Winning Omnichannel Engagement

como®

Introduction

With more ways than ever to connect with customers, it's not unusual for a single business to communicate with shoppers through text messages, push notifications, their business' website, emails, mobile apps, and social media, as well as through face-to-face interactions. But often these communications are based on 'spam them so they stay' logic, repelling more customers than they engage.

A far more important and effective approach is **omnichannel engagement** - a relevant, personalized, and unified customer experience across all available channels.

By failing to employ an omnichannel approach, these businesses are missing great opportunities to build positive customer experiences.

87%

In fact, **87% of consumers** think

"brands need to work harder to create a seamless experience for customer"

according to Zendesk.

It's not only cohesiveness that appeals to today's consumers - they also prefer the personalized nature of omnichannel experiences. According to a study produced by Google, an estimated 85% of consumers say they would be more likely to shop at a brick-and- mortar store if it offered personalized coupons and offers, while 64% are more likely to shop at a store that provides them with product recommendations.

With comprehensive customer engagement solutions, a business of any size can create the omnichannel engagement that drives so much of the success of the online giants.

In fact, omnichannel engagement is a versatile approach to building customer relationships, so it can be utilized to suit a variety of business goals.

For example:
you may choose to use omnichannel strategies to bring back lapsed customers, to sell more of a certain product, or to increase total purchase amounts.

With that in mind, it's important to make sure you have clearly defined the business objectives that you aim to achieve through omnichannel strategies from the outset.

These three steps can guide you through the process of creating an omnichannel customer experience to help you meet your business goals:

1 Start Gathering Data –
and Don't Stop

2 Speak to Each Customer as an Individual,
Using a Variety of Digital Channels

3 Incorporate Your Brick-and-Mortar Locations
into the Omnichannel Experience

1 Start Gathering Data
— and Don't Stop

The better you understand your customers, the better prepared you are to offer them an effective omnichannel experience.

The first, and perhaps most important, step is to an omnichannel experience is to personalize your customer experience. As purchasing volumes have significantly increased in recent years, it's no longer realistic to actually get to know each of your customers personally, like the mom-and-pop shops of the past once did. Instead, businesses can use advanced customer engagement tools to effectively track and personalize their customer experience. With automated tools for customer engagement that are integrated with your POS, you can **keep track of purchases and other customer behavior** in real-time and use that information to create a personalized customer experience.

But, building a database isn't entirely without its complications. The only way to effectively gather data about customers is by getting them involved in the process too.

Overcoming the hurdles to data collection

You can encourage your customers to help you gather the data you need through a loyalty program. You collect important data relating to their purchase behavior in real time, while they enjoy rewards or discounts. In fact, with each gift redeem, or discount used, you're given valuable data to further build upon and grow your relationships with.
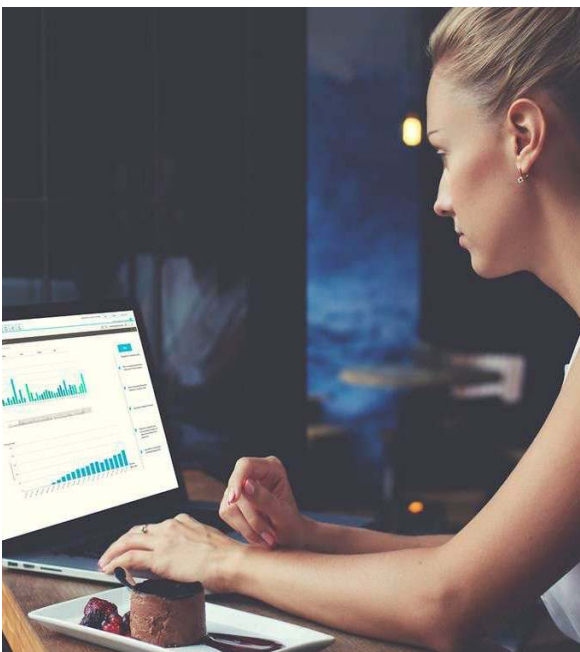
Once a customer has signed up, they're automatically added to your database— enabling you to begin gathering data showing their purchases and other specific, measurable actions. As you continually gather more data you'll be able to distinguish the items or products customers prefer and can send them targeted campaigns based on preferences. Some customer engagement platforms combine data with machine learning, so businesses can determine what products they should bundle and what a customer's future buying habits will be. **It's important to keep gathering and continually analyzing this kind of data, so that you can continue learning about your customers, their preferences, and their shopping habits over time.** This will allow you to keep improving the information in your database, making it an even more effective tool for omnichannel engagement.

2 Speak to Each Customer as an Individual, Using a Variety of Digital Channels

To achieve an omnichannel experience, it's a good idea to send campaigns using a variety of channels, such as:

- Text messages (SMS)
- Push notifications
- In-app notifications
- Emails
- The features and content of your app, including welcome screens
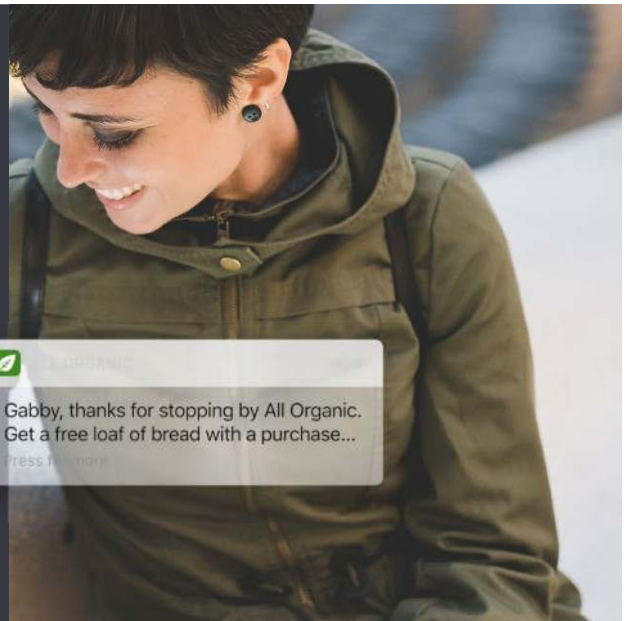
Each channel has its own pros and cons and businesses must clearly assess the message they are sending before choosing which channel they want to send it through.

For example:

Text messages are a good platform for sending transaction confirmations or a reminder about a current promotion.

Emails can be a good channel for messages that need more content and design.

Welcome messages are prime real estate to include eye-catching images and text.

Push notifications can be optimal for engaging customers in real time.

Most of all, to increase sales, loyalty and growth, it's important for all of these channels to work together.

Planning a strategy for omnichannel communication

To use your omnichannel experience to build profitable, lasting customer relationships, it's best to send a mix of product offers and other types of messages. For example, create a personal relationship with customers by sending them push notifications with birthday or holiday greetings and gifts. Follow-up with them by gently reminding that they have a "present" waiting in your location. Send customers general announcement by push notification to get their attention and then customize your app's welcome screen with the details of the announcement that they'll find most enticing. Try emailing customers recipes or creative ways to use your products to keep them looking forward to your communications. To create compelling communications businesses should assess their goals and then ask themselves what content is going to actually be of value to their customers.

In addition to the above campaigns, you can also use a customer engagement solution to automatically send messages to customers based on their actions.

For example, you could create a thank-you message that will automatically be sent to each customer after they have made a purchase. Or, you may choose to send a message specifically to customers who have not made a purchase recently, offering them a discount to incentivize them to come back to your business.

You may also want to add a personal touch by automatically incorporating individual details into a message, such as a customer's name or the number of points they have available.

Personalization doesn't end there. Once a campaign succeeds in bringing a customer back to your business, you'll want their experience to continue seamlessly.

And that brings us to…

3

Incorporate Your Brick-and-Mortar Locations into the Omnichannel Experience

Omnichannel doesn't stop with online communication channels. Customer engagement platforms can also be used for creating an in-store experience that extends and complements the online channel. The idea is that the online and offline aspects of your sales, marketing, and customer experience efforts should build off of each other.

Engaging customers with products

Consumers are highly engaged on mobile, and for good reason: the rate at which they can swipe through different products is far higher than the rate at which they can browse through a shop or read a menu. Businesses can introduce display and touch screens in their locations to give customers the same self-discovery of products offline that they receive online. Additionally, in-store display screens are great ways to highlight products through imagery, rather than through text. For example, Quick-Service Restaurants (QSR) and casual dining eateries can use these types of display screens to promote special dishes that aren't available on the regular menu. This form of visual promotion is far more engaging than a waiter reciting a grocery list of specials.

Engaging customers through payments

We know that many customers expect a quick and seamless experience when they pay for products. Consider that 36% of Starbucks purchases are made via mobile. With that in mind, enabling mobile payments at the POS through your business' app is a great way to allow customers to continue their omnichannel experience at your location. This way, your loyal customers can use their personalized benefits and coupons effortlessly when they pay, since their rewards, coupons, and payment information is already inside the app, requiring no extra steps or boundaries to access.

Another way to create a cohesive customer experience is by making the offline experience as convenient as the online. Services such as click and collect and pre-ordering can be added to your business's website or app and provide customers with additional opportunities to buy however they want to.

The time customers spend waiting can make or break a purchase and can be the ultimate reason for sales lost to competition. Helpful and well-trained staff is, of course, fundamental for making any business a success, but in some hospitality verticals, like QSR and Casual Dining, a **self-service kiosk** can go a long way in boosting sales and reducing the time customers wait to be serviced. McDonalds pioneered this approach and is expected to deploy self-service kiosks in all their US locations by 2020. According to Cowen's analyst report this undertaking is expected to significantly boost sales. Self-service kiosks like these contribute to the in-store customer experience by breaking up the queues in-front of the cashier during peak hours and allowing customers with smaller orders to get their products quicker and be on their way.

Engaging customers through your employees

One of the most important aspects of your customers' in-store experience consists of their interactions with your employees. By personalizing face-to-face encounters using the data you've collected, your team can combine the capabilities of the online giants with the competitive advantage of a brick-and-mortar business' friendliness and human touch.

For instance:

- Your cashier could view a customer's profile at your POS, recommend some products that are likely to interest them, and wish them a happy upcoming birthday or anniversary.
- Your server could view a customer's profile at your POS, call the customer by their first name, tell them how many unused points they have, and recommend new dishes that are similar to their favorites.

In-store personalization is on the rise with very promising results fueling the investments businesses are making in this arena. For example, Burberry, a high-end retailer has reported a 50% increase in repeat customers thanks to personalized customer experience.

Making omnichannel engagement a reality

To connect with your customers on a variety of channels, you'll need to plan a variety of campaigns. To do it efficiently, you'll need to use advanced customer engagement tools. But the most important key to doing it the right way—the omnichannel way—is to keep your focus squarely on the customer.

By gathering data and using it effectively and running campaigns according to your business goals, you can create a unified customer experience across all your channels, both online and offline.

Do that well, and you'll set your business up to more successfully achieve its goals—thanks to a happier and more loyal customer base

Ready to make omnichannel engagement a reality for your business?

Stop by Como's Resource Center to discover all the ways Como Sense can help you achieve your business goals.

About Como

Como empowers businesses with the technology behind the online giants through an end-to-end customer engagement platform. With Como Sense™, retailers and restaurants can gather data about customers and purchases and then deliver ever-more personalized experiences designed to grow loyalty and sales.

Como Sense™ connects with POS software to create a seamless solution with data-driven tools that work together: a branded and customized mobile app, wide choice of loyalty programs, actionable business insights, and marketing automation. Burger King, Quiznos, PAUL, Creams, Carl's Jr., and Chuck E. Cheese's are some of the chains in Como's client portfolio.

We also strengthen POS companies by expanding their offering with next-generation customer engagement for their business clients. We are number one in POS integrations, connected with more than 75 POS companies including Micros, Revel Systems, PAR, and Posera.

A pioneer in cloud-based customer engagement solutions since 2005, Como is a global company with offices in the US, the UK, and Israel.
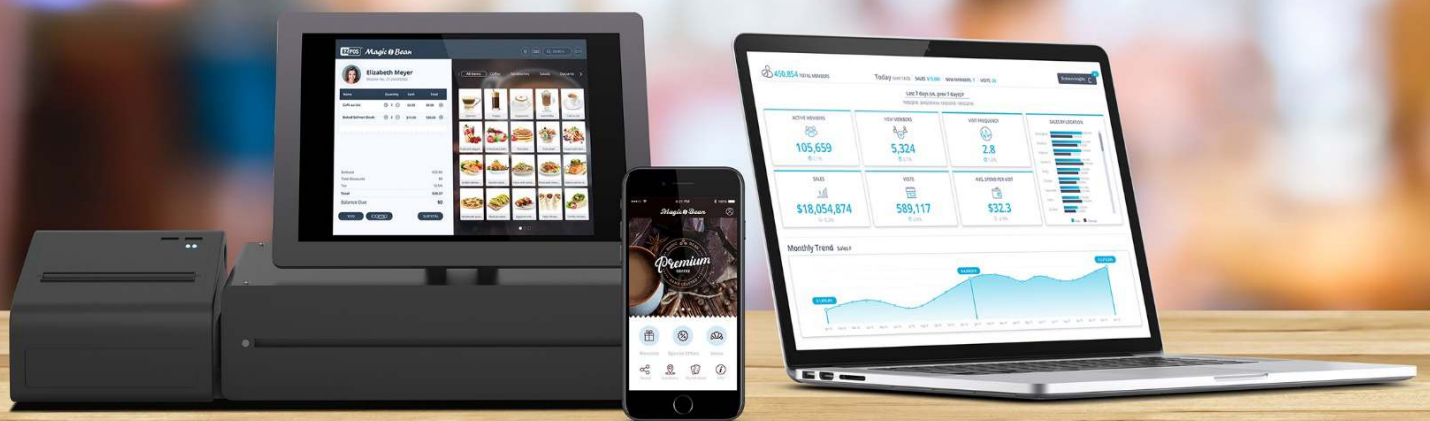
Contact us to find out how Como Sense can work for your business.

comosense@como.com | www.como.com

2050 Center Avenue,
Fort Lee, NJ 07024

10 Bloomsbury Way,
London WC1A 2SL

2 Ilan Ramon Street
Ness Ziona, 7403635, Israel