December 2016

McKinsey Quarterly

OMNICHANNEL, NOT OMNISHAMBLES

Providing an omnichannel customer experience requires companies to become more flexible and responsive.

by Raffaella Bianchi, Michal Cermak, and Ondrej Dusek

Although consumers have quickly adopted digital channels for both service and sales, they aren't abandoning traditional retail stores and call centers in their interactions with companies. Increasingly, customers expect "omnichannel" convenience that allows them to start a journey in one channel (say, a mobile app) and end it in another (by picking up the purchase in a store).

For companies, the challenge is to provide high-quality service from end to end, regardless of where the ends might be. That was the case for a regional bank that sensed that too many customers were falling into gaps between channels.

Mapping its customers' journeys confirmed the suspicions (exhibit). Four out of five potential loan customers visited the bank's website, but from there, their paths diverged as they sought different ways to have their questions answered. About 20 percent stayed online, another 20 percent phoned a call center, and 15 percent visited a branch, with the remainder leaving the process.

The channels' differing performance pointed to specific problems. Ultimately, more than one-fifth of customers who visited a branch ended up getting loans. But in the online channel, less than 1 percent got a loan after almost 80 percent dropped out rather than fill in a registration form. Finally, in call centers, a mere one-tenth of 1 percent of customers received a loan—perhaps not surprising, since only 2 percent even requested an offer.

To integrate digital and traditional channels more effectively, the bank had to become more agile, with the understanding that its one-size-fits-most processes would no longer work. Complex registration forms were simplified and tailored to different types of customers. Revised policies clarified which channel took the lead when customers moved between channels. And new links between the website and the call centers enabled agents to follow up when online customers left a form incomplete. Together, these types of changes helped increase sales of current-account and personal-loan products by more than 25 percent across all channels.

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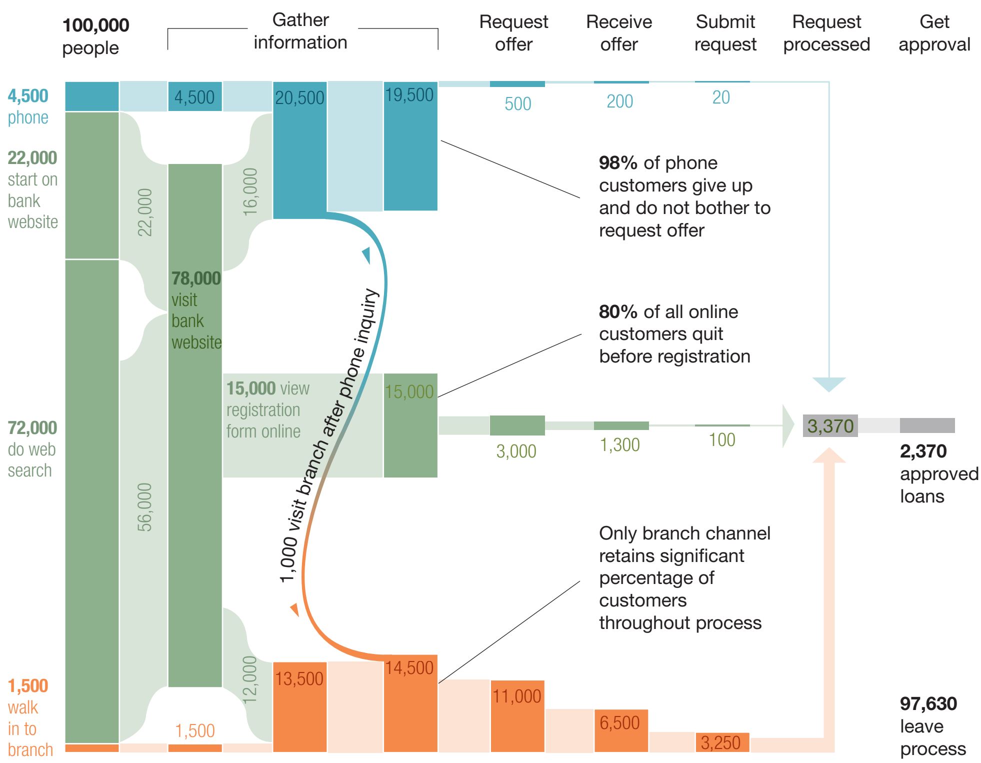
For additional insights, see "More than digital plus traditional: A truly omnichannel customer experience," on McKinsey.com.

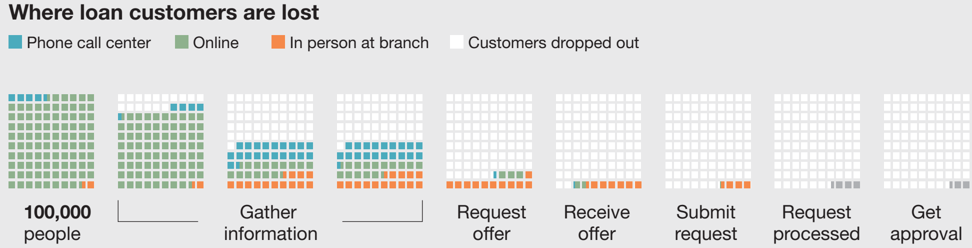
Exhibit

Mapping customer flows highlights pain points.

Average monthly customer flows for loan products by channel,[1] indexed to 100,000



Where loan customers are lost



[1]Preapproved loans excluded.

Source: Call-center data; Google Analytics; interviews; McKinsey analysis