OMNICHANNEL MARKETING AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OF E-TAILING FIRMS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between omnichannel marketing and customer satisfaction of e-tailing firms in Rivers State. The aim of the was to determine the relationship that exist between the dimensions of omnichannel marketing (channel integration, consistent messaging) and customer satisfaction of e-tailing firms in Rivers State. Two (2) research questions and hypothesis were formulated to address the objective of the study. The descriptive research design was adopted. Data were collected from those who engage in purchases through omnichannel platforms such as mobile apps, websites, and social media, it also includes customers of platforms such as Jumia, Konga, Instagram vendors, and WhatsApp-based retailers in Rivers State. A sample size of 169 respondent was used for the study. The Krejcie and Morgan determining table of 1970 was adopted, and the table is one of the easier ways to estimating the right sample size from the population. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The data collected was analyzed with the aid of SPSS software program version 23.0. The study found a significant relationship between omnichannel marketing, its dimensions (channel integration, consistent messaging) and customer satisfaction of e-tailing firms in Rivers State. The study concludes that e-tailing firms that wish to retain customers and remain competitive must adopt holistic and integrated omnichannel marketing strategies. It was recommended that E-tailers should ensure that all customer touchpoints are connected in real-time. For example, a customer's activity on Instagram should sync with the firm's website and WhatsApp chat for seamless continuity.

Keywords- *Omnichannel marketing, channel, integration, consistent messaging, customer satisfaction.*

Introduction

The evolution of e-commerce has significantly transformed the global retail landscape, and in recent years, e-tailing has gained momentum in Nigeria, particularly in urban and semi-urban areas such as Rivers State. E-tailing, which refers to the sale of goods and services via

electronic platforms, has enabled businesses to expand their market reach and meet growing consumer expectations for speed, convenience, and personalized service (Ocloo et al., 2020). As online retail continues to thrive, firms are increasingly adopting omnichannel marketing strategies to provide a seamless and integrated shopping experience across multiple platforms including mobile apps, websites, physical stores, and social media (Verhoef et al., 2017).

Omnichannel marketing differs from multichannel marketing in that it emphasizes the integration and consistency of all customer touchpoints. It enables customers to switch between online and offline channels effortlessly, enhancing their overall shopping experience (Lemon & Verhoef, 2018). For instance, a customer in Port Harcourt may view a product on an Instagram store, ask questions via WhatsApp, complete the purchase on a website, and receive delivery the same day. This level of integration, when executed effectively, can lead to improved customer satisfaction, loyalty, and repeat purchases (Zhang et al., 2020).

Channel integration ensures that customers can begin their shopping journey on one platform and complete it on another without losing context. For example, a customer may browse a product on an app and complete the purchase on a desktop or receive support via WhatsApp. Integration also supports functionalities like inventory visibility, real-time updates, and synchronized order management systems (Piotrowicz & Cuthbertson, 2019).

Consistent messaging across all channels ensures that customers receive uniform information regardless of the platform they engage with. This consistency reinforces brand trust, reduces confusion, and strengthens customer perceptions of professionalism and reliability (Bell et al., 2018).

Customer satisfaction, a key determinant of long-term business performance, refers to the extent to which a product or service meets or surpasses customer expectations (Kotler & Keller, 2019). In the context of e-tailing, satisfaction hinges on multiple factors such as product availability, delivery speed, ease of navigation, cross-channel communication, and customer service quality. With the adoption of omnichannel strategies, firms can leverage real-time data and personalized engagement to deliver more relevant and satisfactory experiences to customers (Juaneda-Ayensa et al., 2016; Li et al., 2022).

In Nigeria, however, the adoption of omnichannel marketing remains uneven, especially among small and medium-sized e-tailers who often rely on informal structures and limited technological infrastructure (Ezenwafor & Okoli, 2021). Rivers State, being one of the most commercially active states in the South-South region, presents a fertile ground for examining the nexus between omnichannel strategies and customer satisfaction. Local e-tailers, ranging from Jumia delivery partners to independent vendors on social media, are increasingly blending online and offline channels to attract and retain customers. Yet, there remains a dearth of empirical research on how these strategies affect customer satisfaction in the Nigerian context.

The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated the digitalization of retail services, pushing both businesses and consumers toward online interactions. This shift has created opportunities for omnichannel approaches but also exposed gaps in delivery, logistics, and digital infrastructure

(Uzonwanne, 2021). Therefore, understanding how omnichannel marketing influences customer satisfaction is crucial for guiding policy decisions, managerial strategies, and the sustainability of e-tailing firms in Rivers State.

Given this context, this study seeks to investigate the relationship between omnichannel marketing customer satisfaction among e-tailing firms in Rivers State.

The rapid advancement of digital technology has reshaped how consumers interact with brands, particularly in the retail sector. E-tailing firms in Nigeria, including those operating in Rivers State, have increasingly adopted multiple digital and offline platforms to engage customers. However, despite the growth of these platforms, many businesses struggle to integrate them into a seamless and consistent customer experience (Natalina & Wahyuni, 2022). As a result, customers often face disjointed services, inconsistent brand messaging, poor responsiveness, and fragmented purchasing journeys, which can undermine satisfaction and loyalty.

In Rivers State, where internet penetration and digital device usage are growing, consumers expect a unified shopping experience across various channels websites, mobile apps, social media, and physical touchpoints. Unfortunately, anecdotal and preliminary observations suggest that many e-tailing firms have yet to fully implement effective omnichannel marketing strategies. There is often poor synchronization between channels and inconsistent communication, in customer interactions (Verhoef et al, 2017).

While several global studies have emphasized the importance of omnichannel integration for enhancing customer satisfaction such as Khanwara et al (2023); Wahyuni and Natalina (2022). There is limited empirical evidence from the Nigerian context, especially within subnational regions like Rivers State. The absence of localized research makes it difficult for e-tailing firms to identify the specific omnichannel factors that influence customer satisfaction in this setting.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by empirically examining the relationship between omnichannel marketing specifically channel (integration, consistent messaging) and customer satisfaction among e-tailing firms in Rivers State.

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between omnichannel marketing and consumer satisfaction in e-tailing firms in Rivers State. Specific aims of this study are to:

- Examine the relationship between channel integration and customer satisfaction of E-tailing firms in Rivers State.

- Examine the relationship between consistent messaging and customer satisfaction of E-tailing firms in Rivers State.

The study seeks to answer the following research questions;

- How does channel integration relate to customer satisfaction of E-tailing firms in Rivers State?

- How does consistent messaging to and customer satisfaction of E-tailing firms in Rivers State?

The following research hypotheses were postulated in the null form

H_{01}: there is no significant relationship between channel integration and customer satisfaction of E-tailing firms in Rivers State.

H_{02}: there is no significant relationship between consistent messaging and customer satisfaction of E-tailing firms in Rivers State.

Review of Related Literature

The study variables show the direction of research work, as it serves as a framework in which the study is built. omnichannel marketing is the predictor variable, with channel integration, consistent messaging as its dimensions. Customer satisfaction is the criterion variable. They are fully represented below:
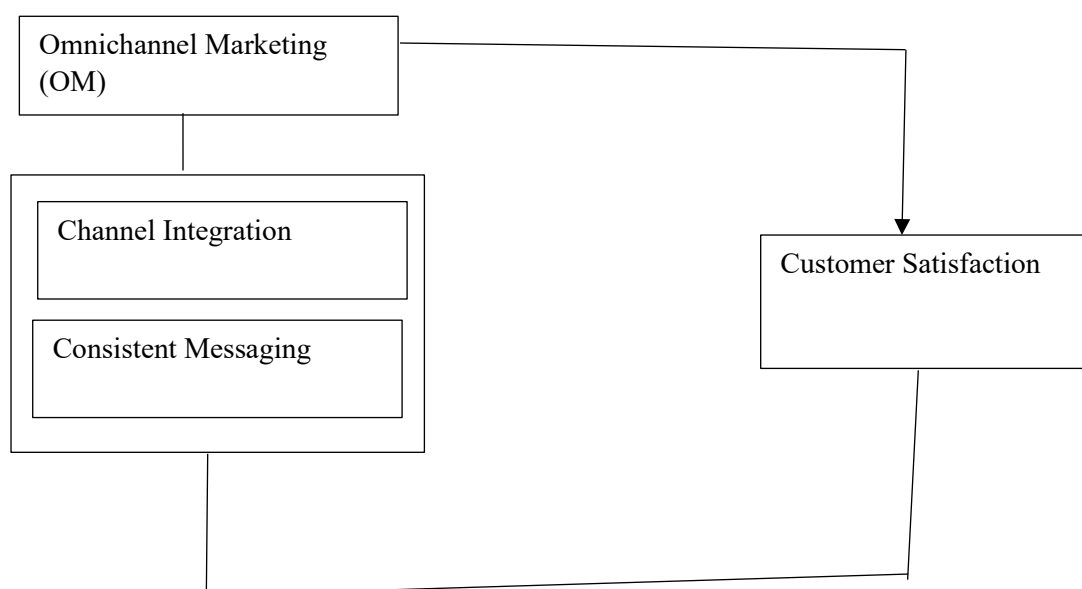
Fig 1.1 conceptual framework for omnichannel marketing and customers satisfaction.

Source: Authors conceptualization from literature

The theoretical underpinning adopted and analyzed in this study is Service Dominant Logic. This is directed by the belief that omnichannel marketing leads in customer satisfaction and drive purchase to actions

Concept of Omnichannel Marketing

Omnichannel marketing refers to the synchronized use of multiple communication and distribution channels to create a unified customer experience. Unlike multichannel marketing,

which simply offers several channels of interaction, omnichannel marketing ensures seamless integration and consistency across these touchpoints, such that the customer perceives a holistic and uninterrupted engagement with the brand (Verhoef et al., 2017). This approach enables customers to browse on one platform, continue the transaction on another, and complete the purchase offline or through a different digital device.

The central goal of omnichannel marketing is to remove the friction associated with channel switching and deliver a personalized, contextual, and timely experience (Lemon & Verhoef, 2018). E-tailing firms in particular benefit from omnichannel strategies by leveraging mobile applications, websites, email, social media platforms, and even physical touchpoints to fulfill customer expectations. For instance, a customer may receive a promotional email, click through to a product page, interact with a chatbot, and complete the purchase through a mobile app. The ability of the firm to maintain consistent messaging, product availability, and customer support across all these stages defines the effectiveness of its omnichannel operations (Li et al., 2022)

Channel Integration

Channel integration is a central pillar of omnichannel marketing and refers to the harmonization of all customer-facing channels both physical and digital such that customers can transition effortlessly between them during their purchase journey. Unlike multichannel approaches where channels function independently, integrated channels are interconnected in real-time, enabling a fluid and personalized customer experience (Verhoef et al., 2017).

In the context of e-tailing, channel integration means that customer information, product availability, pricing, and transaction histories are synchronized across all platforms including websites, mobile apps, email, social media, and customer service outlets. This synchronization allows a customer who views a product on Instagram, adds it to a cart via a website, and completes the purchase on a mobile app to have a seamless and uninterrupted experience (Li et al., 2022).

Studies have shown that effective channel integration enhances customer satisfaction by increasing convenience, reducing cognitive effort, and fostering trust (Zhang et al., 2020). It also allows businesses to respond to customer inquiries or service requests more efficiently, since customer data is centralized and accessible across departments or touchpoints. According to Lazaris and Vrechopoulos (2017), firms that achieve channel integration are better positioned to meet modern consumer expectations of speed, continuity, and personalization.

However, in emerging economies like Nigeria, achieving full channel integration is often hindered by limited technological infrastructure, lack of digital skills among SMEs, and siloed operations within organizations (Ezenwafor & Okoli, 2021). Despite these challenges, some innovative e-tailers in Rivers State have begun using integrated tools such as customer relationship management (CRM) systems, social commerce platforms, and payment gateways that bridge the gap between offline and online activities.

Consistent Messaging

Consistent messaging is another critical component of successful omnichannel marketing. It involves delivering uniform and coherent brand messages across all marketing and service channels. Whether customers interact via email, website, social media, in-store visits, or instant messaging platforms, they should receive the same brand tone, product information, promotional details, and customer support quality (Lemon & Verhoef, 2018). Lack of consistent messaging across platforms can create confusion, reduce trust, and ultimately damage customer satisfaction and loyalty. For instance, a customer who sees one product price or availability on a website but receives different information on WhatsApp or Instagram is likely to feel misled or frustrated (Hossain et al., 2021). Thus, consistency in content, tone, offers, and delivery timelines is vital for maintaining brand credibility and a unified customer experience.

Juaneda-Ayensa et al. (2016) found that consistent messaging positively influences perceived brand reliability, especially in e-commerce environments where consumers rely heavily on digital communication. Similarly, Shareef et al. (2019) argue that brands that maintain consistent communication across digital channels build emotional engagement, which is crucial for sustaining customer satisfaction and repeat patronage.

In Nigeria, where many e-tailers operate through informal social media platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook, maintaining consistent messaging is both a challenge and a necessity. Firms that adopt brand guidelines, unified content strategies, and cross-platform automation tools (like chatbots or auto-responders) are better able to meet the expectations of digitally savvy consumers.

Customer Satisfaction in E-tailing

Customer satisfaction is a fundamental construct in marketing and service delivery, representing the degree to which a product or service meets or exceeds customer expectations. It is a post-purchase evaluative judgment that significantly influences repurchase intentions, word-of-mouth referrals, and long-term brand loyalty (Kotler & Keller, 2019). In the context of e-tailing through electronic platforms customer satisfaction becomes even more critical due to the absence of physical interaction, which increases customers' dependence on the accuracy, responsiveness, and reliability of the online system.

Customer satisfaction is shaped by several dimensions including product quality, ease of navigation, payment convenience, delivery reliability, responsiveness to inquiries, personalization, and after-sales support (Sahadev & Islam, 2021). These elements become especially important in omnichannel settings, where the customer's experience spans multiple platforms and channels such as mobile apps, websites, social media, and physical stores. Inconsistencies or breakdowns in service delivery across these touchpoints can negatively impact satisfaction, while seamless and integrated experiences enhance it.

The digital customer journey in e-tailing begins from product search and evaluation, through purchase, to fulfillment and post-purchase support. Any friction at any stage such as a lag in response time, a mismatch in product description, or a delivery delay can diminish satisfaction. According to Amin et al. (2021), e-customers evaluate their satisfaction based on perceived value, trust, and convenience. The more intuitive and personalized the journey, the more likely the customer is to feel satisfied and remain loyal to the brand.

Moreover, in an omnichannel environment, satisfaction is influenced not just by individual channel performance but by the overall coherence and synergy of all touchpoints (Hossain et al., 2021). For example, a customer who views a product on Instagram, chats with the seller on WhatsApp, and completes the purchase via a website will expect the same level of service, consistent information, and prompt responses across all platforms. When firms maintain a unified and professional brand image and ensure seamless transitions between channels, they create a positive impression that enhances customer satisfaction.

In the Nigerian context, particularly in Rivers State, customer satisfaction in e-tailing is impacted by infrastructural challenges such as erratic internet access, delivery inefficiencies, and limited consumer protection laws (Ezenwafor & Okoli, 2021). Nonetheless, some firms are investing in omnichannel solutions that simplify the shopping process, provide multi-platform engagement, and improve transparency in product offerings and delivery timelines. Customers who experience minimal disruptions and receive timely service tend to report higher satisfaction levels and are more likely to recommend the business to others.

From a marketing perspective, customer satisfaction is both an outcome and a driver of business success. Satisfied customers are more forgiving of occasional errors, less sensitive to price changes, and more open to upselling or cross-selling efforts (Lemon & Verhoef, 2018). They are also more likely to leave positive reviews and become advocates of the brand. In a competitive e-tailing environment, especially in densely populated commercial areas like Port Harcourt, sustaining high levels of customer satisfaction can be a powerful differentiator.

Importantly, omnichannel strategies can enhance satisfaction when supported by accurate data management, real-time inventory visibility, responsive support systems, and personalized communications. As digital technology continues to evolve, customer satisfaction will remain a key metric for evaluating the effectiveness of omnichannel investments and marketing strategies.

Channel integration and Customer Satisfaction

Channel integration refers to the seamless connectivity and synchronization of various platforms through which customers interact with a business ranging from websites and mobile apps to physical stores and social media. The purpose of integration is to ensure that customers can transition effortlessly from one channel to another without disruption in service, content, or transactional continuity. When well-implemented, this strategy supports a unified and uninterrupted customer experience across the entire buyer journey (Piotrowicz & Cuthbertson, 2019).

The relationship between channel integration and customer satisfaction lies in the convenience, flexibility, and empowerment it offers to customers. In today's dynamic retail landscape, consumers expect brands to recognize their preferences and allow them to complete purchases, receive support, and access services on any platform of their choice. Integrated systems reduce the friction commonly associated with disconnected service environments such as repeated data entry, inconsistent information, or lost progress in transactions (Verhoef et al., 2021).

Moreover, channel integration facilitates real-time inventory updates, personalized service delivery, and faster resolution of complaints. According to Bell et al. (2018), customers derive greater satisfaction from retailers that provide omnichannel services with high interoperability. By improving service speed, accuracy, and accessibility, channel integration increases the perceived value and efficiency of the retail experience, ultimately resulting in higher customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Consisted Messaging and Customer Satisfaction

Consistent messaging refers to the strategic alignment of brand communication across all customer touchpoints including advertising, website content, social media, emails, and physical stores such that customers receive a unified and coherent brand experience regardless of the channel. In the context of omnichannel marketing, this consistency is not just about repeating the same message but ensuring brand values, tone, and promises remain harmonized across platforms (Verhoef et al., 2017). Customer satisfaction, on the other hand, is a post-consumption evaluative judgment concerning a specific purchase decision and reflects the degree to which a product or service meets or exceeds customer expectations (Kotler & Keller, 2016). It is a key driver of customer retention, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the **Service-Dominant Logic (SDL)** proposed by Vargo and Lusch (2004), which represents a shift from the traditional goods-centered view of marketing to one that emphasizes service as the fundamental basis of exchange. SDL posits that value is not embedded in products or services themselves, but is co-created through interactions between the firm and the customer. In this framework, customers are not passive recipients of value but active participants in the value creation process.

In the context of omnichannel marketing, SDL provides a suitable theoretical lens because it emphasizes the integration of firm resources (e.g., digital platforms, customer service touchpoints) with the operant resources of customers (e.g., skills, knowledge, and context). Through seamless channel integration and consistent messaging, firms provide an enabling environment for customers to co-create value. For instance, when a customer receives personalized product recommendations and experiences consistent service across multiple channels, they are better able to derive value from their interactions with the brand.

This theory also underscores the importance of relational engagement, a core aspect of omnichannel marketing that supports long-term customer satisfaction. By leveraging customer

feedback and behavioral data across channels, firms continuously adapt and refine their offerings, fostering deeper relational bonds. SDL's emphasis on interactive processes and customer-centricity aligns well with the goals of omnichannel marketing as it relate customer satisfaction in online retail contexts (Vargo & Lusch, 2016; Brodie et al., 2017).

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design is appropriate because it allows the researcher to collect quantitative data from a sample population in order to describe and analyze the relationship between omnichannel marketing dimensions and customer satisfaction. The choice of this design is justified by its ability to capture perceptions, behaviors, and experiences of customers in a non-intrusive manner (Creswell, 2018).

The population of this study comprises customers of e-tailing firms operating in Rivers State**,** particularly those who engage in purchases through omnichannel platforms such as mobile apps, websites, and social media. This includes customers of platforms such as Jumia, Konga, Instagram vendors, and WhatsApp-based retailers. The target population is undefined due to the absence of a central database of e-commerce users; therefore, the study relies on estimated active e-shoppers within urban areas like Port Harcourt city, Obio/Akpor, and Eleme. 100 were selected randomly from each of the 3 LGAs, between the age of 18years to 46 and above, were interviewed and giving questionnaire. From a population of 300 a sample size of 169 was used for the study, according to Krejcie and Morgan determining table of 1970 as cited in Joel (2017) was adopted, and the table is one of the easier ways to estimating the right sample size from the population. 150 questionnaires were returned and valid.

All the items used in the questionnaire were measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1). Reliability was measured using the Cronbach's Alpha at an average level of 0.7%. The reliability coefficient of the instrument for each sub-variable of the study is presented in the table below:

Table 1: Reliability Coefficient of the Research Instrument

Variables	Number of items	Alpha Value	Comments Above 0.7
Channel Integration	5	0.950	Reliable
Consisted Messaging	5	0.820	Reliable
Customer Satisfaction	5	0.810	Reliable

Source: SPSS output 2025

Demographic of the respondents

Variables	Items	Frequency	Percent (%)
Age	18-25	50	33.3

	26-35	35	23.3
	36-45	40	26.7
	46+	25	16.7
Gender	Male	70	46.7
	Female	80	53.3
Educational qualification	Primary	40	26.7
	Secondary	50	33.3
	Tertiary	60	40.0
Hours spent in online shopping	Less than 1hr	10	6.7
	1-2hrs	25	16.7
	3-4hrs	55	36.7
	5hrs	60	40.0
How long you having shopping	0-3yr	20	13.3
	4-6yrs	30	20.0
	7-9yrs	40	26.7
	10yrs	60	40.7
Income level	1,000-10,000	30	20.0
	11,000-20,000	40	26.7
	21,000-30,000	35	23.3
	31,000+	45	30.0
	TOTAL	150	150

Source: SPSS output 2025

The above table shows the age bracket, gender, educational qualifications and income level that filled the instrument. According to the above table, (33.3%) were age 18-25, (23.3%) were 26-35, (26.7%) were 36-45 and (16.7%) were 46 and above. Age 18-25 (33.3%) has the highest number of respondents that filled the instrument. The table showed that male 70 (46.7%) female 80(53.3%) was used. Educational qualifications, primary 40(26.7%), secondary 50(33.3%) and tertiary 60(40.0%) has the highest number of frequencies respondent that filled the instrument. Income level 1,000-10,000(20.0%), 11,000-20,000(26.7%), 21,000-30,000(23.3%) and 31,000+ (30.0%). 10(6.7%) of the respondents spent less than 1hyrs online, 25(16.7%) spent 1-2hrs, 55(36.7%) spent 3-4hrs and 60(40.0%) spent 5hrs online. 20(13.3%) of the respondents spent 0-3hyrs online, 30(20.0%) spent 4-6yrs, 40(26.7%) spent 7-9yrs and 60(40.0%) spent 10yrs shopping online

Correlation table between Omnichannel marketing dimensions and Customer Satisfaction

		Channel Integration	Consistent Messaging	Customer Satisfaction	
Channel Integration	Pearson Correlation	1	.950**	.888**	**.
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	
	N	150	150	150	
Consistent Messaging	Pearson Correlation	.950**	1	.780**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	
	N	150	150	150	
Customer Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.888**	.780**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	150	150	150	

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS output 2025

The table shows the result of Pearson Product Moment Correlation of the association between omnichannel marketing dimensions (channel integration, consistent messaging) and customer satisfaction of e-tailing firms in Rivers State. The result shows a very strong relationship exist between omnichannel marketing dimensions and customer satisfaction of e-tailing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria at 0.950**, 0.968**, 0.888**and 0.780** p-value = 0.000 indicating a strong relationship which is significant at 0.01 level as indicated in the table. This imply that an increase in omnichannel marketing with effective online marketing strategies will restructure the way customers perceived and engage in online purchase.

Conclusion

The study concludes that omnichannel marketing has positive and significant relationship with customer satisfaction in the e-tailing sector in Rivers State. Specifically: Channel integration facilitates seamless experiences across multiple platforms. Consistent messaging reinforces brand reliability and improves engagement. Therefore, e-tailing firms that wish to retain

customers and remain competitive must adopt holistic and integrated omnichannel marketing strategies.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. E-tailers should ensure that all customer touchpoints are connected in real-time. For example, a customer's activity on Instagram should sync with the firm's website and WhatsApp chat for seamless continuity.

2. Firms must communicate coherent brand messages across all channels to reduce customer confusion and build trust.

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