

## Case Study #9 (8 Marks)

### Omni-Channel and Audience Engagement

Consider the practical, everyday implications of the following information:

*“Omni” means “all.” “Channel,” in this context, is a “means of communication.” And so, at its most foundational level, the “omni-channel” approach would seem to mandate the development of an “all channels” dialogue capability. Logically that would include those media outlets—television and digital video, online display advertising, direct mail and others—commonly used to promote awareness, interest and consumer response. So, too, would it integrate those informational, transactional and customer service vehicles—email, mobile, e-commerce portals, physical point-of-sale platforms and more—that provide a means of interacting directly with an individual who has made the leap from consumer to customer.*

*But omni-channel is about more than just standing up a set of outreach capabilities that span media. And it’s about more than integrating the basic components of marketing communications—cadence, branding, offer—so as to present a unified identity to would-be customers. Instead, it speaks to the development of a true customer-centered promotional approach, one that’s driven by the contiguous needs to identify and engage with ideal customer audiences, optimizing that dialogue over the long term so as to align with the overarching business strategy (all while providing meaningful value to the customer). The approach borrows substantially from a number of disciplines, including “multichannel” marketing (which promotes the need to maintain a balanced media mix), “customer experience management” (which elevates the importance of convenience, choice and ease-of-use across all transactional touchpoints) and “integrated marketing communications” (which stresses the need to coordinate the content and timing of messaging across channels).*

*Omni-channel is unique in three important respects:*

- As an actionable concept, it’s designed to support the strategic business aims of the enterprise more than the day-to-day tactical needs of the marketer (though it elevates the role of the latter by leveraging his position at the intersection of media, customer insight and transactional touchpoints). Likewise, it typically requires wholesale transformation of the marketing and media infrastructure (requiring the appropriate business processes, incentive structures and supporting toolsets)*
- It has been made possible only recently, primarily through the development of media, data and technology resources that allow for holistic insight into consumer audiences; and*
- Its ultimate mission is informed engagement with consumer audiences, with the goal of optimizing the lifetime value of those audiences.*

**YOUR TASK:** List some key competencies that define what marketers and publishers will need in order to capitalize on the omni-channel promise in the years ahead.