predictive analysis shapes the customization engine, modulating the content and occurrence of communication to improve interaction and conversion rates.

The result is a strategy that feels intuitive and responsive to the customer, building trust and loyalty. By strategically applying these platforms, marketing professionals can ensure that their omnichannel strategy is comprehensive, coherent, and customer-focused.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

systems to track interactions and gather data



Content Management Systems (CMS)

Populated with insights-driven content tailored to different segments.

Personalization Engines

Utilizes segmentation and consumer insights to deliver personalized experiences in real-time across all channels.

Marketing Automation Platform

Leverages marketing mix modelling to allocate resources and efforts where they will have the most impact.

Predictive Analytics and AI

Uses consumer insights to forecast future behaviors, allowing for proactive strategy adjustments.



Laying the groundwork for omnichannel expertise

We've broken down the essentials—the what, why, and how—of folding omnichannel ideas into your marketing mix.

Omnichannel strategy is about so much more. It's reshaping our entire mindset towards patient and professional interactions. From delving into the intricacies of customer journey to blending data with technology, we're working towards a more dynamic and meaningful exchange within healthcare.



Stepping up the omnichannel communications plan

Having laid down the fundamentals of the omnichannel game plan, it's time to focus on the way we talk to each other. Make sure every touchpoint with HCPs and patients isn't just packed with information but is super engaging and custom-fit.

Navigating the twists and turns of healthcare communication can mean the difference between success and failure. A slick omnichannel approach makes sure your communication stays on point, sticks out, and feels like it's made just for you, no matter where it pops up.

Exploring the omnichannel communication framework

An effective omnichannel communication framework zeroes in on the seamless integration of messaging and interactions within a holistic customer experience. It's about establishing dependable, pertinent, and tailored communication over various channels, whether for promotional purposes or guidance.

Elements of Omnichannel Communication

Uniformity

Regardless of the platform, be consistent in messaging, with slight adjustments for each specific channel's context

Relevance

Leverage consumer data and insights to ensure communications resonate with the audience

Customization

Adjust messages to individuals to reflect past engagements, expressed preferences, and observed behaviors

Synergizing with an Omnichannel Approach

Within the broader framework of marketing, omnichannel communication acts as a unifying element, merging different platforms into one coherent strategy. For instance, its role is key in ensuring that an email resonates as part of an ongoing dialogue originating on social media and progressing through a webinar.



Imagine

...a company in the medical device sector that intends to introduce a new product:

The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system distinguishes a subgroup of healthcare practitioners with previous engagement in comparable devices. Employing the Content Management System (CMS), the company builds content specialized for this audience.

Then the marketing automation tool coordinates the distribution of these materials through emails, social networks, and mobile alerts, guaranteeing the uniformity of the message while tailoring it to suit each medium. Through analytical monitoring, interactions are meticulously examined to reveal which platforms yield the greatest impact and which types of content stimulate interaction.

... a campaign for a diabetes management device. The communication strategy involves:

- 1 Educational Content
Shared via professional healthcare networks and journals.
- 2 Email Campaigns
Personalized follow-ups providing additional information or offering a webinar registration.
- 3 Webinars and Virtual Events
Detailed product demonstrations and Q&A sessions for deeper engagement. Each interaction point is meticulously crafted to offer essential value while seamlessly connecting with the subsequent one, weaving a persuasive story that encourages medical professionals to contemplate using this new device within their practice.
- 4 Social Media
Interactive posts encouraging healthcare professionals to share their experiences and insights on patient management.

Omnichannel communications strategy frameworks and practical applications

Frameworks and applications

These frameworks help set up cross-functional teams for success. They consider what other functional teams are doing, as well as clearly identify gaps that need to be filled with messages, content, or both, to ensure a well-thought-out customer experience.

FRAMEWORK

Channel and Messaging

Creates a matrix to align key messages with customer personas across different channels, and stages of their journey. It ensures that whether a customer is in the awareness, consideration, or decision stage, the messaging they receive is consistent with their journey stage and persona.

Integrated Experience

Now is the time when we look across functional areas to ensure medical, marketing, sales, and other functions are aligned and integrated such that we do not “spam” a customer with our campaigns.

Dynamic Content Adaptation

Also known as a modular content framework, this takes our messaging and creative assets and puts into practice rules and guidelines on how, when, and where they can be used.

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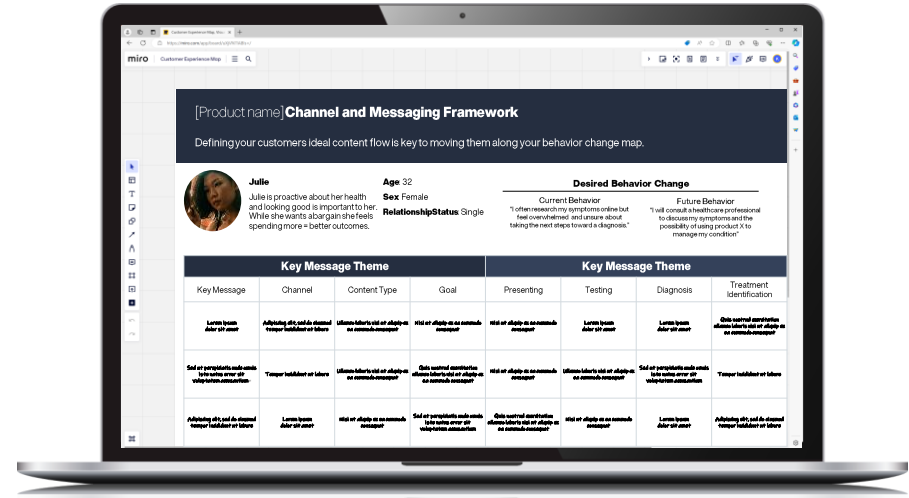
- Customer Persona
- Omnichannel Customer Experience Map
- Integrated Content Strategy
- Omnichannel Customer Experience Map by functional area
- Channel and Messaging Audit
- Omnichannel Customer Experience Map
- Integrated Content Strategy

Channel and Messaging Framework

Mapping out the correct channel at that ideal timepoint for a customer is critical to refining messaging so that it speaks to both the point in time on the journey as well as the unique channel dynamics.

Practical application

A biotech company might create a framework that outlines key channels and messaging for a new drug. This framework would guide the creation of content for healthcare professionals at different stages of their journey, from raising awareness through educational articles in medical journals, to nurturing interest with targeted email campaigns offering deeper insights into the drug's benefits, and finally, facilitating decision-making through detailed case studies and patient outcomes data shared at industry conferences.

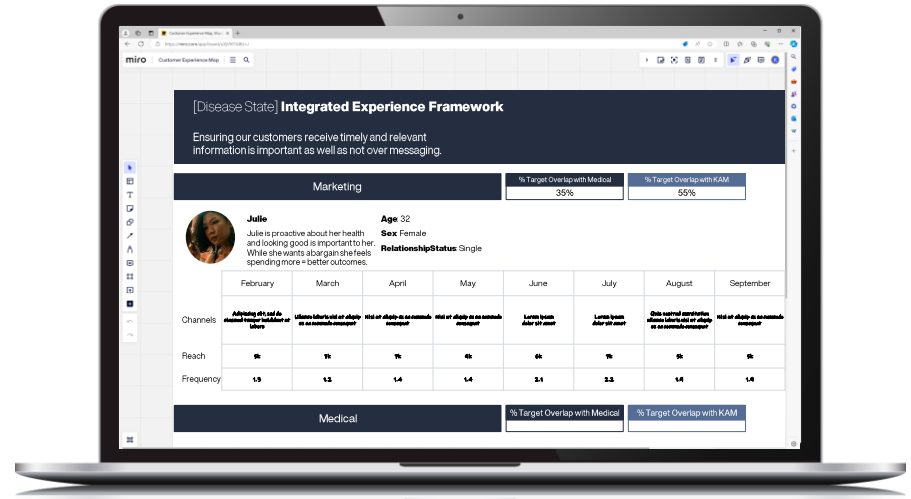


Integrated Experience Framework

One of the most crucial pieces of the omnichannel puzzle is an integrated experience framework. As we all know, omnichannel can increase the amount of content 10-fold quickly, and if you multiply that by various functions, you can quickly turn a great experience into a far worse experience than before by not stopping and ensuring all functions work together.

Practical application

A life sciences company launched a new drug but overwhelmed physicians with redundant messages from separate marketing, medical, and sales teams. Operating in silos, the messages caused physicians frustration and disinterest. With an integrated experience framework, the company could have streamlined communication, delivering consistent, effective messaging, enhancing engagement, and avoiding annoyance.

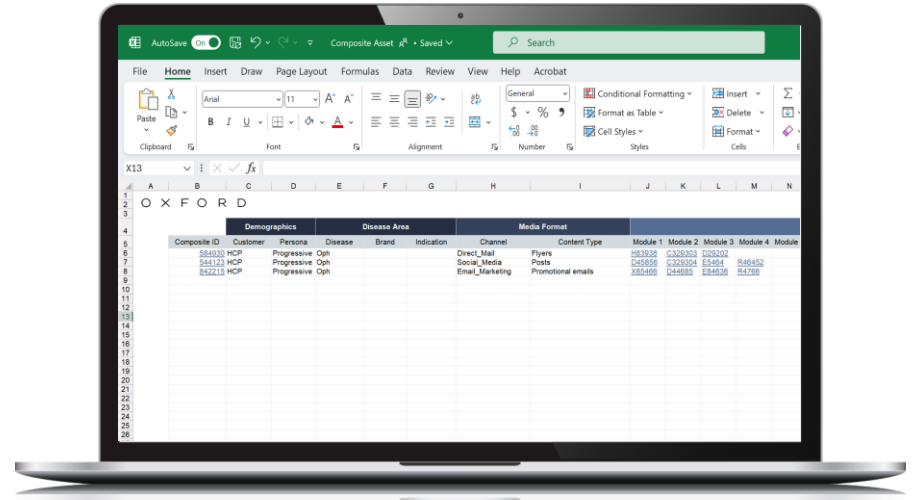


Dynamic Content Adaptation Framework

Provides a structured yet adaptable method of content elements, ensuring relevance, consistency, and impact across all channels. It involves establishing sets of rules and guidelines that dictate how, when, and where various modular content elements can and should show up. Its rigidity and flexibility allow for the speedy creation of assets tailored to the customer, journey, and objective.

Practical application

Using the dynamic content adaptation framework for a diabetes management campaign enabled them to craft targeted messages for different audiences. They created a core message about diabetes control with nuanced language differences for each persona, paired it with various images (such as patient lifestyle shots, product images, and infographics), and used different layouts for each channel. For instance, on patient-oriented social media platforms, the message was paired with lifestyle images and a more casual, empathetic layout to resonate with patients. This modular approach allowed the company to assemble the perfect asset for each channel and audience, ensuring the message was both consistent and appropriately tailored, resulting in higher engagement and more effective communication.



From elevating the user journey to streamlining business processes

Here are some examples of omnichannel benefits

Example

Next-level customer experience

An omnichannel strategy smooths out the interactions across every touchpoint. A doctor might begin exploring a medication on their tablet, pick up where they left off on their phone, and place an order on their computer without missing a beat.

Smart data insights

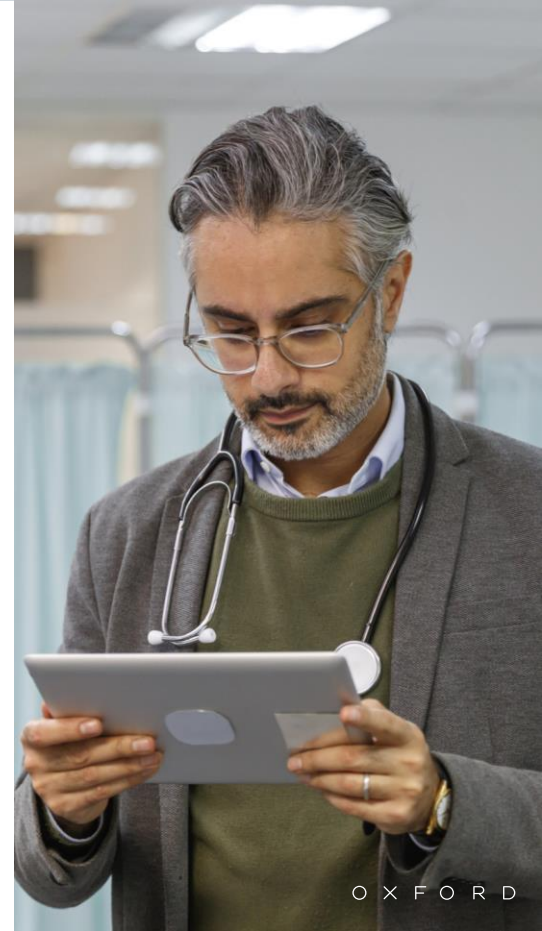
Linking up all the ways customers interact means more in-depth data—it's like having super insights at your fingertips to tailor experiences.

Increased sales and revenue

A well-executed omnichannel strategy can lead to increased sales, by meeting customers where they are and providing multiple avenues for purchase or prescription.

Real-world scenario

- Someone hears about a cutting-edge treatment via an online ad. They get more information on a specialized portal, have a chat with a sales rep virtually, and then get sent a sample via their sales rep. It's like one continuous conversation.
- Take a biotech firm that tracks how healthcare professionals engage with their online resources, emails, and webinars. They use this goldmine of information to tweak their messaging so it engages practitioners, enhancing patient care.
- Patients who receive consistent, informative communications across multiple channels are more likely to ask their healthcare providers about a drug, leading to better efficiency in reaching the target customer.



In omnichannel, we don't just connect channels, we connect with people

Example

Greater customer retention

Omnichannel strategies can build stronger relationships with customers, leading to greater loyalty and retention rates.

Cementing customer bonds

Keeping things consistent over multiple channels isn't playing it safe; it's playing it smart. It deepens those customer ties until they're unbreakable—nurturing loyalty like nobody's business!

Competitive differentiation

Offering a seamless omnichannel experience can distinguish a company from its competitors, particularly in the pharmaceutical, medical device, and biotech sectors, where customer experience is increasingly becoming a key differentiator.

Real-world scenario

- Healthcare professionals who experience a high level of support and engagement across various channels are more likely to remain loyal to a pharmaceutical brand and continue prescribing their medications.
- Healthcare professionals who get top-shelf support wherever they turn—emails, apps, websites—keep coming back to the brand they trust.
- A biotech firm that provides a cohesive, omnichannel educational program for a new therapy differentiates itself from competitors who may only offer traditional, disjointed educational resources.





Bringing it all together for omnichannel success in 2024

In this fast-evolving sector, staying ahead means not just keeping pace with change but anticipating and shaping it. If you're looking to deepen your understanding or refine your omnichannel strategy, remember that the journey is ongoing. The right insights and guidance can be the catalyst for transformative growth and success.

And remember omnichannel success hinges on the 5 Cs:

Collaboration and Partnerships

Without internal stakeholder alignment from all function, including medical and legal review, omnichannel will not work.

Commercial Acumen

Enables the strategic alignment of product market fit, ensuring effective, profitable, and patient-centric communication across all channels.

Customer Empathy and Insight

Facilitates tailored, relevant communications that resonate deeply with diverse audience needs and preferences across all touchpoints.

Creativity and Problem Solving

Essential for adapting and innovating within an omnichannel strategy, it ensures responses to evolving market challenges and customer expectations are met.

Clarity in Data Analysis

Interpreting complex data effectively, deriving actionable insights, and making informed decisions to enhance the precision and impact of an omnichannel strategy.

About the author

Doug Nelson is a consultant specializing in omnichannel transformations at Oxford. His passion is in omnichannel strategy, helping organizations navigate the ever-evolving digital world to deliver business results, including evaluating and developing GTM modes for digital therapeutics.

Want to learn more about best practice surrounding omnichannel strategy in the Life Sciences? We're specialists that can help; [contact us here](#).

