

A D2C Marketer's Guide to Expanding & Optimizing Your Strategy



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THE CURRENT STATE OF D2C MARKETING

With Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) brands now making up 13% of all US-based ecommerce businesses, it's no secret D2C marketing is on the rise. It's also changing the way companies both large and small build their brand, market products, and connect with customers.

D2C has come to mean more than just a way to sell products directly to customers. It now includes businesses with both physical retail outlets as well as businesses that sell both directly to their consumers and indirectly via large online ecommerce sites. Direct-to-consumer is quickly becoming a bespoke marketing strategy.

Utilizing a more direct and customer-centric strategy, D2C appeals to customers that have grown increasingly savvy about researching and shopping online. It also gives brands greater control over how their brand is perceived in the digital marketplace.

For smaller brands weary of the sales bottleneck, the small

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profit margins, and the potential on-shelf competition of the traditional retailer model, D2C is the answer to getting your brand directly in front of consumers.

But connecting with your customers – in the right way, in the right place, and at the right time – isn't easy. D2C relies heavily on building brand awareness and a sense of community. And that means successfully measuring the effectiveness of marketing campaigns and strategies across multiple channels both online and off. This challenge is only going to grow in complexity as D2C marketing moves into the future.



OMNICHANNEL MARKETING: THE FUTURE OF D2C

As D2C marketing matures and competition increases, shifting from digital-first to omnichannel marketing is a great way to increase reach and awareness. The most successful direct-to-consumer brands have and will continue to embrace the increased visibility and wider reach afforded by omnichannel marketing.

Benefits of Omnichannel D2C Marketing

Omnichannel marketing is a powerful tool for D2C brands and marketers. Key benefits include:

- ▶ **Brand Control:** When you no longer rely on big retailers to sell your wares, you take back control of how your brand is presented both online and off.
- ▶ **Increased Customer Interaction:** Marketing across multiple media channels offers exponential growth in opportunities to directly connect and interact with your customers.
- ▶ **Create channels that work together:** Omnichannel marketing works as an umbrella - connecting your channels and therefore your customers. When customers are able to interact with your brand on more than one platform, they're more likely to interact with your brand overall.

Challenges of Shifting From Digital to Omnichannel

Shifting your current marketing strategy to a full-blown omnichannel marketing isn't easy. It takes time and has a

The big difference between models is how they assign or weigh the value of different touchpoints along the path to a customer's purchase.

number of challenges:

- ▶ **Consistency:** Marketing on multiple channels - channels that ultimately work together to further connect customers with your brand - puts a lot of pressure on your team to maintain consistent messaging. It's important all teams are working together to build cohesive campaigns. No silos allowed.
- ▶ **Data Analysis:** Aggregating and interpreting the large amounts of data omnichannel marketing yields can be prohibitive, even for larger companies. D2C brands need to partner with digital analytics platforms and even media platforms themselves to help collect and interpret all of that user data correctly.
- ▶ **Increased Competition – and Increasingly Savvy Consumers:** As more and more brands adopt D2C strategy, consumers will become even more aware of the way brands tell their stories and drive sales.

BEST PRACTICES FOR EXPANDING YOUR MEDIA STRATEGY

Shifting into an omnichannel approach takes time and effort. If you've been focused more on your distribution logistics, or channeling your energy into developing a few disparate marketing channels, you'll need a mindset shift to tackle



omnichannel marketing.

The heart of that mindset shift?

Stop focusing on your brand and start focusing on your consumers.

The most successful D2C brands build community with daily interactions and unique approaches to building connection and trust, focusing far more on customer experience than on strict self-promotion. Below are some of the best practices of every leading D2C brand.

Build a strong brand

Building brand trust and customer loyalty begins with creating a brand identity that is strong, unique, and appeals to your target market. The way you enter and occupy your omnichannel spaces, and the way you interact with your fans, followers and customers will establish your brand's ethos.

Showing up authentically goes a very long way to establishing your brand as one consumers can trust.

Brands like Casper or Purple built their brands by making a difficult task feel easier and they did it in a way that made customers trust them. Suddenly mattresses didn't require store visits and you could actually try them before committing. They also made sure to market everywhere their customers were and utilized influencer marketing to its fullest.

A few solid ways to strengthen your brand and connect to your audience include:



- ▶ Use social media platforms to engage with your followers
- ▶ Enlist popular influencers to spread awareness of your brand
- ▶ Encourage customer loyalty through increased personalization and rewards programs

Create authentic connections

Consumers have a keen sense of authenticity. Your brand needs to be transparent about your mission, who you want to connect with, and what kind of community you're creating around your identity and products.

Consider Rothy's. The brand has built a huge following due to its sustainability efforts. They use recycled materials to create their products and they even launched a coalition of D2C brands to help with the PPE shortage. People connect with the brand because they appear to practice what they preach.

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Businesses can manifest brand authenticity in a variety of ways:

- ▶ Be clear about your brand's mission on your website, social media, and elsewhere
- ▶ Show your commitment to that mission by using your platforms to showcase your actions and the ways in which you're working toward those mission goals.
- ▶ Use email marketing to connect directly with your customers and share more about your brand, your mission, and your actions.

Use your data wisely

Collecting and interpreting the abundance of data omnichannel marketing yields is, as noted, a challenge. But it's also an outstanding benefit. Used wisely, the data you collect can help personalize the customer experiences, tighten your brand, and help you integrate your channels more successfully.



USING YOUR DATA WISELY: MEASURING CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVENESS

Accurately measuring the efficacy of your campaigns is imperative to successfully managing an iterative omnichannel strategy that grows right along with you. But, understanding the data you collect is the key to putting all of that information to work.

Omnichannel marketing results in complicated data sets. Intelligent attribution involves looking closely at the value of individual channels as well as how those channels work together.

The key considerations below are vital to understanding what

your customers want, need, and expect from successful, data-driven D2C omnichannel marketing.

Aggregated Data

Omnichannel marketing requires shifting from channel to channel evaluation to looking at how all the channels you use interact together to lead a customer along on the buyer's journey.

Isolating individual marketing channels into silos prevents you from creating this larger, far more complicated image. Challenging as it may be to define data quality across multiple channels (both online and offline), data aggregation is essential to effective analysis.

Person vs. Persona

In the past, when marketers had less data to collect and interpret, buyer personas were the rule of the land. Segments such as age and income were used to create personas or an image of what the customers grouped together were generally like. But personas provide only broad generalizations across wide segments of your target populations.

Today you have a lot more information at hand to create detailed images of customers based on person-level insights, which in turn allows you to create increasingly personalized ads and touchpoints. The closer you get to understanding your customers on the level of the individual, the more successfully you can target your marketing to their needs and wants.

Offline vs. Online

Truly aggregated data will integrate both offline and online information to show you how these marketing channels

work together. As more and more D2C brands branch out to explore the world offline, through both advertising and physical locations, understanding how a radio ad and an email series work together to encourage conversions, is increasingly relevant.

Attribution Modeling

Yesterday's attribution models are proving less than effective in an omnichannel environment. Media mix modeling and multi-touch attribution, while useful, don't offer the immediacy or overarching view necessary to understanding the interconnectedness of your channels.

analytics generate the cross-channel insights you need to evaluate the efficacy of your campaigns.

Biases

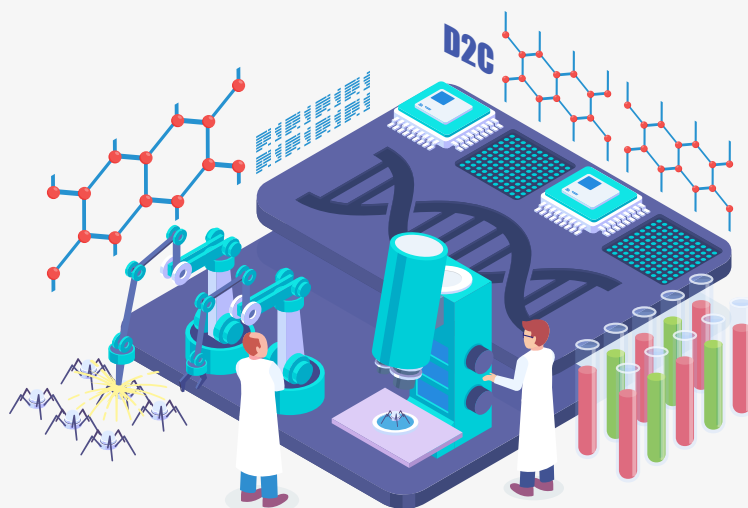
Many common attribution mistakes revolve around biases that prioritize one data set over another. Successful holistic attribution requires a measurement strategy that avoids weighting data from a single channel or marketing activity.

You need unified marketing measurement technology that doesn't elevate one touchpoint over another, and instead generates an interconnected image of how those touchpoints are working together to guide your customers to conversion.

CHOOSING A MARKETING SOLUTION THAT WORKS FOR YOU

Information is both the challenge and the reward of omnichannel marketing. D2C brands need marketing solutions that help them interpret and utilize their data. Here are the 6 things you should consider before choosing the right solution for your business.

- ▶ **A 360-Degree View:** Find an omnichannel marketing solution has the ability to create in-depth images of how your marketing strategy is working across every channel, using data-driven insights.
- ▶ **Consumer-Level Metrics:** Granular measurement and reporting data at the individual level is key to connecting with the right consumer, on the right channels, at the right time.



Rather than relying on attribution modeling that is quickly becoming outpaced, it's crucial to create a holistic approach to data management. The right marketing technology and

- ▶ **Future-proof data:** With cookies quickly disappearing amid growing consumer concerns over data privacy, marketers need data that doesn't rely on site tagging or first-party data to gain actionable insights. The most robust solutions now rely on AI and ML to take you beyond cookies and into the future of omnichannel marketing.
- ▶ **Offline Attribution:** D2C is maturing into a marketing strategy that embraces offline as well as online marketing, and you need a platform that can braid the two together as seamlessly as you do. By merging data from both online and offline channels, you can get a complete view of your strategy and understand exactly where your money is best spent.
- ▶ **Streamlined Reporting and Analysis:** You need a centralized information center to access your data and optimize your media accordingly right on the platform. The best platform offers quick visualizations with actionable insights in addition to in-depth reports for custom analysis.
- ▶ **Omnichannel Measurement that Grows with You:** As you grow you'll need the ability to add new channels, test new strategies, and scale your business whenever you're ready. Don't just rely on your best guess. Instead, utilize a tool that relies on cutting-edge AI and your own data to help you make smarter decisions, faster.

The future of D2C is omnichannel marketing. D2C marketers that want to keep their brands connected and relevant need the right data analytics platform to keep them front and center.

Future Proof Your D2C Strategy

Marketing evolution provides actionable insights, optimized planning, and flexible solutions that grow with you.



Level-up your attribution strategy with
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MARKETING EVOLUTION EMPOWERS MARKETERS TO CONFIDENTLY TAKE ACTION WITH ATTRIBUTION INSIGHTS AND ACTIONABLE INVESTMENT STRATEGIES BACKED BY NOBEL PRIZING WINNING RESEARCH. OUR SCALABLE TECHNOLOGY AND PROPRIETARY MACHINE LEARNING ALGORITHMS ENABLE CUSTOMERS TO BOLDLY NAVIGATE THE CHOPPY WATERS OF MEDIA BUYING, FROM CHANGING PRIVACY LAWS TO FRACTURED DATASETS, TO GROWTH HACK THEIR MARKETING STRATEGIES AND MAXIMIZE ROI.