



# Omni-Channel Marketing for Customer-Driven Interaction

# The Customer-Driven Experience

With the growing impact of mobile apps and digital touchpoints on shopping behavior, customers have more channels to find and buy products. This translates into more opportunities for marketers to connect with and engage such customers. But it also means a great deal more complexity for successful marketing execution.

A customer journey may begin on a smartphone with searches for product information, then continue through social

sites or email. Product discussions can take place in forums or in person with friends. The final purchase may take place in a store or online. After-purchase communications and offers can then be directed to customers over multiple channels.

Customers continue to drive omni-channel experiences. They want interactions on one channel (or device) to carry over to their next interaction channel. Customers don't necessarily look for

the "same" experience on different channels, but they do expect and demand consistency and highly personalized experiences across all channels.



## Connections

**Omni-channel:**

Consumers expect to connect with brands anytime, anywhere, especially on their smartphones.

## Choice

**Endless aisle:**

Store-based retailers must connect their virtual shelf to the store shelf to create a "seamless" shopping experience.

## Convenience

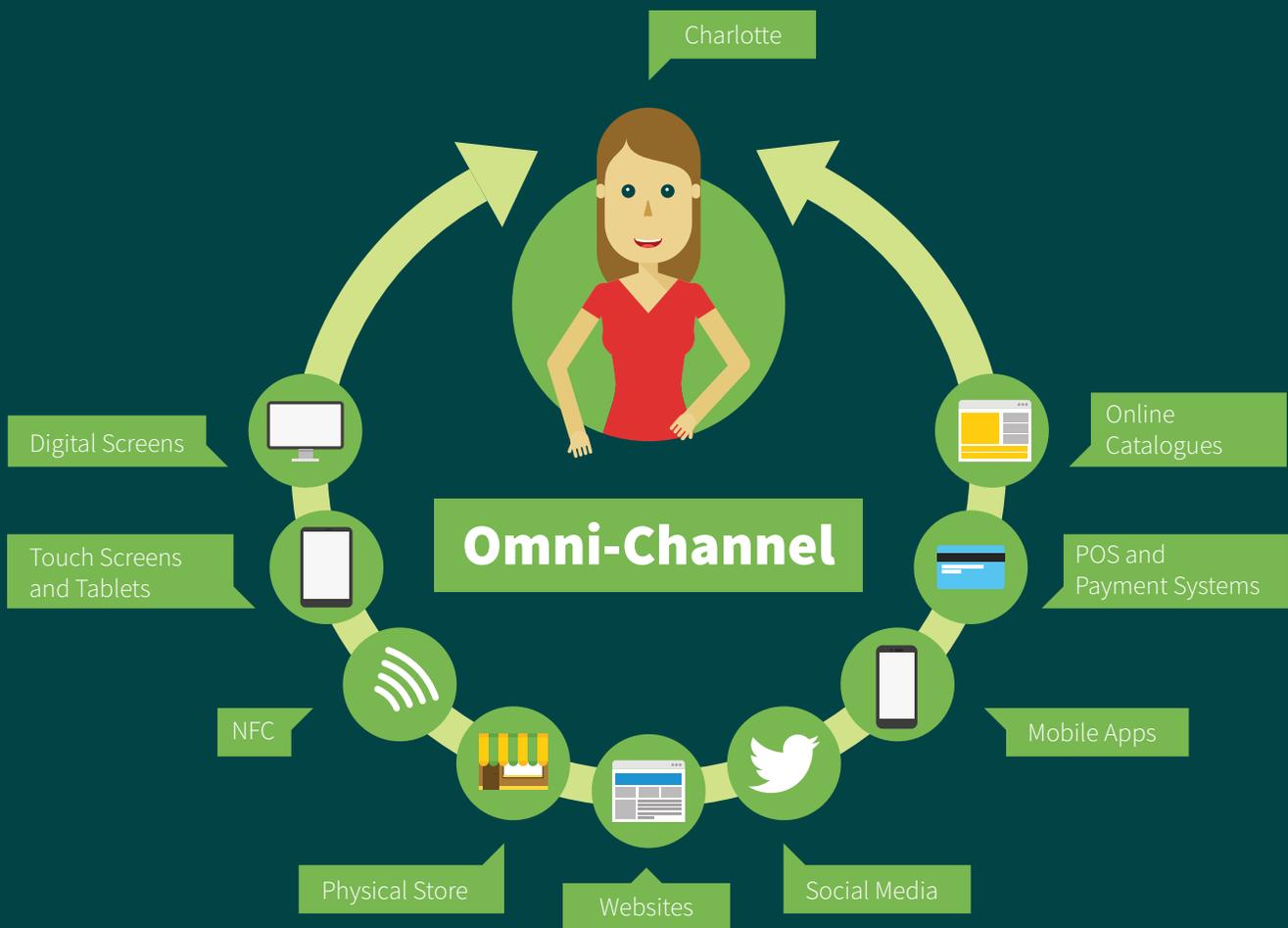
**Flexibility:**

Consumers are looking for convenience and flexibility in how they purchase and receive goods.

## Conversation

**Affirmation:**

Consumers usually begin their journey on social platforms looking for information, conversations, and recommendations about products.



## What Is Omni-Channel Marketing?

Marketers have a tendency to use “multi-channel” and “omni-channel” interchangeably when, in fact, the two marketing approaches are significantly distinct. Omni-channel marketing is the natural evolutionary outcome of multi-channel marketing efforts.

Multi-channel marketing frequently is more tactical, where each separate channel marketing program is planned and executed without integration with other channel marketing efforts. The focus is on the company’s perspective, not the customer’s point of view. As

a result, individual channels often compete with each other, creating serious problems and colliding objectives.

Omni-channel marketing is strategic, with coordinated and integrated channel efforts, and customer-driven focus. All



channels must work together, governed by an over-arching strategy to provide a smoothly consistent customer experience. Each channel is aware of interactions that have occurred on other channels, and each learns valuable information from overall customer behavior, to strengthen comprehensive channel experiences.

Customer-focused omni-channel experiences thrive when channels like mobile, social, and in-store are in sync. Customers not only easily switch between channels but can use channels simultaneously for an

enhanced experience, increased product knowledge, and a more likely purchase.

Omni-channel marketing is gaining importance in many companies as a new way to market, merchandise, and sell. Customers continuously change their buying behavior. For marketers to keep up with what customers want on different channels, the best course is omni-channel. To achieve customer-relevant omni-channel marketing, new best practices must be put into play, along with a lot of creative hard work and support from the right technology tools.

## Value Gained from Omni-Channel Marketing

- A strong customer-focused strategy across the company to connect products, marketing, and selling efforts better to what and how customers want to buy, and to provide consistent interactions at any touchpoint.
- Better understanding of customer preferences and buying behavior across all channels. A more complete view of the customer is developed when channels are integrated, and the combined data is continuously updated and analyzed.
- Powerful insight into individual customer buying journeys to ensure the delivery of what customers want on each channel, enhancing customer experiences and fulfillment.
- Improved customer perception of the brand by more accurately meeting, or exceeding, expectations.
- Increased purchases, as a result of optimized cross-selling and upselling, are achieved by processing customer information in real-time across all channels.

# Harmonizing Customer Experiences for Streamlined Consistency

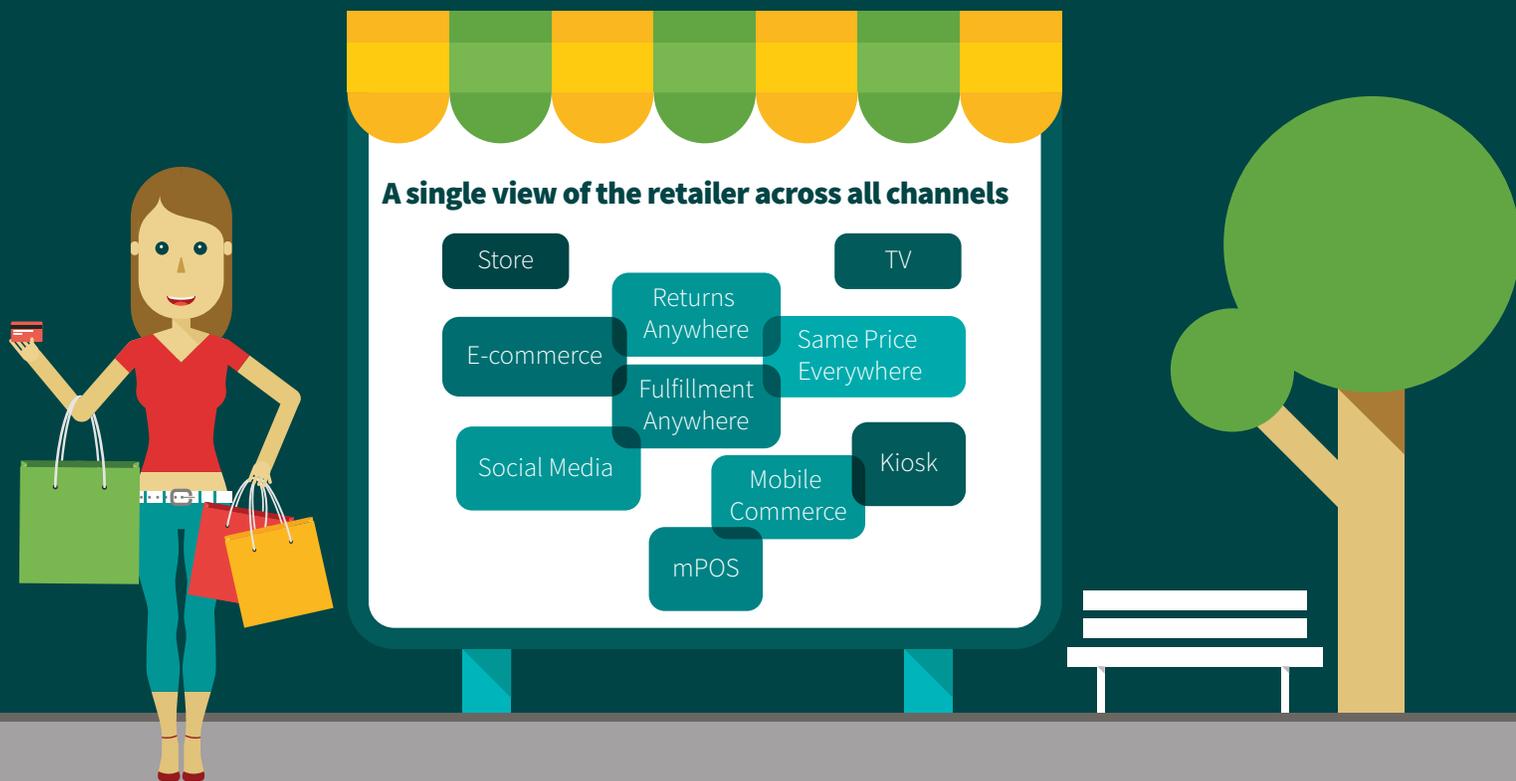
Omni-channel marketing recognizes that customers engage with companies in many different ways, on both physical and digital sites. Customers view interactions with a company as a single relationship, no matter which or how many channels are used. Integrated personalization and continuity of interactions from channel to channel are critical to ensure consistent and engaging experiences.

Most customers understand that it's not really possible to have an identical experience on each channel, but they do want unified information and messaging as they move from one to another. Customers also expect sophisticated personalization that shows that companies value them and listen to them. Omni-channel interactions should fulfill customer

desires for convenience and enhanced buying experiences.

Providing harmonized customer experiences across all channels is an ongoing challenge for marketers. It's also a great opportunity to use well-developed customer intelligence to communicate better and sell to different kinds of customers – anywhere.

## Omni-Channel Retail – a Customer's Perspective



# Technology: a Must-Have for Omni-Channel Marketing

There is a great deal of strategy, planning, and creative work to be done to determine the most effective ways to connect to customers for omni-channel marketing and selling. Technology is another critical piece to enable successful execution of omni-channel marketing and for managing sophisticated and complex customer engagement and interactions. The key is to understand that the technology selected must have the right fit for individual approaches to omni-channel marketing.

Companies need digital marketing and marketing automation technologies,

as well as web content management platforms that are rich in capabilities to enable marketers to keep up with omni-channel and customer demands.

Collecting customer data from multiple sources and channels and then performing advanced analytics require sophisticated software for continuous processing.

Mobile devices are rapidly becoming a core platform for technologies that connect customers across many channels. Both customers and vendors are increasingly using

mobile for many different kinds of experiences and interactions.

For many companies, omni-channel marketing brings additional technology needs. Companies now must provide higher levels of service for functions such as inventory visibility, consistent customer support from channel to channel, payment information, and ease of in-store pickups for merchandise ordered online. Omni-channel marketing also calls for robust cybersecurity measures, to protect vital customer data and to earn customer trust.

## Omni-Channel Technologies

Across marketing, sales, web design, content management, customer intelligence, and customer service

**Marketing Automation**

**Analytics**

**Customer Experience Management**

**Brand**

**Point of Sale Systems**

**Customer Relationship Management**

**Web Content Management**

**Content**

# Best Practices for Successful Outcomes

**Consistency is a key factor for effective omni-channel marketing and selling. Customers expect consistency for the look and feel of each channel, messaging and positioning, product availability and pricing, awareness of customer actions on different channels, and creating personalized experiences.**

**Best practices for exceptional omni-channel marketing include:**

**Focus on what it takes to deliver harmonized omni-channel experiences.**

Companies must invest in and develop new organizational structures, marketing initiatives, business processes, roles for their employees, and technology infrastructure, and in ways that will allow for fluid movement between channels, reflecting how customers want to interact.

**Integrated strategies from the top down.**

For omni-channel marketing to work, upper management must approach it with customer-focused business strategies. Then related strategies are developed for marketing and sales, customer service and support, product creation, and all other customer-facing functions. All marketing efforts must be integrated, including digital marketing, content marketing, mobile, and in-store experiences.

**Omni-channel marketing means omni-channel commerce.**

Omni-channel marketing doesn't succeed if there isn't an omni-channel commerce approach partnered with it. Omni-channel becomes a business model for the companies that adopt it.

**People in the company are very important.**

And that means all people, not just

marketing teams. Omni-channel includes all customer-facing functions. For these people to do their jobs with a strong focus on the customer, they need to understand the strategic vision for harmonized omni-channel experiences, and they need all the right tools to make it happen.

**Start small.**

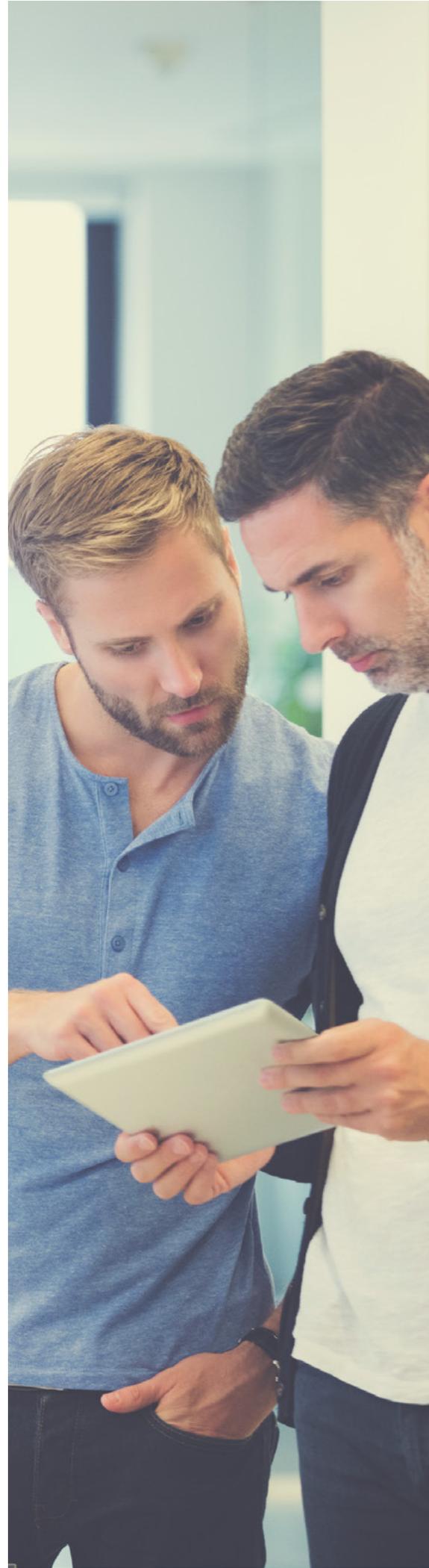
Initiating an omni-channel approach can be overwhelming. Limit first efforts to a couple of channels to develop and master the creation of consistent, personalized interactions and communications that appeal to customers.

**One-size-fits-all doesn't work.**

Omni-channel marketing demands uniformly orchestrated personalization for each customer on every channel. Appropriately personalized interactions require a constant awareness of customer circumstances and behavior – nothing stays the same very long in an omni-channel world.

**Harmonized channels.**

For each customer, channels should offer the same 'look and feel' to add consistency to experiences. Communications with customers at all levels must clearly convey the same information for items such as pricing, product information, shipping, as well as brand identity.





## Stores

- POS
- In-store Immersion
- Clienteling
- Coupons
- Upsell, Cross-sell
- Loyalty Programs
- Store Events



## E-commerce

- Case Management
- Carts
- Campaigns
- Mobile
- SMS
- Chat
- Google Adwords
- Bing Ads
- Social Networks



## Social Media

- Social CRM
- Social Listening
- Social Marketing
- Social Selling
- Social Products
- Social Enterprise
- Custom Audiences



## Call Centers

- Case Management
- Order Processing
- Upsell
- Customer Sat
- Voice Campaigns
- VoC
- SLASs
- Self-service Help

### **Purpose-driven design for effective channel experiences.**

Often customers use different channels or devices for different purposes: smartphones are frequently used for quick access to “simpler” information, while tablets or laptops may be the devices of choice for more complex activities and content. Design well for harmonized customer experiences, but also design for the specific channel or device.

### **Develop content that addresses customer use cases and behaviors.**

Create messaging and content that reflect

the nature of a particular channel combined with customer activity on that channel (as well as on other channels). Make sure plenty of information is available to customers, with the right fit for each channel. There must be an integrated approach to provide unified content for customer interactions from channel to channel.

### **Thoroughly understand target markets and customers.**

This includes discovering which channels matter the most to each customer to be able to concentrate on creating personalized interactions on those

channels. Through integrated channels, more thorough and wider-reaching data collection and analytics are possible to apply lessons learned from mistakes and successes. Beyond continuous data analytics, it’s critical to test, measure, and implement improvements to all aspects of omni-channel marketing. This requires patience and perseverance.

# Outcomes You Can Expect from an Omni-Channel Strategy

## Social Media



## Messaging and Favoriting



## Agendas, Maps, and Contacts



## Commerce, Analytics, and Data



- Download app via communications from event website or email campaign
- QR codes are a physical link between physical event and in-app information and content
- Exhibitors, Speakers, and Products favorited prior to and at show
- Post-show communications and engagement through app favorites
- App and website used in conjunction to plan visit
- Follow up in store, online, and through order platform
- Increased purchase through E-commerce capabilities
- Enhanced interactions with exhibitors



## Omni-Channel Marketing in Practice

As we've learned, the multi-platform, more marketer-focused approach found in "multi-channel" marketing can create competing messages because it lacks a focus on the customer. Omni-channel marketing focuses on the customer. For an understanding of the way omni-channel marketing works in the "real world", take the example of Charlotte, the buyer we saw from the first part of this whitepaper. The company she interacts with – call them "Brand X" – can use pre-designed marketing campaign modules to react to the way Charlotte interacts with them. Because the information that Charlotte receives from Brand X is tailored, through omni-channel marketing, to her interactions with the brand itself, the messages she receives are consistent and focused on her.

With omni-channel marketing's focus on the customer, it's tempting to think about effectively implementing an omni-channel campaign as being time-consuming, expensive, and heavily reliant on human capital to make it effective. In practice, a significant part of the process can be accomplished through automated tools, like those found in Kentico. As part of an omni-channel marketing plan, these tools allow Brand X to establish a lasting connection with Charlotte, boosting Brand X's sales and Charlotte's loyalty.

Charlotte engages in several digital activities – scanning a QR code, browsing products online, making online purchases, completing surveys, and posting to social media – during her purchasing

process. Through omni-channel-focused automated marketing, Brand X can arrange its activities during these points of contact to provide a full, customer-focused series of interactions that are tailored to Charlotte's needs.

We will assume that, in this example, Brand X has created a fully responsive website that works as well on Charlotte's tablet as it does on her desktop or smartphone. Kentico's marketing and campaign automation allows Brand X to reach their customers (Charlotte included) during multiple stages of their customer lifecycles, delivering them the right content and initiating sales activities in a personalized way. Because Kentico allows for the creation of complex campaigns, Brand X

can integrate all of Charlotte's digital contacts with them throughout their marketing journey into one single omni-channel marketing campaign. Because Kentico's Online Marketing is designed to be easy to use, even by those without technical backgrounds, Brand X can effortlessly change the campaign as necessary, depending on how Charlotte, or those like her, interact with the brand.

In our example, once Brand X's site is created and a campaign is designed around a particular customer experience, the marketing team can create automated events that react to triggers in this customer experience. In Kentico, marketing campaigns are controlled through one or more automated processes. Each process consists of a set of triggers that marketers can fully customize using Kentico's built-in visual designer. Brand X's marketers can either start processes manually for individual contacts or groups of contacts, or have the system start processes automatically using condition-based triggers. These triggers function to move the contact – Charlotte – through the automated process by responding in a pre-defined way as she engages, with the various points of contact, with the brand. They are set by the marketing team based on an understanding of possible interactions between the customer and Brand X's digital points of contact.

In practice, Charlotte puts the products she is interested in into her wish list. Because she has created a contact with Brand X by creating a wish list, her contact information and the action of putting products into this wish list trigger one of these pre-defined automated marketing processes. In this case, that pre-defined process could be sending an email that prompts her to buy with offers on shipping, or which shows her other, similar items. These examples can be accomplished out-of-the-box with Kentico, as can follow-

up deals that arrive in Charlotte's email inbox after she orders, deals that keep her engaged with Brand X for later purchases.

The marketer can also use Kentico – with some additional coding – to incorporate the tracking of scanned QR codes or posting to Twitter, as described in the example scenario. This additional coding could also be used to contact her directly via an SMS when her purchase is ready for shipping.

While some automated responses may need to be created with additional coding, the key to all event-triggered contacts that Brand X sends to Charlotte as a result of omni-channel, marketing-focused automated marketing is that every one of them is individually tailored to actions that Charlotte takes. When she reaches out to Brand X via any of its many responsive touchpoints, including its website, via social media, by putting products in her shopping cart, or she opens a QR code, or places an order, etc., each point of contact triggers a specific, pre-defined event, which is tailored to the specific series of actions she has taken.

Omni-channel marketing is an effective way to reach customers with a rich message, focused on them, rather than a static message, focused on the conflicting needs and platforms used by a marketing department. Kentico offers a highly-functional set of Marketing Automation and campaign automation features that give the marketer the opportunity to incorporate omni-channel marketing into their campaigns and reach customers in the most effective way. Because Charlotte feels connected to Brand X through omni-channel marketing, she stays connected. She comes back time and again, and she and others like her help the business grow.



Kentico is an all-in-one CMS, E-commerce, and Online Marketing platform that drives business results for companies of all sizes, both on-premise or in the cloud. It gives customers and partners powerful, comprehensive tools and customer-centric solutions to create stunning websites and manage customer experiences easily in a dynamic business environment. The Kentico Web Content

Management Solution's rich selection of out-of-the-box web parts, easy customizations, and open API, quickly gets websites operational. When combined with the full set of integrated solutions, including Online Marketing, E-commerce, Online Communities, and Intranet and Collaboration, Kentico fully optimizes the digital customer experience across multiple channels.

Founded in 2004, Kentico is a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner headquartered in the Czech Republic with offices in the US, UK, Netherlands, and Australia. Kentico has 1,000 digital agency partners and powers more than 25,000 websites across 100 countries. Customers include Bacardi, Twinings, Great British Chefs, Gibson, Mazda, and UNICEF Australia.

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