

Defining Omnichannel Marketing in Pharma

Part One of a DHC Group Project

Unpacking How Pharmaceutical Experts are Defining
Omnichannel and Why Getting It Right Is Critical to Brands

In Partnership with

CMITM
MEDIA GROUP

Introduction

The Omnichannel Marketing (and Customer) Experience



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Most marketers and industry experts seem to coalesce around a shared description of omnichannel marketing – a seamless experience for customers across all channels with a consistent brand experience. However, pulling that off requires a teamwork mentality across the brand and the organization. Successful omnichannel requires taking a customer-centric view of the customer in a world where many pharmaceutical companies (and even brands) are still organized and mobilized by tactics (or audience) - and not the customer.

Something else that often gets lost in the omnichannel marketing conversation and debate about omnichannel success is the concept of simplicity – from the customer point of view. The most complex omnichannel marketing system and approach misses the mark if it ultimately confuses (or loses) the customer. It's not about the number of channels, it's really about the seamless and simplified nature of how easy a customer can move through those channels over time in a fluid fashion. There should be no perceived gap between the channels – it just works. In the end, it's about making engagement and the overall experience easier for the customer.

Furthermore, pharmaceutical marketers, and their partners, must not only understand and meet the needs of their customers in the market today – they must accurately anticipate their needs in advance in this new world of modern marketing and customer experience. The continued explosion and integration of available first party data along with third party data sources is allowing innovative brands to not only react in real-time to customers but also predict what channel, content, and experience the customer wants (or needs) in the future.

Introduction Continued



Think about how you interacted with brands 10 – or 20 – years ago? You most likely had some form of face-to-face (in person). You may have been using a phone. You were also most likely using various forms of digital including email, sites, and social. Fast forward to today. If your omnichannel strategy as a brand is not radically different in 2022 compared to 2002 (or even 2012) just imagine the disconnect between the customer expectation and ultimately experience. It's not about offering more and multiple channels to a physician or consumer. It's the complete rethink of what that channel preference and coordination is from their point of view.



In terms of integration (or lack thereof), some marketers are still so fascinated with the metrics within the individual channels (and tactics) that they often lose sight of the bigger picture. It's more comfortable to debate open rates, conversion, and social vanity metrics than it is to answer the tough question – does this overall experience work for the customer? Does the sum of the parts drive value?



What does “good” look like in omnichannel today? We often know it when we see it as a customer or prospect. It's the shared and consistent experience from the in-person experience at a Starbucks to their app to their site. It's a retail pharmacy that has successfully linked the in-person experience with everything the customer does through any digital channel – and often knows when they are ready to (re)engage based on past or likely future behavior. And of course, you can't talk about omnichannel without some discussion of Amazon and their continued push to make everything they do a consistent and truly omnichannel experience. As they continue to push further into health care with pharmacy and now primary care delivery, we will continue to learn how they may serve as a model of not only omnichannel marketing and experience overall but also redefining what customer experience can and should look like in health care delivery system.



In this brief, the first in a multi-part series on omnichannel marketing and experience from DHC Group and partners, we dive into the definition of and value of omnichannel. We value your feedback and would like to hear what else you would like to see covered on this topic in the future.

Meet The Experts

We would like to thank the following experts and thought leaders below for contributing their time and insights to this industry brief. What follows is a summary and highlights of the collective conversations with these experts.



Irene Coyne

EVP, Group Client Director
CMI Media Group



Joyce Ercolino

Director
Harmony Biosciences



Jose Ferreira

EVP, Product Strategy & Innovation
CMI Media Group



Justin Freid

Chief Media & Innovation
CMI Media Group



David Salmon

Global Head Innovation
AstraZeneca



Steven Xie

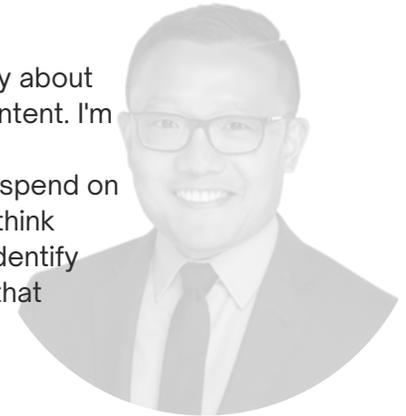
Director
Biohaven

DEFINING OMNICHANNEL

Based on interviews and roundtable discussions we conducted, it is clear that if you look across our industry, each company, each person is defining 'omnichannel' a little bit differently. It is often described as the entire user experience an individual has with a brand. That can go from the upfront work and data analysis and audience segmentation through person-to-person contact, whether that's a sales rep or a patient working with a clinical advisor, all the way through to how they engage with media and content. But there's also some skepticism as to whether real depth exists behind the catch-all.

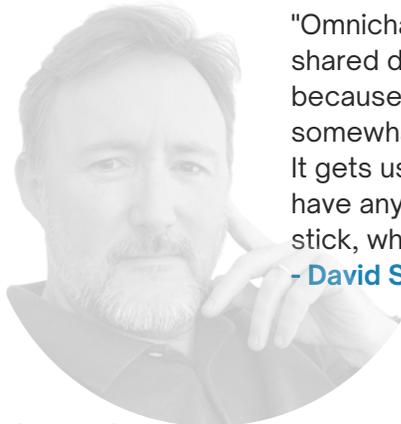
It's such a buzzword, but what does that mean? I think every individual and every organization defines omnichannel differently. I think omnichannel ultimately is really about creating meaningful customer engagement with the most contextually relevant content. I'm looking at omnichannel through the lens of this rapidly evolving consumer media consumption behavioral change. When you think about today, how much time you spend on your phone, how much time you spend on streaming TikTok outside of linear TV. I think omnichannel is about understanding where your customers get their information, identify the moments that lead to decision-making, lean into these moments with content that resonates with them and ultimately drive the intended action."

- **Steven Xie, Director, Biohaven**



"Omnichannel is one of those terms -- there's no single shared definition. It's one of those trendy terms that because it's not especially understood, but also somewhat hot, it goes through a bit of semantic collapse. It gets used repeatedly in organizations until it ceases to have any actual meaning. It becomes an envelope that you stick, whatever project you want to stick into it."

- **David Salmon, Global Head of Innovation, AstraZeneca**



I think of omnichannel as a fully connected, dynamic user experience; meaning everything we're doing is building off something else, and dynamic in the sense of it is ever-changing based on the reactions, or the performance of what is happening in real-time. When I think about multi-channel, and the difference from omnichannel, multi-channel is the use of multiple channels at the same time to achieve a goal. So, in omnichannel, the full orchestration of those channels is interdependent. Whereas multichannel can be somewhat independent, omnichannel is interdependent, dynamically changing based on a user's preference, a user's performance, or the trajectory that we've laid out for them.

- **Irene Coyne, EVP, CMI Media Group**



DEFINING OMNICHANNEL CONTINUED

As it often the case, it's helpful to define something against other known and accepted terms. In this case, many of the experts we spoke with wanted to ensure a distinction between multi-channel and omnichannel. Their insights are important in driving us towards a more widely agreed on sense of what omnichannel is - and how it can become a meaningful part of our industry's work, especially with regards to improving the customer's experience.

"The way I interpret it is omnichannel has the focus on the customer experience. Multichannel has more of the focus on the channels. It's about customer engagement. It's not that you're not looking to have a good customer experience, but it's more about engaging the customer versus omnichannel is getting more towards, in a perfect world, delighting the customer."

- **Joyce Ercolino, Director, Harmony Biosciences**



"What is the difference between omnichannel and the multichannel? Omnichannel is not just about the ubiquitous brand presence, but strategic media mix design that really helps your brand maximize media efficiency, brand resonance, and customer activation.

- **Steven Xie, Director, Biohaven**



"There is a difference between multichannel and omnichannel, omnichannel is more than media. It's any way an individual can interact with a brand. There are a lot of things that happen from the patient side conversations that occur in social media platforms, about treatments. One of our big things we've started to do more and more is make sure we're leveraging social listening to understand the conversations that are happening on Twitter, Reddit, etc, between patients to then understand the types of engagements they want or the questions they have and then potentially answer them. MCM is a part of the overall omnichannel workflow experience we're trying to deliver."

- **Justin Freid, Chief Media and Innovation Officer, CMI Media Group**



"It's aligning all the various touch points for any stakeholder, any customer, to the extent that we're able to. It's essentially aligning that next engagement, the next interaction that you're going to have with a customer and is informed by all of the data that you've collected, so that you're adding value every single time you communicate or advertise to a specific customer.

- **Jose Ferreira, EVP, CMI Media Group**



THE VALUE OF OMNICHANNEL

With the need for well-executed omnichannel as a key catalyst for improving customer experience established, the experts weighed in on its value and integration. One key factor they all identified - the value needs to resonate for both the manufacturer and the customer. The recommendation is to not just set a blanket goal to "integrate omnichannel" but rather first identify the markets and customers where it adds value.

Omnichannel is foundational to customer relationships. Asking if you need to operate within an omnichannel framework is like asking if you need water to live. If you're not operationalizing omnichannel across your organization, then you're not really marketing at the level of customer expectations. If I have the ability, and we now have the technology, to communicate to customers in a story fashion where it's not intrusive then I'm adding value whenever I interact with them. And that value is self-evident I think. We get a lot of questions about "let's prove out the ROI of this." We do it all the time. We have set up test and control studies. We make sure the investment is worth the outcome. In every case that I've seen so far over the last three or four years we've seen the positive ROI above and beyond normal/traditional multi-channel media. We've proved it works. That's no longer an open question.

- **Jose Ferreira, EVP, CMI Media Group**



"In order for [omnichannel] to yield a return on investment and return on effort that is high enough to justify the work, you have to have extreme clarity on the why—why you're doing it, what it entails and more importantly, what you're not going to do."

- **David Salmon, Global Head of Innovation, AstraZeneca**

I wouldn't ask whether your customer wants it or not. We're very behind in terms of meeting the customer expectations. When you go to a website to purchase something, you always think about the shopping cart experience on amazon.com. When you somehow land on the pharma brand, all of a sudden you are back in the '90s. So, I think that's where I think a huge opportunity, actually, for the industry, when you think about how omnichannel can really unlock some of the white spaces.

- **Steven Xie, Director, Biohaven**

Bringing it Together

It's time for marketers to embrace the complexity and sophistication of omnichannel as the new age of marketing. Omnichannel—the orchestration of touchpoints working in harmony with one another—has replaced the old multichannel approach to marketing, to create the most relevant, impactful, personalized and timely delivery of messaging to customers. It involves innovation, technology, and speed along with alignment and commitment from internal teams. With an omnichannel approach, brands can move their customers through the journey from engagement to action.

Omnichannel success is ultimately judged from the customer point of view. As we continue to explore the additional facets of omnichannel in future publications we will also explore the importance of culture and how companies can invest and motivate teams to share insights, integrate data, and share the learning that ultimate success with omnichannel from the customer point of view ... requires integration and shared insights across and within the organization driving that omnichannel strategy.

About the DHC Group

Expanding on the legacy of the 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization Digital Health Coalition, the DHC Group funds and conducts research, hosts and produces industry events, while offering media and outreach opportunities for its members. The DHC Group partners with numerous industry outlets, including the Digital Health Coalition, to drive industry thought leadership forward and make research-supported content available to a broader audience of pharmaceutical, media, publishing, technology, and advertising firms interested in the future of digital health, marketing, and customer experience.

About CMI Media Group

CMI Media Group, a WPP company, is a full-service media agency focused solely on health, wellness, and pharmaceutical marketing. CMI Media Group's core offerings include Audience Strategy, Planning, Development, and Insights; Data and Analytics; Buying and Investment; and Direct Response and Customer Experience. As the leading media resource for the world's top healthcare companies, CMI Media Group brings together leading technology, data, and talent to deliver seamless capabilities for clients. CMI Media Group has been recognized as a leader in DE&I, talent retention and employee development as well as one of the industry's best places to work.