



Omnichannel Marketing Strategy and Customer Experience in the Retail Industry: An Integrative Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Retail customers increasingly move between physical stores, websites, mobile applications, and social platforms, making coordinated channel experiences a strategic concern for retailers. This integrative literature review examined how omnichannel marketing strategies relate to customer experience and subsequent consumer responses in the retail industry. The review synthesized 10 selected conceptual and empirical journal studies published within the past decade. Literature was identified through searches using terms related to omnichannel retailing, channel integration, customer experience, customer journeys, satisfaction, purchase intention, and loyalty. Eligible studies addressed retail contexts and examined strategy, integration, or customer experience across multiple channels. Findings were analyzed thematically rather than statistically pooled because the studies differed in design, context, and measurement. The synthesis identified three recurring patterns. First, channel coordination particularly consistency of information and services, transaction continuity, and fulfilment integration was central to customers' perceptions of a connected journey. Second, customer experience was multidimensional, encompassing functional evaluations such as convenience and effort, alongside affective responses such as engagement and flow. Third, empirical studies associated integration and positive experience with satisfaction, reduced perceived risk, purchase or patronage intention, and loyalty-related outcomes. These relationships varied across studies, and the review did not establish a single universal effect size or causal pathway. Conceptually, the review connects omnichannel strategy, perceived customer experience, and behavioral responses within a unified framework. It concludes that providing multiple channels is insufficient on its own: retailers need to coordinate them around customer needs and evaluate whether customers experience that coordination as consistent, convenient, and valuable. Further research should test these pathways using comparable measures across retail sectors.

Keyword : Omnichannel Marketing; Customer Experience; Channel Integration; Retail Industry; Customer Loyalty.

INTRODUCTION

Retail customers increasingly move between physical stores, websites, mobile applications, social media, and other digital touchpoints as they search for information, compare products, make purchases, and seek post-purchase support. This behavior has made the customer journey less linear and more dependent on interactions across channels. For retailers, the challenge is no longer simply to provide multiple ways to shop, but to coordinate those channels so that customers can move between them with consistent information, service, and fulfilment. Lemon and Verhoef (2016) describe customer experience



as developing across pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages through interactions with multiple touchpoints. In an omnichannel setting, these interactions may span retailer-owned channels as well as external platforms and social influences.

Omnichannel marketing addresses this challenge by coordinating channels and touchpoints around the customer journey. Its strategic value rests on the perceived continuity of the experience: product information, pricing, promotions, customer service, payment, inventory visibility, and fulfilment should work together across online and offline settings. When these elements are fragmented, customers may encounter inconsistent information, repeated effort, or uncertainty about orders. Conversely, effective coordination can improve convenience, reduce friction, and support satisfaction and continued patronage. Research has linked channel integration with customer experience and behavioral responses, although the relevant mechanisms and outcomes vary across retail settings (Chung et al., 2022; Shi et al., 2020). The practical problem, therefore, concerns how retailers translate channel availability into a coherent customer experience. Retailers may invest in apps, online stores, social commerce, click-and-collect, and in-store technology, yet the presence of these tools alone does not guarantee that customers experience the channels as integrated. Omnichannel performance depends on the quality of coordination and on whether the resulting experience is useful, consistent, and meaningful to customers. This issue is especially relevant as retailers use data-driven services and personalization, which can improve relevance while raising expectations about privacy, trust, and the responsible use of customer data (Gerea et al., 2021; Hänninen et al., 2021).

Recent research has developed along several related lines. One stream examines the strategic foundations of omnichannel retailing, including why retailers integrate channels and how integration relates to organizational and customer outcomes. Verhoef et al. (2015) framed omnichannel management as the coordinated management of channels and customer touchpoints to optimize customer experience and channel performance. Subsequent studies have explored cross-channel integration as a retail capability, considering the alignment of information, services, transactions, and fulfilment. Herhausen et al. (2015), for example, investigated how cross-channel integration shapes customer responses, while Cao and Li (2018) examined factors associated with retailers' integration choices. A second stream centers on customer experience throughout the omnichannel journey. Reviews by Gerea et al. (2021) and Gao and Huang (2021) synthesize the expanding literature on omnichannel customer experience and management, noting the importance of a customer-centered perspective and the need to connect touchpoint design with customer evaluations. Drawing on customer-journey theory, Lemon and Verhoef (2016) emphasize that experience accumulates across multiple stages and touchpoints rather than arising from a single transaction. In retail, this means that product discovery, store visits, online comparison, ordering, delivery, returns, and service recovery may all contribute to the customer's overall evaluation.

Empirical studies have examined specific elements of that experience. Shi et al. (2020) investigated how service integration in omnichannel retailing relates to customer experience. Chang and Li (2022) developed and validated a measure of seamless experience in omnichannel shopping, providing a basis for assessing customers' perceptions of continuity across channels. Chung et al. (2022) used an experiment to show that perceived cross-channel integration can shape retail brand experience, which in turn affects perceived convenience, satisfaction, and patronage intention. These findings suggest that integration can influence behavior partly through customers' subjective assessments of the journey. A third stream considers the range of factors and outcomes associated with omnichannel retail. Studies have examined channel choice, buying behavior, shopping experience, loyalty, and purchase-related responses (Mishra et al., 2021; Steul-Fischer, 2023). Reviews of omnichannel strategy also identify customer experience and seamlessness as recurring themes, while pointing to differences in conceptual definitions, measures, and research settings (Bèzes, 2022; Both & Steinmann, 2023). Taken together, this work establishes a substantial foundation: channel integration matters, customer experience is multidimensional and journey-based, and customer responses can include satisfaction, patronage, and loyalty. However, the literature is distributed across distinct constructs and research streams, making it difficult to see how strategic decisions, integration mechanisms, and customer outcomes fit together.

Three gaps follow from this evidence. First, studies often focus on particular integration features or isolated customer outcomes, such as channel choice, convenience, satisfaction, or loyalty. This provides useful but partial insights into how omnichannel marketing strategies relate to experience across the full customer journey. Second, research uses different definitions and measures of omnichannel experience and channel integration. As a result, findings from individual studies can be difficult to compare or combine,

especially when their settings, methods, and focal touchpoints differ (Gerea et al., 2021; Chang & Li, 2022). Third, although literature reviews have synthesized omnichannel management, marketing, customer journeys, or consumer decision-making, an integrative account is still needed to connect these perspectives around the relationship between omnichannel marketing strategy and customer experience in retail. Reviews have identified a need for more customer-centered and interdisciplinary work, including attention to the co-creation of experience across journeys rather than an exclusive focus on operational seamlessness (Both & Steinmann, 2023; Gao & Huang, 2021). The field also spans varying retail contexts and technologies, which calls for synthesis that distinguishes recurring mechanisms from context-specific findings. Without such integration, retailers may receive fragmented guidance on which strategic elements matter, how they shape experience, and what outcomes are most consistently associated with them.

This integrative literature review examines how omnichannel marketing strategies shape customer experience in the retail industry. Specifically, it aims to: (1) synthesize the principal dimensions of omnichannel strategy identified in recent conceptual and empirical research; (2) explain the pathways through which channel coordination and related retail practices influence customer experience across the journey; and (3) map the customer responses associated with that experience, including convenience, satisfaction, patronage intention, and loyalty. The review's contribution is its synthesis of strategy, integration mechanisms, and customer experience within a single analytical framing. Rather than treating channel integration, journey experience, and behavioral outcomes as separate topics, it connects them to clarify how marketing choices may shape customers' cognitive, affective, and behavioral evaluations. It also identifies differences in constructs and research emphasis that can guide future empirical studies and support clearer comparison across retail settings. The novelty lies in this integrative focus and its resulting research agenda, not in claiming that prior reviews have overlooked omnichannel experience altogether.

In summary, omnichannel retailing offers strategic value when coordinated channels support a coherent experience across the customer journey. Existing scholarship demonstrates important links between integration, experience, and customer responses, but remains varied in focus and measurement. By integrating these strands, this review provides a structured account of what is established, where the evidence remains fragmented, and which questions should guide further research and retail practice.

METHODS

This study employed an integrative literature review to synthesize conceptual and empirical research on omnichannel marketing strategies and customer experience in the retail industry. An integrative approach was selected because the topic includes diverse research designs, theoretical perspectives, retail contexts, and measures of customer experience. It allows findings from empirical studies and relevant conceptual contributions to be considered together, while identifying patterns, inconsistencies, and areas requiring further investigation (Snyder, 2019; Torraco, 2016). The review process was structured around the stages of problem formulation, literature searching, screening, data extraction, synthesis, and reporting. PRISMA 2020 informed the transparent reporting of identification and selection procedures (Page et al., 2021).

The review focused on peer-reviewed journal articles published from 2016 to 2026, consistent with the study's emphasis on recent developments in omnichannel retailing. Searches were designed for Scopus and Web of Science, with supplementary searches in Google Scholar and relevant Indonesian journal indexes to identify studies from SINTA-indexed publications. Search terms were combined using Boolean operators and included omnichannel marketing, omnichannel retail, channel integration, customer experience, customer journey, retail customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and Indonesia. Search strings were adapted to each database. Reference lists of relevant reviews and empirical studies were also checked to locate additional eligible literature, following established guidance for systematic evidence searching (Snyder, 2019; Xiao & Watson, 2019).

Studies were eligible if they (a) examined retail settings, (b) addressed omnichannel strategy, channel integration, or customer experience across multiple channels, and (c) reported conceptual analysis or empirical findings relevant to the review objectives. Articles were excluded if they focused solely on single-channel e-commerce, non-retail services without transferable findings, technical systems without customer or marketing implications, or non-peer-reviewed commentary. Duplicate records were removed before screening. Titles and abstracts were reviewed for relevance, followed by assessment of full texts against the inclusion criteria. The final synthesis comprises 10 articles, as specified for this

review. The literature set was selected to represent both conceptual work and empirical research, including studies on channel integration, seamlessness, customer journey experience, satisfaction, patronage, and loyalty.

A structured extraction form was used to record each article's authorship and year, country or market context, research design, theoretical framing, sample or data source where applicable, focal omnichannel dimensions, customer-experience constructs, key results, and stated limitations. The studies were then coded thematically. Initial codes captured strategic features such as cross-channel information consistency, service coordination, fulfilment, personalization, and digital touchpoints. These were compared and grouped into broader themes concerning strategy, experience mechanisms, and customer outcomes. Thematic synthesis was used to identify recurring relationships and differences across the ten studies, while retaining distinctions between conceptual propositions and empirical results (Thomas & Harden, 2008).

To strengthen methodological transparency, the synthesis distinguishes findings supported by empirical testing from arguments developed conceptually. The review does not treat the number of articles as evidence of effect magnitude, nor does it pool statistical results across studies with differing measures and designs. Instead, it interprets the evidence comparatively and uses methodological and contextual differences to qualify conclusions. The PRISMA diagram reports the final included corpus as $n = 10$; intermediate identification and exclusion counts should be completed from the documented database search and screening records before the figure is used as a final account of the review.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Synthesis of the Literature

The integrative review synthesized ten conceptual and empirical studies on omnichannel marketing and customer experience in retail. Across the literature, omnichannel strategy is associated with coordinating customer touchpoints and services across physical and digital channels. The evidence suggests that channel presence alone does not ensure a coherent customer experience: integration, consistency, and customers' perceptions of usefulness and convenience also matter. Table 1 summarizes recurring findings. It distinguishes conceptual or review-based contributions from empirical studies; it does not combine effect sizes or imply that results from different study designs are directly comparable.

Table 1. Synthesis of ten selected studies on omnichannel retailing and customer experience

Study	Evidence type and focus	Main finding relevant to this review
Gerea et al. (2021)	Integrative review of omnichannel customer experience and management	Identifies customer-centered experience management as a core concern and highlights the need to integrate touchpoints across the customer journey.
Bèzes (2022)	Systematic review of omnichannel retail strategy	Synthesizes strategy drivers and outcomes, including channel integration and the customer expectation of a seamless shopping experience.
Mishra et al. (2021)	Literature review of omnichannel consumer decision-making	Organizes research around consumer decisions across the omnichannel journey and identifies future research needs.
Rahman et al. (2022)	Mixed-method scale development and validation	Develops a measure of perceived omnichannel customer experience, treating it as a multifaceted assessment of retail experiences across channels.
Chung et al. (2022)	Scenario-based experiment on cross-channel integration	Finds that perceived integration affects retail brand experience, which relates to perceived convenience, satisfaction, and patronage intention.
Quach et al. (2020)	Empirical study of service integration	Reports that service consistency significantly affects customer flow and perceived risk; service transparency significantly affects flow.
Riaz et al. (2022)	Empirical study in fashion retail	Reports positive, significant effects of omnichannel retailing factors on customer experience in the study context.

Alexander and Kent (2022)	Review of technology-enabled in-store experiences	Describes the growing role of in-store technologies and their integration in shaping fashion retail customer experiences.
An et al. (2024)	Empirical model of experience drivers and outcomes	Finds that omnichannel and individual customer characteristics affect utilitarian and hedonic experience, which mediates loyalty outcomes.
Mishra et al. (2022)	Quantitative study of fashion retailer channel integration	Reports that different integration dimensions relate to customer satisfaction and perceived-risk reduction, which are linked to purchase intention.

Thematic Results

Three themes were prominent. First, cross-channel coordination is a central strategic mechanism. The literature connects integration of information, service, transactions, and touchpoints with stronger customer evaluations (Bèzes, 2022; Chung et al., 2022; Mishra et al., 2022). The implication is that retailers' omnichannel efforts are most relevant to experience when customers perceive continuity as they move between channels. Second, customer experience is multidimensional. The studies describe it through assessments that include functional or utilitarian qualities, such as convenience and effort, as well as experiential or hedonic qualities, such as engagement and flow (An et al., 2024; Rahman et al., 2022; Quach et al., 2020). This means that evaluating omnichannel performance solely through channel availability or transaction completion may miss important customer perceptions. Measures of perceived risk, satisfaction, and ease of moving between touchpoints add further insight. Third, customer outcomes are linked to the experience produced by integration. Empirical studies associate integrated retail experiences with satisfaction, patronage intention, purchase intention, or loyalty-related outcomes (An et al., 2024; Chung et al., 2022; Mishra et al., 2022). These associations do not establish one universal pathway: the mediating factors and outcomes differ across study contexts. For example, perceived risk reduction and satisfaction appear in research on purchase intention, while utilitarian and hedonic experience are examined in relation to loyalty. Overall, the reviewed literature presents omnichannel marketing as a strategy whose customer-facing value depends on coordinated touchpoints and the experience customers perceive across their journey. The evidence supports a conceptual relationship between integration, customer experience, and behavioral responses, while leaving variation by sector, customer characteristics, and research design to be addressed in future studies.

Discussion

The integrative synthesis indicates that omnichannel marketing contributes to customer experience when retailers coordinate channels as parts of a connected customer journey. This finding supports the distinction between multichannel availability and omnichannel integration: offering several channels gives customers options, while integration enables them to move between those channels with continuity. Reviews of omnichannel strategy identify channel integration and seamless shopping as central outcomes, but also show that implementation involves organizational and operational choices beyond simply adding digital platforms (Asmare & Zewdie, 2022; Cai & Lo, 2020). The practical implication is that retailers should evaluate how well channels work together from the customer's perspective, rather than count the number of channels offered.

The first important mechanism is consistency across touchpoints. When product information, promotions, customer service, transactions, and fulfilment are coordinated, customers are more likely to perceive their shopping journey as convenient and coherent. Chung et al. (2022) found that perceived cross-channel integration shapes retail brand experience, which in turn relates to perceived service convenience, satisfaction, and patronage intention. Similarly, Quach et al. (2020) report that service consistency significantly affects customer flow and perceived risk in omnichannel retailing. Together, these empirical findings suggest that integration can reduce interruptions and uncertainty during shopping. For managers, this means that channel coordination must be reflected in actual customer-facing processes, including the accuracy of product and inventory information and the ability to receive service across channels.

However, the synthesis also indicates that integration does not produce a uniform experience for all customers. Customer experience includes functional evaluations, such as effort and convenience, and

affective or hedonic evaluations, such as engagement and flow. An et al. (2024) find that both omnichannel characteristics and individual customer characteristics shape utilitarian and hedonic experience, which mediates loyalty outcomes. Rahman et al. (2022) likewise conceptualize perceived omnichannel customer experience as a multifaceted construct and develop a measurement instrument for evaluating it. These findings strengthen the case for assessing more than operational efficiency. A retailer may offer convenient fulfilment yet fail to create a satisfying experience if interactions feel impersonal, confusing, or inconsistent with customer expectations.

A related point concerns technology. Retail apps, in-store technologies, and digital services can connect online and physical experiences, but their contribution depends on how customers use and evaluate them. Alexander and Kent (2022) describe the changing role of technology-enabled touchpoints in fashion stores and the need to consider their relationship with the broader customer journey. Technology should therefore be understood as an enabler of integration, not a substitute for it. Features such as real-time product information, digital assistance, or cross-channel ordering can improve the journey when they solve customer problems and function reliably. If they add steps or duplicate information, they may increase rather than reduce customer effort.

The evidence further indicates that customer experience helps link omnichannel strategy to behavioral outcomes. Findings from empirical studies associate integration and positive experience with satisfaction, patronage, purchase intention, or loyalty (An et al., 2024; Chung et al., 2022; Mishra et al., 2022). These outcomes are related, but they should not be treated as interchangeable. Purchase intention concerns a prospective transaction; patronage intention concerns a willingness to visit or continue using a retailer; loyalty concerns a more sustained relationship. The studies also identify different mechanisms, including perceived risk reduction, satisfaction, engagement, and customer experience. Consequently, retailers should select outcome measures that match their strategic goals and avoid assuming that a single experience indicator captures every form of customer response.

Channel integration quality may also influence loyalty through customer engagement and relationship programs. Gao and Huang (2021) examine this relationship and highlight the role of engagement and receptiveness to relationship programs in linking integration quality with loyalty. This helps explain why seamless service alone may not ensure a durable customer relationship: retailers also need to give customers reasons to engage and recognize the value of continued interaction. The broader literature review of cross-channel effects similarly emphasizes that retail strategies can influence different stages of the customer journey and both consumer and firm outcomes, while noting the need for further empirical work before stronger quantitative generalizations can be made (Avery et al., 2022).

These findings have particular relevance for retail markets where customers combine digital discovery with physical evaluation and fulfilment. Yet the evidence base remains context-dependent. Fashion, beauty, and general retail differ in product evaluation, purchase frequency, return behavior, and the relative importance of store assistance. The reviewed studies also vary in designs and measures, so their findings should be interpreted as converging patterns rather than as a single estimated effect. Reviews of customer experience in omnichannel retail call for more consumer-centered work that recognizes experience as co-created across journeys and touchpoints (Both & Steinmann, 2023). Research on omnichannel risks and benefits also points to operational efficiency, channel inefficiency, and organizational strategy as relevant dimensions of implementation (Helme-Guizon & Ottmann, 2024).

Overall, the literature supports a connected interpretation: omnichannel strategy shapes customer experience through the quality of cross-channel coordination; experience then relates to customer responses such as satisfaction, intention to purchase, patronage, and loyalty. The contribution of this review is to bring these links together conceptually while retaining the differences among study contexts and outcomes. Future research should test the proposed pathways with consistent measures across retail sectors, and examine how personalization, customer privacy, fulfilment quality, and customer characteristics influence the experience. For retail practice, the central implication is to coordinate channels around customer tasks and expectations, then evaluate whether customers actually experience that coordination as useful, seamless, and trustworthy.

CONCLUSION

This integrative literature review examined how omnichannel marketing strategies shape customer experience in the retail industry. Across the ten studies synthesized, the evidence indicates that the value of omnichannel retailing depends on how effectively retailers coordinate online and offline touchpoints.

Key mechanisms include consistent product and service information, connected transactions and fulfilment, and customer-oriented integration across the shopping journey. Empirical findings link perceived channel integration and service consistency with customer flow, convenience, satisfaction, and reduced perceived risk. Other studies associate utilitarian and hedonic customer experiences with purchase intention, patronage, engagement, and loyalty-related outcomes. These patterns support a conceptual pathway in which omnichannel strategy influences customer responses through the experience customers perceive across channels.

The findings should be interpreted as a narrative synthesis, not as pooled statistical estimates: the included studies differ in research design, retail context, and measurement, so no single effect size or universal causal relationship can be reported. Conceptually, the review contributes by connecting channel integration, multidimensional customer experience, and behavioral outcomes within one framework. For retailers, the results suggest prioritizing reliable channel coordination and assessing whether customers experience it as convenient, consistent, and valuable. Future empirical research should test these relationships with comparable measures across retail sectors and examine how personalization, privacy concerns, fulfilment quality, and customer characteristics influence outcomes. Overall, omnichannel marketing is most likely to strengthen customer relationships when integrated channels support a coherent and valuable customer journey.

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