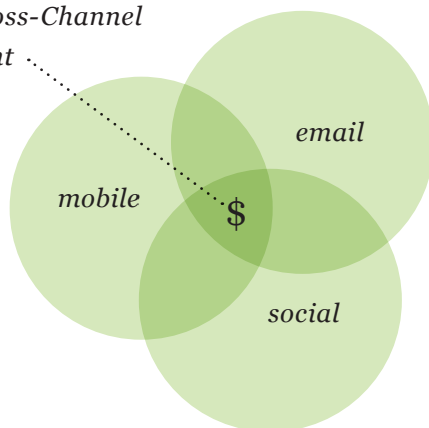


# Moving from Multichannel to Cross-Channel Marketing

The challenge with adopting anything new is that old habits die hard. Cross-channel marketing, whereby marketers target customers based on channel preference and permission, is emerging as **the most effective way of competing for mindshare** at a time when 3,000 marketing messages bombard consumers every day (according to researcher SymphonyIRI).

Yet cross-channel marketing simply isn't that simple to implement. Just as many companies adopted email marketing as a distinct competency years ago, the same has more recently happened with mobile and social media. Moving quickly to utilize innovative ways of reaching customers leaves little time to consider how digital channels overlap or work better when stitched together. Marketing within channels, or multichannel marketing, is the result.

*The Cross-Channel Segment*



This would not be an issue, were it not for the fact that customers who browse and buy via multiple channels are among the most coveted. RSR research shows this to be the case for retailers, but when you think about it, no matter your industry, anyone who visits your website, opts

into your email program, provides permission to be communicated with via SMS text messaging and follows your brand on Twitter and Facebook, is someone you should know. You could infer that anyone who meets these criteria defines your highest value customer segment.

## Getting Past the Marketing Silos

So what's a digital marketer to do? Whether you're a "one person show" with purview over anything digital, or oversee distinct teams aligned to email, mobile and social media, the challenge is the same: you probably have separate databases of customers for email and mobile channels. Many companies possess internal email lists but their agencies often have mobile phone numbers obtained from one-off campaigns without any identifying data. With social media, playing by the rules in that space makes it difficult to connect with customers on a one-to-one basis.

**The solution is a new category of software that ties these channels together**, unifying the customer record, and providing the tools and workflows to enable digital marketers to target their cross-channel customer segments with engaging marketing campaigns. The software itself doesn't require businesses to completely

re-think their marketing efforts or organizational structure; rather it complements marketing in each channel, helping create a “whole” more valuable than the “sum of its parts.”

And, it’s delivered as a service, as in software-as-a-service, a business model that ensures innovation is rolled out to all customers rapidly, and not isolated to one-off, custom implementations. Technically, it’s called multi-tenancy. At a time when social media innovation is outpacing all other categories, the value of a cross-channel marketing application delivered as a service cannot be underestimated. Just check out this August 20 eMarketer.com article, titled “[Are Marketers Struggling to Keep Up with Social Trends?](#)”

## Practical Path Forward

It’s easy to pontificate about the value of cross-channel marketing, but how can any business quickly adopt cross-channel methods? The answer is rather simple: inform your marketing efforts in each channel with knowledge of those customers who desire a cross-channel marketing relationship with your business. These are highly engaged consumers who deserve special attention and can be encouraged to buy more, more often, if they can be identified and treated as a segment.

In other words, start by understanding which customers opt into email and mobile communications, and are also followers of your brand in social channels such as Twitter and Facebook. That sounds simple, but for marketing organizations with teams of people, unique databases, and separate software driving different channels, gaining a unified view can be intimidating. It’s easier to maintain the status quo, but it doesn’t have to be that way.

## Informing Multichannel with Cross-channel Segmentation

Assuming you have separate databases for email and mobile marketing, and also maintain a presence on Twitter or Facebook, **a cross-channel marketing software application simplifies the process of identifying and developing your cross-channel customer segment.** Following is an illustration of just how:

- Remember, a cross-channel marketing application accounts for multiple digital channels. It thus includes strong individual channel marketing capabilities. The difference is they are stitched together around a unified customer record and embrace the notion of “channel orchestration.”
- Your email marketing team imports its list of opt-in customers into the cross-channel system and develops a program designed to learn these customers’ channel preferences. No matter the call to action, the email includes a trackable link to a webform connected to the cross-channel system. This form requests some basic information: “would you like to opt into mobile communications?”, “Do you follow us on Twitter,” “Do you follow us on Facebook?”
- Afterwards, what the email team has done is identified the subset of email subscribers who participate, or wish to participate, in a fully cross-channel relationship.
- The mobile team does the same with its list of opted-in subscribers (likely just phone numbers). The cross-channel marketing system offers the flexibility to solicit preference details in-line with a real-time messaging session, or optionally click on a trackable URL to visit a mobile-optimized web page. This page hosts a form requesting similar

permission for email and asks if the customer participates in any company social communities.

- The mobile team has now identified the subset of mobile subscribers who desire a cross-channel relationship.


*These are highly engaged consumers who deserve special attention and can be encouraged to buy more, more often, if they can be identified and treated as a segment.*

Of course there may be overlap between email and mobile subscribers, but if you request these details one time in association with a strong call to action/incentive, it should be sufficient to overcome customers questioning why you don't already have this level of visibility into channel preferences and permissions. This call to action should be accounted for within the cross-channel marketing system; be it pre-packaged campaigns around promotional contests or sweepstakes, or limited-time offers, there must be workflow to help marketers engage consumers most effectively within each channel.

- Lastly, the social media teams post an attractive offer in their online communities, pointing to a redemption form via trackable URL whereby similar details are requested around email and mobile permissions. In addition, customer "handles" are requested from those socially active customers interested in receiving unique offers based on their preferences and interests.

- The social team afterwards knows a segment of its social universe that desires a cross-channel relationship and is able to directly message customers with unique incentives to advance their company's charter of generating revenue and engendering customer loyalty. Remember, social media isn't all about monitoring sentiment and customer service. Although valuable, consumers increasingly desire a traditional digital marketing relationship with the businesses they follow on social networking sites.

The cross-channel marketing system resolves these distinct channel campaigns into a single customer profile. It allows the digital marketing functions to segment in such a way that each can see those customers who desire a cross-channel relationship—increasingly a proxy for a business' most valuable customers. The individual programs were successful in obtaining interesting and informative data about each customer that can drive more relevant messages, calls to action, offers or promotions. And marketing efforts within each channel can isolate and target those customers most valuable to the business.

Having collaborated on this initial project, each team—email, mobile and social—next begins formulating interesting ways of driving desirous customer behavior across channels. The cross-channel marketing software's orchestration capabilities then come into play, where the timing, frequency and location of engagement across channels comes into play. For this business, the cross-channel revolution has just begun and there's no looking back. 

Find more Signal white papers that clarify the application and benefits of mobile marketing for your brand: [signalhq.com](http://signalhq.com)

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