Integrating Omnichannel Strategies in Digital Marketing: A Framework for Enhanced Customer Engagement

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Abstract

This study focuses on the implementation status and core challenges of omnichannel strategies in China's digital marketing environment. Although China has taken a leading position in the world in the field of digital commerce, companies still face structural obstacles such as data distortion, platform fragmentation, stricter supervision, and lack of user trust. Through a literature review and industry analysis, this study identifies four major issues and proposes corresponding countermeasures: establishing a data authenticity verification mechanism, building a content middle platform to enhance platform collaboration, strengthening the local compliance system, and promoting responsible marketing to reshape user relationships. Research shows that digital marketing in China is transforming from channel expansion to value integration and experience collaboration. Only by achieving the synergy of data governance, institutional response, and user trust can enterprises achieve long-term growth and competitive advantage in the omnichannel landscape.

Keywords

Omnichannel strategies, Digital marketing, Online, Ffline marketing.

1. Introduction

The rise of technology in marketing and business has played a crucial role in shaping market performance, particularly in meeting the diverse needs of targeted consumers. In China, omnichannel strategies have emerged as customer-centric approaches that integrate multiple channels to create a seamless brand experience across physical stores, websites and mobile applications (Cai & Choi, 2023) [1]. The goal of this approach is to ensure that consumers can interact with brands across different platforms, ultimately enhancing their brand experience.

China's current omnichannel marketing landscape focuses on establishing a unified marketing system that allows consumers to access brands and products from almost anywhere. This enables product value to be showcased, facilitating comparisons and fostering consumer engagement (Popova & Lysa, 2023) [2]. Consumer needs are addressed by ensuring that product offerings align with their expectations, thereby strengthening brand loyalty.

In China, luxury brands rely heavily on omnichannel marketing to provide personalized consumer experiences. One key strategy is customer profiling, in which consumer data are collected from various channels to gain insights into behavior and preferences. This data is then used to tailor product design, ensuring that consumer needs and desires are incorporated into the final product design.

Another major trend is the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced analytics to process customer information. AI-driven insights help brands design products that align with market demands and offer adaptability in response to emerging trends. This ensures that marketing efforts remain relevant, leading to improved customer experience and informed purchasing decisions (Cai & Choi, 2023) [1].

Customer journey mapping is a crucial aspect of omnichannel marketing in China. This technique helps businesses understand how consumers interact with their products on various platforms, such as apps and websites. Data collected from these interactions are used to create visual representations of consumer expectations, allowing brands to enhance the overall customer experience. Direct engagement with consumers through feedback and conversations plays a key role in refining strategies and ensuring sustainable improvement.

Omnichannel marketing is highly relevant in today's business environment because it enables brands to precisely address consumer needs. A strong emphasis on personalized experiences fosters emotional connections with consumers, ensuring that marketing strategies remain effective and relevant (Popova & Lysa, 2023) [2]. Consistency in messaging across different channels is also crucial, as it reinforces brand identity and helps businesses make the necessary adjustments to align with market demand. By leveraging data analytics, brands can continuously optimize their marketing campaigns and improve their overall performance.

This study analyzes various omnichannel digital marketing strategies used by Chinese businesses to enhance consumer engagement. Additionally, this study explores the historical development of the industry, identifies key challenges, and proposes feasible solutions to drive long-term success.

The research objectives of this study are as follows: identify key challenges in omnichannel digital marketing in China, such as structural inefficiencies and lack of integration across different channels; examine the difficulties in online-offline integration, assessing their impact on efficiency and overall industry advancement; propose strategies for improving omnichannel marketing by addressing challenges and optimizing digital marketing approaches for enhanced consumer engagement and long-term growth.

2. Literature review

2.1. Channel integration and customer experience optimization

Scholars generally believe that the key to an omnichannel strategy is to integrate online and offline resources to create a consistent and coherent customer experience. Popova and Lysa (2023) pointed out that Chinese companies create seamless consumption processes through online and offline integration and use data-driven and artificial intelligence to improve personalized marketing and market responsiveness [2]. Cai and Choi (2023) emphasized that collecting user feedback through digital tools can help optimize product services and improve customer satisfaction and conversion rates [1]. Yang and Hu (2024) believe that digital technology is not only the basis for channel integration, but also provides support for service quality and customer participation, and strengthens the role of omni-channel retail in promoting business performance [3].

Liu and Zhang (2022) also emphasize the value of platform data for corporate strategic adjustments, and advocate the use of digital means to improve channel collaboration and operational efficiency [4]. Shi et al. (2020) and Cheng et al. (2023) focus on the consumer perspective, emphasizing the positive role of consistent cross-channel information push and brand building in enhancing customer trust and engagement [5-6]. In summary, channel integration not only improves the consistency of customer touchpoints but also enhances personalization and interaction depth through data and technology support, thereby optimizing the overall customer experience.

2.2. Organizational capabilities and service model innovation

In addition to channel integration, the successful implementation of an omnichannel strategy also depends on the coordination of organizational resources and the continuous innovation of service models. Song et al. (2021) pointed out that the digitalization and knowledge management capabilities of the supply chain determine whether an enterprise has the agility to adapt to market changes and are an important basis for ensuring the consistency of omni-channel services [7]. Song and Song (2021) further emphasized that the integration of human resources and operational processes is related to the speed at which an enterprise responds to customer needs and affects the final service effect [8]. New retail models, such as BOPS and BORO, proposed by Tan et al. (2023), demonstrate the innovative ability to integrate online and offline processes, which not only improves shopping convenience but also enhances customer trust [9].

Wang and Jiang (2022) pointed out that enterprises' familiarity with the operation of digital platforms helps establish cross-channel service capabilities, thereby enhancing customer stickiness and brand loyalty [10]. The concept of "collaborative marketing" proposed by Chen et al. (2022) emphasizes the combination of price consistency and service personalization, which promotes customer relationship management while maintaining a unified brand image [11]. Strong organizational coordination capabilities and user-oriented model innovation are the key mechanisms for promoting the successful implementation of omni-channel strategies.

In summary, existing research generally emphasizes the positive role of omni-channel strategies in improving customer experience and market responsiveness, especially the widespread application of digital tools, artificial intelligence, and data integration. However, the current literature focuses on the construction of strategic frameworks and technical paths and rarely systematically explores the specific challenges and coping mechanisms faced by enterprises in an environment of highly fragmented platforms, strengthened institutional constraints, and complex and changing user behaviors. In addition, research on foreign-funded enterprises in terms of localization compliance, cultural adaptation, and user relationship maintenance is lacking. Therefore, further exploration of how to implement omni-channel strategies, adapt to the logic of multiple systems, and achieve long-term value creation in China's digital marketing ecosystem has become the key to deepening theory and transforming practice. This study attempts to propose a systematic analysis and strategic recommendations to address the above gaps to enrich relevant theories and guide corporate practice.

3. Analysis of China's digital marketing industry

3.1. The evolutionary path and key characteristics of China's digital marketing industry

China's digital marketing industry has experienced significant expansion over the past two decades, gradually evolving from a primary attempt at informatization to a world-leading digital business system. E-commerce began between 1997 and 1998, initially led by IT manufacturers and media companies. In the early 2000s, e-commerce companies gradually gained market dominance, laying the foundation for digital marketing development in China. By the 2010s, China had surpassed the United States in many areas, such as digital payment and online retail, becoming one of the core areas of global digital transactions.

This development is due to the coordinated maturity of several basic conditions. First, the highly secure and popular mobile payment systems, especially the promotion of WeChat Pay and Alipay, have greatly improved the convenience and trust of online consumption. Second, the strong logistics and express delivery infrastructure provides practical support for digital marketing conversion, ensuring an efficient connection from online browsing to offline delivery.

Third-party platforms play an important role in this process. Local social platforms such as WeChat and QQ Space have significant advantages in terms of user scale and content. Their comprehensive functions have replaced the influence of Western platforms, such as Facebook, in many aspects. In addition, major events such as the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the 2010 Shanghai World Expo have become opportunities for the digital upgrade of the advertising industry, accelerating the digital transformation of enterprises in terms of brand communication.

Consumer behavior has also changed structurally. Digital channels have gradually become the preferred shopping method because of their high efficiency, comparability, and transparency. For example, live streaming marketing has been widely used in industries such as retail and insurance, allowing brands to directly reach consumers and provide real-time interaction. The evolution of the platform economy has also promoted the transformation of large-scale marketing strategies from passive exposure to interactive and personalized content delivery methods.

According to the 55th Statistical Report on Internet Development in China, released by the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), by 2024, the number of Chinese Internet users have exceed 1.1 billion [12]. This huge user base provides a solid foundation for digital marketing and promotes the continuous expansion of online consumption and platform ecosystems. The growth of the user scale not only improves the coverage efficiency of digital channels but also creates a more complex audience structure, prompting companies to pay more attention to population segmentation and precise reach when formulating marketing strategies.

The performance of leading companies reflects this trend. Alibaba has established its dominance in the global e-commerce sector by continuously expanding its digital business ecosystem, including record-breaking IPO. The rise of platforms such as Meituan and Pinduoduo shows that new entrants still have the possibility of breaking the monopoly pattern after finding the right user positioning and model innovation.

Pinduoduo's model is representative. It uses the "group buying" mechanism to strengthen the social connection between users and successfully attracts a large number of low- and middle-income users by providing low-priced, non-branded products, especially in the sinking market. Since its listing in 2018, Pinduoduo has continued to adopt a price-sensitive product strategy combined with the platform's social mechanism to achieve simultaneous improvements in user stickiness and conversion efficiency.

In summary, China's digital marketing industry not only has a huge market size and a high level of platform integration capabilities, but also presents the characteristics of continuous interactive evolution of technology and consumption patterns. From user preferences and platform ecology to corporate behavior, the industry has formed a highly dynamic and complex system, providing a rich resource base and application scenarios for companies to build omnichannel marketing strategies.

3.2. Analysis of omnichannel Integration trends and core models

Driven by improvements in digital infrastructure and the rapid transformation of consumer behavior, Chinese companies' marketing strategies are increasingly turning toward omnichannel integration. The so-called omnichannel is not just the superposition of the number of platforms but emphasizes the high consistency of brand delivery, customer interaction, and transaction processes at multiple touchpoints. This strategy has become an important way to improve customer engagement, extend the customer life cycle and enhance brand loyalty.

Currently, omnichannel integration is reflected in three core model types. First, content-driven instant interactive methods have become the forefront of consumer participation in the fashion industry. Live broadcasts and short videos are widely used in the Chinese market, especially on

platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou. Brands have effectively improved the visibility and emotional connection of products through scene-based displays, interactive comments, and limited-time discount offers (Ali et al., 2025) [13]. Traditional industries, such as insurance and finance, educate consumers through live broadcasts. For example, Alipay and Manulife Insurance have used live broadcasts as an important channel for educating young groups and guiding their customers to use their services. Live broadcasts not only strengthen the real-time and trust foundations but also enable companies to directly respond to user feedback and shorten the path from cognition to conversion.

Key opinion leader (KOL) marketing has become a key intermediary in digital communication (Kong & Wu., 2024) [14]. Chinese consumers generally value recommendations from acquaintances and other credible sources. The status of KOLs on platforms such as Weibo, Xiaohongshu, and Video Accounts gives brands stronger cultural embedding and emotional resonance. By cooperating with KOLs, companies can increase the market acceptance of new products in a short period while building a deep user interaction field with the help of their social influence.

The third model is the deep integration of online and offline channels in omnichannel retailing. Under the impact of e-commerce, many traditional retailers have tried to introduce hybrid models such as "Buy Online Pick up in Store" (BOPS), opening up the consumer experience path through online ordering and offline fulfillment. In the field of high-frequency consumer goods, this model not only improves logistics efficiency but also enhances consumer confidence in the authenticity of goods and the quality of services. In addition, the widespread deployment of artificial intelligence and data analysis tools enables companies to achieve automation and personalized collaboration in inventory management, precise recommendations, and customer relationship management, further promoting the intelligence of channel integration.

Under this integration trend, the behavioral patterns of female consumers have become significant. Consumer behavior data show that female users are more sensitive to trends, more inclined to interact on social platforms, and actively search for cost-effective information than male users (Hawkins & Vel., 2013) [15]. Platforms such as Pinduoduo and JD.com have developed more targeted product pushes and content strategies based on this feature. The activeness of female audiences in live streaming directly affects the effect of live streaming, and the content ecology of community platforms (such as Xiaohongshu) also significantly relies on the production and feedback of women.

It is worth noting that the implementation path of the omnichannel strategy in China is still limited by platform technology barriers and fragmented user touchpoints. The data between different platforms are not interoperable, and the operating logic is very different, which increases the difficulty of brands in managing cross-platform content unification, user identification, and experience consistency. Despite this, leading companies are connecting user information between different channels through technical architectures such as "unified customer view" and "data middle platform" to achieve people-centered personalized marketing.

In general, China's digital marketing ecosystem is transitioning from the channel expansion stage to a new stage centered on experience coordination and value integration. The integration of live broadcasts, short videos, KOL marketing, and online to offline (O2O) not only exists as a technical means but also reconstructs the relationship logic between enterprises and customers at a deeper level. A successful omnichannel integration strategy not only improves the breadth of corporate communication but also increases consumers' willingness to participate and brand dependence through the synergy mechanism of content, context, and interaction.

3.3. Analysis of challenges facing digital marketing in China

Although China has achieved global leadership in digital marketing, the industry faces multiple structural challenges. These challenges include technical issues, such as data fraud and platform fragmentation, and institutional barriers, such as market access restrictions and regulatory pressure.

In the high-intensity digital competition, false data and non-human traffic have become the main risks affecting marketing effectiveness. Some companies use brushing software and zombie clicks to falsify user behavior, resulting in a serious distortion of key indicators, such as the click-through and conversion rates. This problem is particularly serious in high-investment industries such as advertising, telecommunications and automobiles. As much as one-third of the advertising traffic of some companies does not come from actual users. Simultaneously, China's digital platform ecosystem is highly fragmented, and different platforms have significant differences in content structure, algorithm mechanism, and interactive logic, which poses a challenge to the cross-platform consistency of brand management.

China's increasingly stringent regulation of data security and digital space is also a difficult challenge that needs to be addressed. In recent years, the introduction of laws such as the Data Security Law and the Personal Information Protection Law has clarified the compliance obligations of companies regarding data collection, processing, and cross-border transmission. Companies must bear higher data protection costs when implementing digital marketing strategies; otherwise, they will face high fines, account bans, or legal proceedings. In addition, foreign companies entering the Chinese market are restricted by network censorship and digital sovereignty requirements. International brands find it challenging to directly use conventional digital tools such as Google and Facebook, which restricts their localized marketing capabilities.

Cultural heterogeneity and diversity in consumer behavior are also challenges that cannot be ignored. Chinese consumers rely more on recommendations from acquaintances and social verification in their purchasing decisions, and there are significant differences in preferences between regions, income levels, and age groups. For example, some users pursue brand premium and scarcity, while others are more concerned about cost-effectiveness and basic functions of the product. This requires brands to achieve high segmentation in positioning strategies, content design, and media placement to adapt to the cognitive structure of different groups.

Users' trust in platforms and brands increasingly relies on transparency and accountability. However, phenomena such as fake orders, false advertising, and abuse of user data have eroded user trust, leading users to participate in digital content and commercial transactions more cautiously and for a shorter term.

4. Recommendations

4.1. Establish a data authenticity verification mechanism

Faced with the strategic decision-making dilemma caused by the distortion of key marketing indicators, enterprises urgently need to establish a systematic data verification mechanism to restore a true understanding of digital marketing performance and the accuracy of resource allocation. To this end, it is recommended to introduce a third-party audit platform with independence and technical support capabilities and use blockchain technology to encrypt and record user behavior data and store it in an unalterable manner, ensuring that the data from click to conversion is verifiable and traceable.

In addition, a multi-source data docking framework should be built to connect internal systems, such as advertising platforms, customer relationship management systems (CRMs), transaction

backends, and customer data platforms (CDPs), to form a unified data link and strengthen the cross-validation capabilities of behavioral data. On this basis, the performance evaluation system also needs to be transformed: surface traffic indicators such as "exposure" and "click volume" with core indicators such as effective interaction rate and real conversion cost that reflect behavioral quality and conversion effects, thereby improving the allocation efficiency of marketing resources and the overall return on investment (ROI) level.

4.2. Differentiated content adaptation

The industry structure of multiple platforms coexisting provides enterprises with various strategic windows to reach their users. The differences in content mechanisms, user preferences, and socialupon the social logic of different platforms constitute their unique brand communication value. Thus, enterprises should focus on identifying the structural differences of platforms and establishing content adaptation mechanisms and strategy combination paths that are adapted to local conditions to achieve synergy in differences and form an integration effect in differentiation.

Specifically, it is recommended to adopt a modular content strategy to break down the brand's core assets (such as value propositions, product stories, and visual language) into flexible and variable content modules and to recombine and adapt them according to the communication preferences of different platforms. For example, Douyin is suitable for emotion-driven, fast-paced short video content, whereas Xiaohongshu emphasizes real experiences and lifestyle expression. Companies should create platform-native content based on the content language of each platform, rather than simply distributing it using a unified template. Plan and connect the user's contact paths on different platforms, and give each platform a clear marketing function. For example, a brand can create hot topics on Douyin, complete word-of-mouth verification on Xiaohongshu, and achieve private domain conversion within the WeChat ecosystem.

4.3. The dual-wheel strategy of local compliance and user trust

In a policy environment where data governance is becoming stricter and digital sovereignty awareness is increasing, companies should first establish a dedicated digital compliance function and set up a digital compliance officer position to coordinate the compliance process of data collection, storage, analysis, and cross-border transmission, and ensure that risk identification and response capabilities are available in all aspects of marketing activities. This function should form a linkage mechanism with the legal, IT, security, and marketing departments to jointly formulate a digital governance manual and emergency plan and establish a stable "compliance operation closed loop" at the organizational level.

In terms of technology selection and platform cooperation, enterprises should prioritize adopting locally compliant data service solutions, such as storing user data on servers in China and using certified local customer data platform (CDP) and advertising delivery platforms to reduce the risk of operational interruption caused by policy-sensitive links. Especially for foreign-funded enterprises, they can indirectly obtain platform algorithms and user behavior data by establishing in-depth cooperation with local MCNs, platform ecosystem service providers, etc., so as to achieve precise delivery under the premise of legality and compliance.

At the strategic level, a three-step localization adaptation method should be constructed: the first step is to establish a cooperation mechanism with local content and data agents with regulatory qualifications to ensure legal access to the marketing ecosystem; the second step is to adapt the core technology stack locally, including algorithm logic, language style, and UI design; the third step is to strengthen cultural adaptability in content and interactive methods to ensure that the communication strategy can truly enter the cognitive structure of target users. Through this integrated path, companies can seek a balance between institutional constraints and market demand and expand their innovation space based on compliance.

Companies should introduce third-party platforms to verify the accuracy of marketing content, such as pre-verification of key information, such as product efficacy, price discounts, and expert recommendations, and display a verifiable label in communication to enhance the credibility of communication. In addition, for content that is controversial or questioned by users, companies should establish a rapid response mechanism and content correction channels to demonstrate their continued investment in responsible communication.

In terms of user relationships, brands need to go beyond one-off promotions or content attraction and turn to a refined operation model based on the life cycle of the brand. User portraits built on first-party data should be refined to dimensions such as behavioral preferences, sources of trust, and interaction frequency to develop differentiated content reach and interaction rhythms. Simultaneously, user relationship maintenance should be incorporated into customer relationship management (CRM) and CDP systems to promote a deep linkage between front-line functions, such as customer service, community, and member management and data platforms, thereby achieving "relationship-driven" marketing growth.

5. Conclusion

This study systematically examines the evolution path, typical models, and real dilemmas of China's digital marketing industry in the process of omnichannel strategic transformation. By combining a literature review and practical analysis, it explores the response logic of enterprises in the context of increasingly complex technology, systems, and consumer behavior. Research shows that the digital marketing system in the Chinese market has moved from the initial tool-based operation to a deep integration stage. The rapid differentiation of platform ecology, high diversification of user needs, and continuous strengthening of the regulatory system are reshaping the marketing logic and organizational capability structure of enterprises.

Through the review and analysis of channel integration, service innovation, and user participation mechanisms, this study emphasizes that the omni-channel strategy is not only a marketing model transformation but also a systematic change that is user-centric, data-based, and compliance-based. In this process, the challenges faced by enterprises do not come from a single technical obstacle, but from how to coordinate content and data in a multi-platform environment, maintain innovation space under institutional pressure, and achieve relationship building in a social environment where trust is scarce.

The core contribution of this study is to analyze the omni-channel strategy in the context of China's unique digital platform structure and system, highlighting the strategic tension and practical path from a local perspective.

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