


Chapter 8

The Role of Gamification in Omnichannel Service Systems From the Customer Experience Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Ensuring continuity by increasing the satisfaction, loyalty, and experience of existing and new customers is an essential requirement in terms of long-term competition for businesses that offer omnichannel services. In this context, with the growth and spread of digital platforms, social media, and mobile technologies, the use of gamification processes, which are used extensively in service design, in omnichannel service systems comes to the fore. Gamification processes are used extensively in various non-game contexts to create a connection with users, and to influence and improve the behavior of actors in the ecosystem. Gamification, which creates positive and enjoyable experiences for customers through a gaming platform, plays a key role in the interaction between omnichannel customers and businesses operating in this field, who behave very differently from traditional customers. Customers will increase their demand from service providers. When they find service providers that offer the experience they want, they will become more loyal and profitable customers.

INTRODUCTION

Technological developments that increase online and offline interactions in business-customer relations have led to the differentiation of touch points and perceptions of experiences between actors. Omnichannel, which paves the way for interaction with customers through more than one channel, enables the customer to play a more active role in the value created, especially in the retail sector. The accessibility of contact points and interaction tools in business-customer relations leads businesses to different ap-

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plications in terms of competition. Differentiating customer shopping habits as a result of increasing competition cause retailers to harmonize their strategies and value propositions in order not to be left behind. Internet access and the increase in the use of mobile devices lead to the disappearance of the lines between the real world and online environments; It also differentiates customers' expectations from shopping and their perceptions of experience. Regardless of the channel and/or touchpoint, customers aim to achieve an improved shopping experience in the context of a consistent and better service (Piotrowicz and Cuthbertson, 2014). In this direction, long-term customer satisfaction, commitment, and loyalty are becoming more important than in the past. In the business-customer interaction with a very high level of connectivity, a high-informed customer profile, and relatively lower switching costs compared to the past and traditional situation also cause an increase in the ability to establish relationships between the actors.

Experienced in the retail sector; the transition process from single channel to multi-channel and later to omnichannel brought about changes in business models and practices. While the single channel strategy refers to retail sales through a single channel (for example, a physical store) without the coexistence of other channels; the multi-channel strategy is conceptualized as due to the development of the internet and related technologies, retailers start to include various channels (online and mobile) and operate them as standalone entities called multi-channel strategy (Beck and Rygl, 2015). The omnichannel strategy has emerged as an effective strategy to meet the expectations of both parties in terms of increasing customer expectations and inter-business competition and filling the gap between the digital world and the physical world (Wang et al., 2016). The concept of omnichannel service system is defined as an integrated sales experience that combines the advantages of physical stores with an information-rich online shopping experience by combining physical and digital channels to provide a seamless shopping experience (Rigby, 2011). Omnichannel service system, which is considered as the design, distribution, coordination, and evaluation of the different channels through which businesses interact with their customers; aims to increase customer value by establishing, developing, and maintaining relationships (Neslin et al., 2006). Omnichannel service system, which focuses on addressing and improving the performance of each channel (Ailawadi and Farris, 2017), provides convenience to customers through multiple touchpoints, such as online and in-store stores. Omnichannel service system makes common uses of digital and online environments such as websites, mobile commerce, and social commerce available to the global industry, along with physical stores that are presented as the only option for customers in the context of traditional service systems (Verhoef et al., 2015; Juaneda-Ayensa et al., 2016). For customers, these integrated systems also bring many superior advantages such as no waiting in line, simple price comparisons, access to much more product/service options, access to stores in all time zones, and instant purchasing. The omnichannel service system, which also causes the interaction between actors to increase and intensify, enables different costs (such as a store, labor, and infrastructure) to decrease and/or disappear for businesses (Niranjanamurthy et al., 2013). In omnichannel service systems, where two-way changes occur, retailers operating offline enter the digital environment; they have tended to open physical stores in retailers operating online (Herhausen et al., 2015; Brynjolfsson et al., 2013; Bell et al., 2014; Piotrowicz and Cuthbertson, 2014; Beck and Rigl, 2015). These two-way changes have led to the integration of supply chains, increasing the costs and the retailers' sphere of influence. In addition, omnichannel service system provides a broader perspective on how customers can be influenced, directed, and moved between channels in their search and purchase processes (Verhoef et al., 2015).

Advances in omnichannel service systems have led to the emergence of a unified approach that manages channels as entangled touchpoints to enable consumers to have a seamless experience within an ecosystem (Shen et al., 2018). Unlike multi-channel service systems, omnichannel service systems

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