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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Omnichannel Customer Engagement

Case Studies, Market Drivers, Market Barriers, and Best Practices for the Adoption of Omnichannel Engagement Strategies and Software

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KEITH KIRKPATRICK
Principal Analyst

CLINT WHEELOCK
Managing Director

Section 1

Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

The term “omnichannel” has become nearly ubiquitous among marketers, CX managers, and software technology vendors. An omnichannel strategy is a cross-channel strategy that gives a seamless and integrated experience to users across multiple channels. Unlike multichannel strategies, where each channel is managed individually, omnichannel engagement strategies streamline all customer touchpoints under a single platform, with a consistent and continuous experience for the user.

From a customer journey point of view, an omnichannel experience helps customers interact with an organization smoothly, without the need for retaining or repeating information about the experience at the last touchpoint. This makes their interaction with an organization smooth and intuitive, and can also reduce the time, cost, and effort required to serve each customer.

Although brands have been transforming their CX models over the last several years, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated many organizations’ plans for deploying omnichannel engagement strategies. Not surprisingly, during the pandemic, customers engaged with brands across more digital channels than ever. Customers were regularly booking and paying for services they never had before, such as grocery delivery, forcing them to navigate virtual services for activities they used to perform in person like banking. A PwC report suggests that growth in omnichannel experiences increased from 20% to more than 80% since 2020.

Between stay-at-home orders, transitioning to remote and hybrid workforces, and the growing reliance on digital-first engagement, companies are now relying on technologies and platforms to prioritize faster, actionable insights to meet buyers through the channels they prefer to use, while also using those same channels to provide post-sale engagement, service, and support, including short message service (SMS), social media, messaging apps, and automated chatbots. Ultimately, providing personalized CX and omnichannel engagement strategies are rapidly becoming competitive differentiators.

In order to enable omnichannel engagement, companies must remove data silos and capture and analyze customer interactions at scale. With these insights, organizations can uncover pain points, concerns, or challenges and take action to improve omnichannel CX and drive increased customer retention and loyalty.

An omnichannel experience is designed to provide seamless and uninterrupted experiences that increase the efficiency, efficacy, and overall CX of all customer interactions, with an end goal of improving customer satisfaction, increasing revenue, and realizing better profitability. Done successfully, an effective omnichannel platform will deliver a resolution-centered, personalized experience to every customer—no matter how they connect with an organization.

This report focuses on the market drivers and barriers to the adoption and use of an omnichannel engagement strategy delivered through CX platforms and applications. The report provides an overview of the commonly used channels for delivering an omnichannel experience, and provides several representative case studies detailing successful implementations of CX software platforms and applications. Best practices and recommendations for deploying omnichannel engagement strategies within the enterprise, along with selection criteria for software, are also provided.

1.2 Market drivers

The adoption of an omnichannel engagement strategy within the CX discipline is driven by several factors, although growing and retaining both revenue and profits continue to serve as the key underlying drivers for nearly all CX activity.

The key market drivers spurring the adoption and use of artificial intelligence (AI) within the CX discipline include:

- Poor levels of customer support
- A growing shift to digital interactions
- Changing demographics of customers
- The COVID-19 impact on sales, service, and support
- CX as a competitive differentiator

1.3 Market barriers

Like any technology or approach, there are technical and operational barriers to complete market adoption. The most notable market barriers to adopting and incorporating an omnichannel engagement strategy within the enterprise are:

- Technical challenges with implementing disparate software and workflow processes
- A lack of an agreed-upon and supported omnichannel vision
- Training and personnel issues
- Privacy issues

1.4 Dash Research insights

The use of omnichannel engagement strategies for CX is clearly on the rise, and customers will simply move on to another provider if the CX is not seamless, efficient, and tailored to their needs. A company-wide focus on deeper customer engagement will not only improve CX ratings, but will also help ensure that price, feature set, or other decision metric is not the sole purchase decision factor considered by customers.

Organizations must continuously evaluate their omnichannel engagement strategies, and consider evolving customer preferences and shifts in the way communication channels are being used. Some of the key tactics to consider include:

- Meet customers where they are and anticipate changes
- Analyze analytics by channel and correlate cross channel
- Ensure “platform” software can integrate with existing software and tools
- Ensure that training and practices for deploying omnichannel strategies are on point to support ongoing technology investments

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Appendix

8.1 Scope of study

This report examines the market issues, drivers, and barriers for the use of omnichannel engagement strategies within enterprises, underpinned by CX software platforms, software applications, and services targeting B2B and B2C markets. Omnichannel is defined as a category of engagement that supports a consistent and seamless CX, regardless of the channel used. The report covers applications, platforms, and services that support omnichannel engagement to drive better customer experiences.

8.2 Sources and methodology

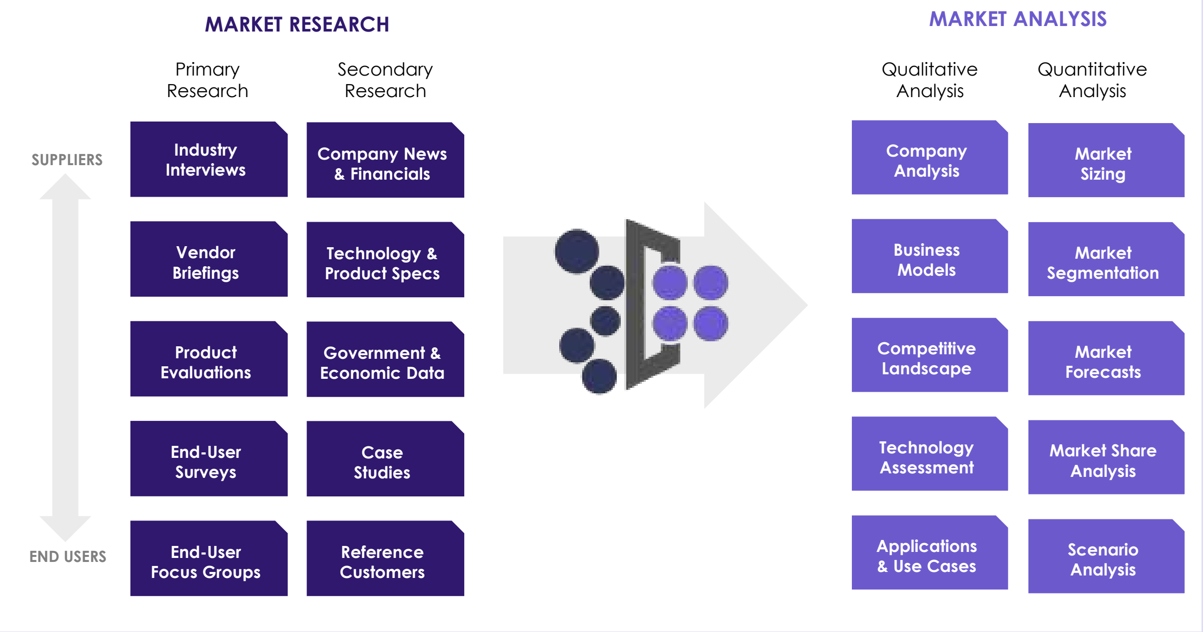
Dash Research is an independent market research firm that provides industry participants and stakeholders with an objective, unbiased view of market dynamics and business opportunities within its coverage areas. The firm's industry analysts are dedicated to presenting clear and actionable analysis to support business planning initiatives and go-to-market strategies, utilizing rigorous market research methodologies and without regard for technology hype or special interests including Dash Research's own client relationships. Within its market analysis, Dash Research strives to offer conclusions and recommendations that reflect the most likely path of industry development, even when those views may be contrarian.

The basis of Dash Research's analysis is primary research collected from a variety of sources including industry interviews, vendor briefings, product demonstrations, and quantitative and qualitative market research focused on consumer and business end users. Industry analysts conduct interviews with representative groups of executives, technology practitioners, sales and marketing professionals, industry association personnel, government representatives, investors, consultants, and other industry stakeholders. Analysts are diligent in pursuing interviews with representatives from every part of the value chain to gain a comprehensive view of current market activity and future plans. Within the firm's surveys and focus groups, respondent samples are carefully selected to ensure that they provide the most accurate possible view of demand dynamics within consumer and business markets, utilizing balanced and representative samples where appropriate and careful screening and qualification criteria in cases where the research topic requires a more targeted group of respondents.

Dash Research's primary research is supplemented by the review and analysis of all secondary information available on the topic being studied, including company news and financial information, technology specifications, product attributes, government and economic data, industry reports and databases from third-party sources, case studies, and reference customers. As applicable, all secondary research sources are appropriately cited within the firm's publications.

All of Dash Research's reports and other publications are carefully reviewed and scrutinized by the firm's senior management team to ensure that research methodology is sound, all information provided is accurate, analyst assumptions are carefully documented, and conclusions are well-supported by facts. Dash Research is highly responsive to feedback from industry participants and, in the event errors in the firm's research are identified and verified, such errors are corrected promptly.

Dash Research Methodology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445 Union Blvd., Suite 101
Lakewood, CO 80228 USA

+1.720.603.1700
info@dashresearch.com
www.dashresearch.com