
INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION IN OMNI-CHANNEL ENVIRONMENTS: A CONCEPTUAL REAPPRAISAL

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ABSTRACT

This study provides a conceptual reappraisal of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) within the context of omni-channel environments, highlighting its evolution from a traditional communication coordination tool to a strategic, customer-centric capability. Drawing on an extensive review of contemporary literature, the paper examines how digital transformation, data analytics, and changing consumer behavior have reshaped the scope and application of IMC (Beauvisage & Mellet, 2020; Hänninen et al., 2021). The study adopts a qualitative, theory-based methodology using systematic literature review and thematic synthesis to identify key dimensions such as communication integration, technological enablement, and customer experience management. The findings suggest that IMC in omni-channel settings extends beyond message consistency to encompass seamless customer experiences across multiple touchpoints. The integration of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence and customer relationship management systems enables real-time, personalized communication, enhancing customer engagement and organizational responsiveness (Gupta & Jeyaraj, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2022). However, challenges such as organizational silos, data privacy concerns, and the need for cross-functional alignment persist. The study contributes to the theoretical advancement of IMC by proposing a holistic perspective that integrates communication, technology, and customer experience. It also provides a foundation for future empirical research in omni-channel marketing contexts (Barrett et al., 2023; Purchase & Volery, 2020).

Keywords: Integrated Marketing Communication, Omni-channel Marketing, Customer Experience, Digital Transformation, Consumer Engagement

INTRODUCTION

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) has evolved significantly over the past few decades, transitioning from a coordination-focused managerial concept to a strategic, customer-centric paradigm that is deeply embedded in omni-channel environments. Traditionally, IMC emphasized the harmonization of promotional tools—advertising, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing—to deliver a consistent message to target audiences. However, the rapid proliferation of digital technologies, the emergence of data-driven marketing ecosystems, and the increasing complexity of consumer journeys have necessitated a conceptual reappraisal of IMC in the context of omni-channel environments (Beauvisage & Mellet, 2020; Guercini et al., 2018).

Omni-channel marketing represents a paradigm shift from multichannel approaches by focusing not merely on the presence of multiple channels but on the seamless integration of these channels to provide a unified and consistent customer experience. Unlike multichannel strategies, where channels often operate in silos, omni-channel environments enable consumers to move fluidly across online and offline touchpoints—such as physical stores, mobile applications, social media, and e-commerce platforms—while maintaining continuity in their interactions with brands (Hänninen et al., 2021; Yrjölä et al., 2018). This transformation has profound implications for IMC, as the traditional focus on message consistency must now expand to include experiential consistency across all touchpoints (Lazaris et al., 2021).

The conceptual foundation of IMC has been increasingly influenced by developments in digital communication technologies and big data analytics. The integration of customer data from multiple sources enables firms to deliver personalized and contextually relevant messages in real time, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of communication strategies (Gupta & Jeyaraj, 2021; Wang et al., 2021). In this context, IMC is no longer limited to coordinating communication tools but involves orchestrating data, technology, and content to create a cohesive and adaptive communication ecosystem. This shift underscores the importance of viewing IMC as a dynamic capability that enables firms to respond to changing customer expectations and market conditions (Ewerhard et al., 2019; Weber & Maier, 2020).

Moreover, the rise of empowered consumers has further complicated the communication landscape. Consumers today actively participate in content creation, share brand experiences through social media, and influence other consumers through online reviews and word-of-mouth communication. This participatory nature of communication challenges the traditional top-down approach of IMC and necessitates a more interactive and dialogic perspective (Hickman et al., 2020; Rojas-Lamorena et al., 2022). As a result, organizations must not only manage brand messages but also engage with consumers in meaningful ways across multiple platforms, fostering co-creation of value and strengthening brand relationships (Chiu & Chuang, 2021; Son et al., 2021).

Another critical dimension of IMC in omni-channel environments is the role of technology in enabling integration and coordination. Technologies such as Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, marketing automation platforms, and artificial intelligence-driven analytics facilitate the collection, processing, and utilization of customer data across channels. These technologies support the delivery of consistent and personalized communication while also enabling real-time decision-making (Hoque et al., 2020; Nguyen

et al., 2022). However, the effective implementation of such technologies requires organizational alignment, cross-functional collaboration, and a strategic orientation toward customer-centricity (Burnes & Towers, 2016; Kyrousi et al., 2022).

The integration of online and offline channels also raises important challenges related to organizational structure and resource allocation. Firms often struggle with channel conflicts, data silos, and inconsistencies in brand messaging, which can undermine the effectiveness of IMC strategies (Asmare & Zewdie, 2021; Reaidy et al., 2021). Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach to IMC that emphasizes coordination across departments, integration of information systems, and alignment of organizational goals with customer expectations. In this regard, IMC can be conceptualized as a strategic process that involves not only communication planning but also organizational transformation (Borders & Lester, 2020; Tanner Jr., 2021).

Furthermore, the increasing importance of customer experience (CX) in marketing has expanded the scope of IMC beyond communication to encompass all aspects of the customer journey. In omni-channel environments, customer experience is shaped by interactions across multiple touchpoints, and inconsistencies in these interactions can negatively impact customer satisfaction and loyalty (Martín-Consuegra et al., 2018; Sun & Xu, 2019). Therefore, IMC must be integrated with customer experience management to ensure that all interactions contribute to a coherent and positive brand perception. This integration highlights the need for a customer-centric approach to IMC that prioritizes the delivery of value at every stage of the customer journey (Ozbilge et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2019). In addition, the globalization of markets and the increasing diversity of consumer segments have added further complexity to IMC strategies. Firms must adapt their communication strategies to different cultural, social, and economic contexts while maintaining a consistent global brand identity (Poirel & Rollet, 2016; Zarei et al., 2020). This requires a delicate balance between standardization and localization, which can be achieved through the strategic use of data and insights to tailor communication to specific segments without compromising overall brand coherence (C.-L. Chen, 2017; P.-J. Chen et al., 2022).

The emergence of social media platforms and digital ecosystems has also transformed the media landscape, creating new opportunities and challenges for IMC. Social media enables real-time interaction with consumers, facilitates the dissemination of user-generated content, and amplifies the reach of marketing messages (Jellil et al., 2018; Liu & Levin, 2018). However, it also increases the risk of message distortion and reputational damage, as negative information can spread rapidly across networks. Consequently, organizations must develop robust strategies for managing their online presence and engaging with consumers in a transparent and authentic manner (Silchenko & Askegaard, 2020; Wu & Cui, 2021). Despite the growing body of literature on IMC and omni-channel marketing, there remains a need for a comprehensive conceptual framework that integrates these domains and addresses the complexities of contemporary marketing environments. Existing studies often focus on specific aspects of IMC or omni-channel strategies, without fully capturing the interdependencies between communication, technology, and customer experience (Barrett et al., 2023; Purchase & Volery, 2020). This gap highlights the importance of reappraising IMC

from a holistic perspective that considers the dynamic and interconnected nature of modern marketing systems.

The evolution of IMC in omni-channel environments reflects broader changes in the marketing landscape, driven by technological advancements, changing consumer behavior, and increasing market complexity. The traditional focus on message consistency must be expanded to include experiential consistency, data integration, and customer engagement across multiple touchpoints. By reconceptualizing IMC as a dynamic, technology-enabled, and customer-centric capability, organizations can better navigate the challenges of omni-channel marketing and create meaningful and lasting relationships with their customers (Song & Song, 2021; Tzempelikos, 2022; Zuberi & Rajaratnam, 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) has undergone substantial theoretical and practical evolution, particularly in response to the emergence of omni-channel environments. Early conceptualizations of IMC primarily focused on the coordination and consistency of promotional tools to ensure a unified brand message across traditional media channels. However, with the proliferation of digital platforms and changing consumer behaviors, IMC has expanded into a more complex, strategic, and customer-centric framework that integrates communication, technology, and experience across multiple touchpoints (Beauvisage & Mellet, 2020; Burnes & Towers, 2016).

One of the foundational streams in the literature emphasizes IMC as a process of message consistency and coordination. Earlier studies highlighted the importance of aligning advertising, public relations, sales promotion, and direct marketing to avoid fragmented communication and enhance brand clarity (Borders & Lester, 2020). This traditional view positioned IMC as a managerial function aimed at optimizing communication efficiency. However, such a perspective has been criticized for being overly tactical and limited in scope, particularly in the context of dynamic digital ecosystems (Guercini et al., 2018).

The transition from multichannel to omni-channel marketing has significantly reshaped the discourse on IMC. While multichannel strategies involve the use of multiple independent channels, omni-channel marketing emphasizes seamless integration and synchronization of these channels to deliver a unified customer experience. Studies by Yrjölä et al. (2018) and Hänninen et al. (2021) highlight that consumers increasingly expect a consistent and continuous interaction with brands across physical and digital environments. This shift necessitates a redefinition of IMC from a communication-centric approach to an experience-centric paradigm, where the focus extends beyond message alignment to include the orchestration of customer journeys.

A significant body of literature has explored the role of digital technologies in enabling IMC within omni-channel contexts. The integration of big data analytics, artificial intelligence, and customer relationship management systems allows firms to collect and analyze vast amounts of customer data, facilitating personalized and real-time communication (Gupta & Jeyaraj, 2021; Wang et al., 2021). These technological advancements have transformed IMC into a data-driven process, where decision-making is increasingly informed by customer insights and predictive analytics. Consequently, IMC is now viewed as a dynamic capability that

enables organizations to adapt to rapidly changing market conditions (Ewerhard et al., 2019; Weber & Maier, 2020).

Another important theme in the literature is the growing importance of customer engagement and co-creation in IMC. With the rise of social media and interactive platforms, consumers are no longer passive recipients of marketing messages but active participants in the communication process. Studies by Hickman et al. (2020) and Rojas-Lamorena et al. (2022) emphasize that user-generated content, online reviews, and social interactions significantly influence brand perception and consumer decision-making. This participatory environment challenges the traditional top-down communication model and calls for a more dialogic and relational approach to IMC (Chiu & Chuang, 2021; Son et al., 2021).

The literature also underscores the integration of IMC with customer experience management (CXM) as a critical factor in omni-channel environments. Martín-Consuegra et al. (2018) and Sun and Xu (2019) argue that customer experience is shaped by interactions across multiple touchpoints, and inconsistencies in these interactions can lead to dissatisfaction and reduced loyalty. Therefore, IMC must be aligned with CXM to ensure that all brand interactions contribute to a cohesive and positive experience. This perspective positions IMC as a strategic tool for managing the entire customer journey rather than merely coordinating communication activities (Ozbilge et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2019).

Organizational challenges associated with implementing IMC in omni-channel environments have also been widely discussed. Asmare and Zewdie (2021) and Reaidy et al. (2021) identify issues such as data silos, lack of cross-functional coordination, and channel conflicts as major barriers to effective integration. These challenges highlight the need for organizational restructuring and cultural change to support IMC initiatives. Burnes and Towers (2016) emphasize that successful IMC implementation requires strong leadership, interdepartmental collaboration, and a shared vision centered on customer value. Similarly, Kyrousi et al. (2022) argue that internal alignment is crucial for achieving consistency and coherence in communication strategies.

Another stream of research focuses on the strategic role of IMC in building brand equity and competitive advantage. Studies by Liu and Levin (2018) and Jellil et al. (2018) suggest that integrated communication enhances brand recall, credibility, and trust, thereby strengthening customer relationships. In omni-channel settings, where consumers interact with brands through multiple platforms, consistent and coherent communication becomes even more critical for maintaining a strong brand identity (Silchenko & Askegaard, 2020; Wu & Cui, 2021). This reinforces the view of IMC as a strategic resource that contributes to long-term organizational performance.

The globalization of markets has introduced additional complexities to IMC strategies. Firms operating in diverse cultural and economic contexts must balance the need for global brand consistency with the need for local adaptation. Poirel and Rollet (2016) and Zarei et al. (2020) highlight that cultural differences can significantly influence consumer responses to marketing communication, necessitating context-specific strategies. Advances in data analytics have enabled firms to segment audiences more effectively and tailor messages to

specific markets without compromising overall brand coherence (C.-L. Chen, 2017; P.-J. Chen et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the literature highlights the increasing importance of content integration and storytelling in IMC. In omni-channel environments, brands must create compelling and consistent narratives that resonate with consumers across different platforms. Song and Song (2021) argue that storytelling enhances emotional engagement and helps build deeper connections with consumers. This approach aligns with the broader shift toward experiential marketing, where the focus is on creating memorable and meaningful interactions rather than simply delivering information.

Recent studies have also explored the role of emerging technologies such as augmented reality, virtual reality, and mobile applications in enhancing IMC effectiveness. Nguyen et al. (2022) and Hoque et al. (2020) suggest that these technologies provide new opportunities for immersive and interactive communication, enabling brands to engage consumers in innovative ways. However, the integration of such technologies also requires significant investment and strategic planning, highlighting the importance of aligning technological capabilities with organizational goals.

Despite these advancements, the literature identifies several gaps and areas for further research. Barrett et al. (2023) and Purchase and Volery (2020) note that existing studies often adopt fragmented approaches, focusing on specific aspects of IMC or omni-channel marketing without considering their interdependencies. There is a need for comprehensive frameworks that integrate communication, technology, and customer experience to provide a holistic understanding of IMC in contemporary marketing environments.

In addition, ethical considerations related to data privacy and consumer trust have emerged as critical issues in data-driven IMC. As firms increasingly rely on customer data for personalization, concerns about data security and misuse have become more prominent (Tzempelikos, 2022; Zuberi & Rajaratnam, 2020). Addressing these concerns requires transparent data practices and a commitment to ethical marketing, which are essential for building and maintaining consumer trust.

The literature on IMC in omni-channel environments reflects a shift from a narrow focus on communication coordination to a broader, more strategic perspective that encompasses customer experience, technological integration, and organizational alignment. The evolution of IMC is driven by changes in consumer behavior, advancements in digital technologies, and increasing market complexity. While significant progress has been made in understanding these dynamics, further research is needed to develop integrated frameworks that capture the multifaceted nature of IMC in omni-channel contexts. This conceptual reappraisal underscores the importance of viewing IMC as a dynamic and adaptive capability that enables organizations to create value and sustain competitive advantage in an increasingly interconnected and customer-centric marketplace.

Table 1: Literature Review Table

Sr. No.	Author(s) & Year	Study Focus	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gap
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1	Asmare & Zewdie (2021)	IMC implementation challenges in modern marketing	Conceptual / Review	Identified issues like data silos and lack of coordination affecting IMC effectiveness	Limited focus on omni-channel integration mechanisms
2	Beauvisage & Mellet (2020)	Digital transformation of marketing communication	Conceptual analysis	Highlighted shift from traditional IMC to data-driven communication ecosystems	Lacks empirical validation in omni-channel settings
3	Hänninen et al. (2021)	Omni-channel customer experience	Empirical study	Demonstrated importance of seamless channel integration for customer satisfaction	Limited integration with IMC theoretical framework
4	Guercini et al. (2018)	Evolution of IMC in complex environments	Conceptual study	IMC seen as a strategic capability rather than tactical tool	Does not address technological enablers deeply
5	Gupta & Jeyaraj (2021)	Role of analytics in marketing communication	Empirical research	Big data enhances personalization and communication effectiveness	Insufficient linkage with customer experience outcomes
6	Hickman et al. (2020)	Consumer engagement in digital platforms	Empirical study	User-generated content significantly influences brand perception	Limited discussion on integration across channels
7	Martín-Consuegra et al. (2018)	Customer experience and loyalty	Empirical analysis	Consistent experiences across touchpoints improve satisfaction and loyalty	IMC integration not fully explored
8	Nguyen et al. (2022)	Technology-enabled IMC systems	Empirical / Conceptual	CRM and AI improve real-time communication and integration	Organizational readiness challenges not deeply analyzed
9	Rojas-Lamorenna et al. (2022)	Social media and IMC effectiveness	Systematic review	Social media plays a critical role in interactive communication and co-creation	Need for unified omni-channel communication models

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a conceptual and theoretical methodology to reappraise Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) within the context of omni-channel environments. As the objective of the research is not to test hypotheses empirically but to develop a comprehensive conceptual understanding, a qualitative approach based on an extensive review and synthesis of existing literature is employed. The study relies on secondary data drawn from peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and reputable academic databases to ensure the credibility and relevance of the sources (Beauvisage & Mellet, 2020; Barrett et al., 2023). A systematic literature review approach is followed to identify, evaluate, and integrate key scholarly contributions related to IMC, omni-channel marketing, customer experience, and digital transformation. Relevant studies were selected based on their theoretical contribution, recency, and alignment with the research theme. Particular emphasis is placed on studies published in high-impact journals to ensure the inclusion of rigorous and validated insights (Guercini et al., 2018; Hänninen et al., 2021). The selection process also considers interdisciplinary perspectives, incorporating insights from marketing, information systems, and consumer behavior literature to provide a holistic understanding of the subject.

The study employs a thematic synthesis technique to analyze the literature. Key themes such as communication integration, technological enablement, customer journey management, and consumer engagement are identified and critically examined. This approach facilitates the identification of patterns, relationships, and gaps within the existing body of knowledge (Ewerhard et al., 2019; Weber & Maier, 2020). By comparing and contrasting different theoretical perspectives, the study develops a coherent conceptual framework that captures the evolving nature of IMC in omni-channel settings. Furthermore, the methodology incorporates an interpretive approach to theory building, allowing for the integration of diverse viewpoints and the development of new conceptual linkages. This is particularly relevant in the context of rapidly evolving digital ecosystems, where traditional models may not fully capture emerging dynamics (Nguyen et al., 2022; Kyrousi et al., 2022). The study does not involve statistical analysis or primary data collection, as its primary aim is to contribute to theoretical advancement. This methodology enables a structured and critical reappraisal of IMC, providing a foundation for future empirical research and practical application in omni-channel marketing environments.

DISCUSSION

The discussion of Integrated Marketing Communication in omni-channel environments reflects a significant shift from traditional communication paradigms toward a more dynamic, customer-centric, and technology-enabled framework. The synthesis of existing literature indicates that IMC is no longer confined to ensuring message consistency across promotional tools but has evolved into a strategic process that integrates communication, customer experience, and data-driven decision-making across multiple touchpoints (Guercini et al., 2018; Hänninen et al., 2021).

One of the central insights emerging from this study is the transformation of IMC into an experience-oriented construct. In omni-channel environments, consumers interact with brands through a complex network of online and offline channels, expecting seamless transitions and

consistent experiences. This has expanded the scope of IMC beyond communication alignment to include the orchestration of the entire customer journey. The findings align with Martín-Consuegra et al. (2018) and Sun and Xu (2019), who emphasize that customer satisfaction and loyalty are highly dependent on the consistency of experiences across touchpoints. Therefore, IMC must be integrated with customer experience management to deliver holistic value.

Another important aspect highlighted in the discussion is the role of digital technologies as key enablers of IMC. The integration of big data analytics, artificial intelligence, and customer relationship management systems has allowed organizations to personalize communication and respond to customer needs in real time (Gupta & Jeyaraj, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2022). This technological transformation supports the reconceptualization of IMC as a dynamic capability, enabling firms to adapt their communication strategies in response to evolving market conditions (Ewerhard et al., 2019; Weber & Maier, 2020). However, the effectiveness of such technologies depends on the organization's ability to integrate data across channels and align technological investments with strategic objectives.

The discussion also reveals that consumer behavior has become more participatory and interactive, significantly influencing the effectiveness of IMC strategies. With the rise of social media and digital platforms, consumers actively contribute to brand narratives through reviews, feedback, and content creation. This challenges the traditional one-way communication model and necessitates a shift toward a dialogic approach, where organizations engage with consumers as co-creators of value (Hickman et al., 2020; Rojas-Lamorenna et al., 2022). In this context, IMC must facilitate two-way communication and foster meaningful engagement to strengthen brand relationships.

Despite these advancements, several challenges associated with implementing IMC in omni-channel environments are evident. Organizational barriers such as data silos, lack of cross-functional coordination, and resistance to change continue to hinder effective integration (Asmare & Zewdie, 2021; Reaidy et al., 2021). These challenges suggest that IMC is not merely a marketing function but a strategic organizational capability that requires alignment across departments. Burnes and Towers (2016) highlight the importance of leadership and organizational culture in facilitating such integration, while Kyrousi et al. (2022) emphasize the need for internal collaboration and shared objectives. Furthermore, the discussion underscores the importance of balancing standardization and customization in global markets. While omni-channel strategies enable firms to maintain consistent brand messaging, they must also adapt communication to diverse cultural and regional contexts (Poirel & Rollet, 2016; Zarei et al., 2020). The use of data analytics allows for more precise segmentation and targeting, enabling firms to tailor their messages without compromising brand identity (C.-L. Chen, 2017; P.-J. Chen et al., 2022). This balance is critical for achieving both global coherence and local relevance.

Another key implication of the findings is the growing importance of content integration and storytelling in IMC. In a fragmented media landscape, creating cohesive and engaging narratives across channels is essential for capturing consumer attention and building emotional connections (Song & Song, 2021). Storytelling enhances the effectiveness of communication by making it more relatable and memorable, thereby reinforcing brand

identity across touchpoints. The discussion also points to ethical considerations related to data usage and consumer privacy. As IMC becomes increasingly data-driven, concerns about data security and transparency have become more prominent (Tzempelikos, 2022; Zuberi & Rajaratnam, 2020). Organizations must adopt ethical data practices and ensure compliance with regulations to build trust and maintain long-term relationships with consumers. Failure to address these concerns can undermine the effectiveness of IMC strategies and damage brand reputation.

Finally, the study highlights the need for a more integrated theoretical framework that captures the interdependencies between communication, technology, and customer experience. While existing literature provides valuable insights into individual components of IMC and omni-channel marketing, there is a lack of comprehensive models that unify these elements (Barrett et al., 2023; Purchase & Volery, 2020). Addressing this gap is essential for advancing both academic research and managerial practice. The discussion demonstrates that IMC in omni-channel environments is a multifaceted and evolving construct that requires a strategic, integrated, and adaptive approach. Organizations must leverage technology, foster customer engagement, and ensure organizational alignment to effectively implement IMC. At the same time, they must address emerging challenges related to data privacy, cultural diversity, and internal integration. This reappraisal provides a deeper understanding of IMC and offers valuable insights for future research and practice in an increasingly complex marketing landscape.

CONCLUSION

The present study reappraises Integrated Marketing Communication in the context of omni-channel environments, highlighting its evolution from a tactical communication tool to a strategic, dynamic, and customer-centric capability. The analysis of existing literature demonstrates that IMC is no longer limited to ensuring consistency of promotional messages but has expanded to encompass the integration of communication, technology, and customer experience across multiple touchpoints. This shift reflects broader transformations in the marketing landscape driven by digitalization, changing consumer expectations, and the increasing complexity of market interactions (Guercini et al., 2018; Hänninen et al., 2021).

One of the key conclusions of this study is that omni-channel environments necessitate a redefinition of IMC as an experience-oriented construct. Consumers today engage with brands through a seamless network of channels, expecting continuity and coherence in their interactions. As a result, organizations must move beyond traditional communication strategies and focus on managing the entire customer journey. This requires aligning IMC with customer experience management to ensure that all touchpoints contribute to a unified and positive brand perception (Martín-Consuegra et al., 2018; Ozbilge et al., 2022). The integration of communication and experience thus becomes a critical determinant of customer satisfaction, loyalty, and long-term relationship building.

Another important conclusion is the central role of technology in enabling effective IMC in omni-channel settings. The use of big data analytics, artificial intelligence, and customer relationship management systems allows firms to deliver personalized and contextually relevant communication in real time. These technologies facilitate the integration of data

across channels, enabling organizations to better understand customer behavior and tailor their strategies accordingly (Gupta & Jeyaraj, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2022). Consequently, IMC can be conceptualized as a dynamic capability that enhances organizational responsiveness and adaptability in a rapidly changing environment (Ewerhard et al., 2019; Weber & Maier, 2020). The study also concludes that consumer behavior has become increasingly interactive and participatory, requiring a shift from one-way communication to a dialogic and engagement-driven approach. Consumers actively contribute to brand narratives through social media and other digital platforms, influencing not only their own perceptions but also those of other consumers. This participatory dynamic necessitates that organizations engage with consumers as co-creators of value, fostering meaningful interactions and building stronger relationships (Hickman et al., 2020; Rojas-Lamarena et al., 2022). IMC, therefore, must incorporate mechanisms for facilitating two-way communication and enhancing customer engagement.

Despite these opportunities, the study identifies several challenges associated with implementing IMC in omni-channel environments. Organizational issues such as data silos, lack of cross-functional coordination, and resistance to change can hinder effective integration and reduce the overall impact of IMC strategies (Asmare & Zewdie, 2021; Reaidy et al., 2021). Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that emphasizes organizational alignment, leadership support, and a customer-centric culture. IMC should be viewed as an enterprise-wide capability rather than a function confined to the marketing department (Burnes & Towers, 2016; Kyrousi et al., 2022). Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of balancing global consistency with local adaptation in communication strategies. In an increasingly globalized marketplace, firms must maintain a coherent brand identity while also addressing the diverse cultural and contextual needs of different markets (Poirel & Rollet, 2016; Zarei et al., 2020). Advances in data analytics provide opportunities for precise segmentation and targeted communication, enabling firms to achieve this balance effectively (C.-L. Chen, 2017; P.-J. Chen et al., 2022).

Ethical considerations also emerge as a critical aspect of IMC in data-driven environments. The increasing reliance on customer data raises concerns about privacy, security, and transparency. Organizations must adopt responsible data practices and ensure compliance with regulatory frameworks to build trust and sustain long-term relationships with consumers (Tzempelikos, 2022; Zuberi & Rajaratnam, 2020). Ethical IMC practices are not only a regulatory requirement but also a strategic imperative in maintaining brand credibility.

This study underscores the need to reconceptualize IMC as a comprehensive, adaptive, and technology-enabled framework that integrates communication, customer experience, and organizational processes. The findings contribute to the theoretical advancement of IMC by highlighting its evolving nature and identifying key dimensions that define its effectiveness in omni-channel environments. While the study provides valuable insights, it also points to the need for future empirical research to validate and extend the proposed conceptual understanding. As marketing environments continue to evolve, organizations must continuously adapt their IMC strategies to remain competitive and relevant in an increasingly interconnected and customer-driven marketplace (Barrett et al., 2023; Purchase & Volery, 2020).

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