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Omnichannel-based promotions' effects on purchase behavior and brand image

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the effects of utilizing consumers' digital shopping traces when designing in-store promotions on purchase behavior and brand image. In two experimental studies with 526 and 550 respondents, the authors examine the effects of omnichannel-based promotions (e.g. using digital shopping trace to offer a promotion when the consumer enters the physical store) in two different product categories (utilitarian vs. hedonic), spontaneous/planned purchases and two different retail industries (durable good vs. travel). The results show that retailers benefit from using digital shopping traces as it increases purchases and enhances brand imagery. The effects are moderated by product category and type of purchase.

1. Introduction

Shoppers today may use a retailer's digital channels and touchpoints on the path to purchase and thereby disclose information to the retailer about, for instance, what types of products they are interested in (Pantano and Viassone, 2015; Yurova et al., 2017). This behavior produces digital trace (e.g. from website browsing with the mobile phone) about shopping goals that may be a valuable source of information for retailers that they base individualized in-store promotions upon (Lambrecht and Tucker, 2013).

In this paper we focus on consumer reactions to promotions offered to them during individual shopping trips in an omnichannel setting (Beck and Rygl, 2015; Verhoef et al., 2015). Specifically, we experimentally examine how consumers respond when retailers offer a promotion in the physical store that is based on pre-purchase digital data, that is to say a promotion on an item that shoppers have browsed for in the pre-purchase phase. We compare this shopping goal-congruent promotion with a generic, traditional promotion.

Shopping goal congruent promotions are made available through digital development and innovation within omnichannel retailing. Digitalization is turning today's consumers into omnichannel customers that often use digital and physical channels both during the pre-purchase and purchase phase (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013; Rigby, 2010; Verhoef et al., 2015; Yurova et al., 2017). Due to mobile broadband and Wi-Fi services, digitalization affects consumers in the physical store environment as well, as they have access to other channels while shopping (e.g. using the mobile phone to look for further information

about products in the assortment)

Based on Verhoef et al. (2015, p. 176 Note: our italics) definition of omnichannel management "...the synergetic management of the numerous available channels and customer touchpoints, in such a way that the *customer experience* across channels and the *performance* over channels is optimized", we address the effects of promotions on two highly relevant omnichannel variables; *purchase behavior* (related to performance) and *brand image* (related to customer experience). We argue that shopper response to these promotions is likely to be both behavioral (e.g. higher purchase) and attitudinal (e.g. enhanced brand imagery). The shopping goal congruent promotion should be linked to enhanced utilitarian benefits which is likely to affect both performance and experience (e.g. "I got a good deal on an item I was looking for") and enhanced hedonic benefits (e.g. "It is fun and entertaining to shop here") that primarily affects the brand experience (Chandon et al., 2000; Mathwick et al., 2001).

In addition, previous research has indicated that promotion initiatives in an omnichannel context are dependent on the product category (Kushwaha and Shankar, 2013; Van Baal, 2014). Shopping goal congruity in promotions may work differently in utilitarian and hedonic product categories as the shopping behavior is more focused and goal-oriented in utilitarian product categories whereas it is more recreational in hedonic product categories (Scarpi et al., 2014). The degree of planning may also produce different responses to shopping goal congruent promotions as the goals are more pronounced during a planned purchase (Bell et al., 2011), which should make the response to shopping goal congruent promotions work differently for planned versus

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spontaneous purchases.

This paper aims to contribute to the growing omnichannel retailing literature by demonstrating that using digital customer data in goal-congruent promotions may lead to positive customer reactions on relevant omnichannel performance indicators, such as purchase behavior and brand image (Verhoef et al., 2015). We aim to show that these effects are mediated by specific benefits of the promotion as well as by how the overall in-store experience is evaluated. This paper also contributes to the omnichannel literature by investigating boundary conditions of these effects related to product categorization and purchase planning.

2. Theoretical background

A literature review in recent years reveals that research on digitalization issues have been growing dramatically in recent years (e.g. Beck and Rygl, 2015; Bell et al., 2014; Pantano and Viassone, 2015; Verhoef et al., 2015; Yurova et al., 2017). Academic research on the use of mobile phones during shopping, linkages between online and offline retail stores, and the focus on omnichannel issues in retailing show that consumers respond positively to retailers' digital initiatives in general (Poncin and Ben Mimoun, 2014; Scarpi et al., 2014; Stein and Ramaseshan, 2016; Yurova et al., 2017).

Important findings relate to how digitalization enhances the shopping experience and creates a stronger customer-retailer relationship when it comes to customer satisfaction, service quality, and revisiting intentions (e.g. Pantano and Viassone, 2015). The majority of the previous empirical research is based on surveys that demonstrates general attitudes of shoppers and a propensity to engage in digitalization and omnichannel initiatives (Poncin and Ben Mimoun, 2014; Scarpi et al., 2014; Stein and Ramaseshan, 2016). In addition, most previous studies focus on long-term customer-retailer relationships. Our study contributes to omnichannel research by examining digitalization related to individual shopping trips and shopper reactions to omnichannel-based promotions that are created for short-term purposes. To our knowledge, we are the first to test promotions on relevant omnichannel performance indicators simultaneously (Verhoef et al., 2015 the definition of omnichannel stipulates a simultaneous focus on performance and experience).

2.1. Omnichannel retailing and shopping goals

Omnichannel retailing is about creating an overall retailing experience that is the same across all channels and touchpoints (Beck and Rygl, 2015; Bell et al., 2014; Verhoef et al., 2015). Moreover, omnichannel retailers should address sales and branding effects jointly (Verhoef et al., 2015). As a consequence, retailers need to constantly evaluate how their actions affect sales performance and brand experience simultaneously and they need to stay away from short term performance enhancements that may have negative effects on the brand experience such as heavy discounts. At the same time, synergies on sales and branding may be created by targeting customers based on shopping goals (Puccinelli et al., 2009). In order to evaluate omnichannel promotions correctly it is important to examine the effects on purchase behavior (promotion redemption) and brand image (retail brand attitude) simultaneously.

Shopping as an activity has been shown to be strongly linked to goal-directed behavior (Puccinelli et al., 2009). Consumers tend to form shopping goals before and during a shopping trip. We argue that digitalization increases the possibility for retailers to utilize customer data across channels and also get indications of shopping goals from a consumer's digital shopping trace. In an omnichannel retail landscape where channels are used interchangeably (Dholakia et al., 2010; Stein and Ramaseshan, 2016) we argue that consumers more easily reveal their shopping goals (e.g. browsing for items on sale or for new items in the assortment, focusing on certain types of products). If retailers use

the digital shopping traces when designing promotions across channels, retailers could create goal congruent promotions that produce attractive utilitarian and hedonic shopping experiences. Moreover, retailers benefit from gaining more knowledge about different types of shopping behaviors to ensure that they act correctly on the right type of digital trace (e.g. based on product category and type of planned/unplanned purchase).

2.2. Effects of goal congruity

In this paper, we argue that the perceived congruity between a shopping goal and an omnichannel-based promotion affects shopping behavior and shopping experiences. Congruity theory has been applied in several different research areas; marketing, advertising, and retailing research (e.g. Dahlén and Lange, 2004; Lane, 2000). However, contradicting results have often been demonstrated. Moderate incongruity has been shown to be more positive than congruity in advertising since moderate incongruity seems to increase curiosity towards the communication (Dahlén and Lange, 2004; Dahlén et al., 2005). When consumers are situated in a shopping setting, and generally more task-oriented than when evaluating an advertisement (cf. Nordfält, 2011; Pieters and Wedel, 2007) congruity has been shown to yield more positive effects on consumer behavioral aspects (Puccinelli et al., 2009).

Thus, we argue that congruity is preferred in an omnichannel shopping situation, and produces a positive effect on promotion redemption and retail brand attitude. We base our arguments on previous retail research that has demonstrated that consumers are a) exposed to millions of stimuli from the shopping environment (Lurie, 2004), b) equipped with too little cognitive resources to deal with all these different types of stimuli (Broniarczyk et al., 1998), c) forced to filter out a lot of this information (Nordfält, 2011), and d) use different heuristics, and usually base their shopping choices on habits (Broniarczyk et al., 1998). In addition, since consumers that are in a shopping mode often are task oriented, we expect that they prefer marketing stimuli and marketing activities that demand less mental activity and make their shopping trip more fluent.

Compared to a generic promotion that is not based on digital shopping trace, we argue that a shopping goal congruent promotion will be perceived as more fluent. Since fluency seems to be sought by consumers when they are shopping, we argue that a shopping goal congruent promotion have a positive effect on consumer behavioral aspects. Moreover, if a retailer offers a shopping goal congruent promotion, it is likely that shoppers will perceive that the retailer is making an effort to create a favorable brand experience. Thus, we expect shopping goal congruent promotions will have positive effects on both promotion redemption as well as retail brand attitude. Hence we hypothesize:

H1a. Promotion redemption is higher for a shopping goal-congruent promotion than for a generic promotion in an omnichannel setting

H1b. Retail brand attitude is higher for a shopping goal-congruent promotion than for a generic promotion in an omnichannel setting

How can these effects be explained? Previous research on specific effects on sales promotions (Chandon et al., 2000) and general effects on the overall shopping experience (Mathwick et al., 2001) suggest that both utilitarian and hedonic value may be created during a shopping trip. Chandon et al. (2000) developed a framework with utilitarian promotional benefits like savings and getting a good deal and hedonic promotional benefits like fun shopping and entertainment. These benefits correspond to different experiential values connected to a consumer's shopping experience listed by Mathwick et al. (2001), where shopping efficiency is linked to utilitarian shopping values and enjoyment to hedonic values.

We argue that a shopping goal congruent promotion initially produces shopper perceptions of certain promotional benefits (e.g. savings,

a superior and entertaining deal, Chandon et al., 2000), and subsequently also perceived experiential values (e.g. efficient and enjoyable shopping overall, Mathwick et al., 2001). We believe that the positive response to shopping goal congruent promotions is first related to an increase in perceived promotional benefits (e.g. “this is a good deal”) that in turn have a positive effect on perceived experiential shopping value (e.g. “I like to shop here”). Both utilitarian and hedonic aspects come into play. Specifically, a shopping goal congruent promotion will lead to benefits of getting a better monetary deal as well as entertaining and pleasurable promotional benefits that, in turn, will positively affect values equivalent to shopping efficiency and enjoyment.

However, we argue that different mechanisms drive the positive effect of shopping goal congruent promotions on promotion redemption and retail brand attitude. Since shoppers often evaluate current product acquisitions in terms of what they get for their money (Chandon et al., 2000), we argue that utilitarian promotional benefits and utilitarian shopping experiential values mediate the positive effect of shopping goal congruent promotion on promotion redemption, whereas the hedonic aspect is not serially mediating redemption. For brand attitude towards the retailer, both utilitarian and hedonic benefits and values are expected to be relevant mediators. It is unlikely that the brand experience will only be based on utilitarian aspects (cf. Brakus et al., 2009). When evaluating the retailer's brand experience, benefits and values linked to hedonic aspects (e.g. entertainment and enjoyment) will also drive the effects from a shopping goal congruent promotion on retail brand attitude. There is great value for retailers if our proposed effects hold as they get additional knowledge regarding the different paths that lead to desired outcomes in an omnichannel setting. We hypothesize the following mediating effects.

H1c. The effect of shopping goal-congruent promotions on promotion redemption is mediated by utilitarian promotional benefits and utilitarian experiential shopping values

H1d. The effect of shopping goal-congruent promotions on retail brand attitude is mediated by utilitarian *and* hedonic promotional benefits and utilitarian *and* hedonic experiential shopping values

2.3. The moderating effect of product category

Previous retailing research has demonstrated that consumer behavior differs when consumers shop for utilitarian or hedonic products (Kushwaha and Shankar, 2013; Van Baal, 2014; Yurova et al., 2017). We expect that goal congruity will lead to different effects depending on the product category. Fluency, effortlessness, and ease of shopping are primarily sought when consumers are shopping for utilitarian products (Kushwaha and Shankar, 2013; Voss et al., 2003; Dhar and Wertenbroch, 2000). Consumers that shop for hedonic product categories seek exploration, variation and enjoyment and would satisfy their shopping goal in a more experiential fashion, where the shopping experience is part of the shopping goal (Kushwaha and Shankar, 2013; Voss et al., 2003; Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982).

We argue that consumers that are shopping for a utilitarian product category will redeem the promotion to a greater extent and have a more positive attitude towards the retailer since a shopping goal congruent promotion evoke benefits that are more valued by those shopping for utilitarian rather than hedonic products. Moreover, a shopping goal congruent promotion will create a more fluent shopping trip where the consumers could satisfy their shopping goal in an effortless manner, compared to if a generic promotion was offered.

This is also in line with utilitarian product categories. Consumers that are shopping for hedonic products are likely to appreciate a greater promotional range since more diversified aspects of an offer could increase the perceived variation. Moreover, the shopping goal congruent promotion would be relatively of less importance since consumers shopping for hedonic products also perceive the shopping trip

experience, and not just the acquisition of a product, as the shopping goal. Hence, we expect that shopping goal congruent promotions will have an attenuating effect for hedonic compared to the utilitarian categories. The effects hold for both redemption and retailer brand attitude. Thus, we hypothesize:

H2a. A shopping goal congruent promotion offered in an omnichannel setting will increase promotion redemption more (less) when a consumer shops from a utilitarian (hedonic) product category compared to a generic promotion

H2b. A shopping goal congruent promotion offered in an omnichannel setting will increase retail brand attitude more (less) when a consumer shops from a utilitarian (hedonic) product category compared to a generic promotion

2.4. The moderating effect of purchase planning

Another important aspect when developing omnichannel promotions is the consumer's degree of planning before a purchase. Previous research has shown that the degree of planning is linked to higher involvement, purchase regret, and dissonance (Hoyer et al., 2013).

When consumers make a planned purchase they have identified a problem beforehand (Prion, 1993), and they are highly involved and engaged in problem solving (Engel et al., 1995). Moreover, when consumers make a planned purchase they engage in a more rational shopping process and usually form much more clearly defined shopping goals (Prion, 1993). As Engel et al. (1995, p. 238) describe, this “buyer knows exactly what he or she wants and is willing to shop until it is found.”

In contrast, a spontaneous purchase corresponds to more irrational, emotional, affective, hedonic, experiential and variety seeking aspects of shopping (Aruna and Santni, 2015; Engel et al., 1995; Arnoud et al., 2002; Sharma et al., 2009). When consumers make a spontaneous purchase, they seem to engage in less cognitive effort and information processing (Cobb and Hoyer, 1986; Sharma et al., 2010). A spontaneous purchase occurs without much thought or consideration (Prion, 1993), and is linked to a less rational process (Aruna and Santhi, 2015). A spontaneous purchase is made with relatively little cognitive control (Arnoud et al., 2002) and is usually linked to abstract shopping goals (Bell et al., 2011).

Thus, a different degree of prepurchase planning is likely to influence the perceived value of a shopping goal congruent promotion. A shopping goal congruent promotion will help consumers reach what they seek and strive for. This benefit is more aligned with a shopping mindset of consumers that have planned their purchase. Since consumers that have made a planned purchase have engaged in cognitive effort, thought and involvement, and have formed a concrete shopping goal, a promotion that is congruent with this goal is likely to be more valued. We argue that consumers that make a planned purchase will more likely redeem the promotion and have a more positive attitude towards the retailer, than when a consumer is making a spontaneous purchase.

The degree of congruity will be less important when consumers make a spontaneous purchase since their shopping goal is more abstract (Bell et al., 2011), less cognitive effort have been used and since they are less involved in the purchase (Cobb and Hoyer, 1986; Sharma et al., 2010). We argue that the positive effect of shopping goal congruent promotions on promotion redemption and retail brand attitude will be attenuated when consumers are making spontaneous versus planned purchases. Hence, we hypothesize:

H3a. A shopping goal congruent promotion offered in an omnichannel setting will increase promotion redemption more (less) when a consumer makes a planned (spontaneous) purchase compared to a generic promotion

H3b. A shopping goal congruent promotion offered in an omnichannel setting will increase retail brand attitude more (less) when a consumer makes a planned (spontaneous) purchase compared to a generic promotion

3. Study 1

Hypothesis 1a-d and 2a-b are tested in study 1 using a 2 (shopping goal congruent promotion vs. generic promotion) \times 2 (utilitarian vs. hedonic product category) between-subjects experiment.

3.1. Stimuli development

In the shopping goal congruent promotion scenario, the retailer integrated customer data across channels and then used these digital shopping traces when designing a promotion that was offered to the consumer while in the physical store. In the generic promotion scenario, the promotion offered by the retailer was a standardized promotion. The promotion offered was a 10% discount, either on a product that the consumer had searched for during the pre-purchase phase (congruent) or a standardized product the consumer had not searched for (generic). In the product category manipulation, the utilitarian product category was represented by the consumer electronics category, and the hedonic product category was represented by the apparel category. These two specific category choices were based on studies by [Kushwaha and Shankar \(2013\)](#) and [Voss et al. \(2003\)](#). Shopping scenario examples are found in the [Appendix](#) (examples from study 2).

3.2. Procedure and sample

The data was collected through an online panel. The online panel was representative in terms of demographics of the general population in the overall retail market. An email with a link to the study was sent to a subgroup of the 65,000 panelists. A total of 526 responses were used when examining the hypotheses. The mean age of the respondents was 43.5 years and 47.8% of the sample was women. The respondents received a link to the study, and were randomly assigned to one of the scenarios.

3.3. Measures

The respondents first answered questions with regards to our dependent variables. Our purchase-related variable, *promotion redemption*, was measured by one item; “*In the described shopping situation above, I will use the promotion offered*” on a 7-point semantic scale (1 = Not at all likely, 7 = Very likely). Our brand-related variable was *retail brand attitude* and was measured by three 7-point items: “*Bad-Good*”, “*Dislikable-Likable*”, “*Negative-Positive*” (Cronbach's alpha = .943).

To check for the hypothesized mediating effects, we measured *savings* and *entertainment* promotional benefits and *efficiency* and *intrinsic enjoyment* experiential shopping values. Benefits of the promotions measures were adapted from [Chandon et al. \(2000\)](#). Savings was

measured by two items: “*In the shopping situation above, I really saved money/I felt that I got a good deal*” (Pearson correlation = .756), and entertainment by “*In the shopping situation above I felt like the promotion offered was fun/I felt like the promotion offered was entertaining*” (Pearson correlation = .883). The variables used to measure experiential shopping value were adapted from [Mathwick et al. \(2001\)](#). Efficiency was measured by three items “*With the shopping experience described above in mind, shopping in this store is an efficient way to manage my time/makes my life easier/fits my schedule*”, (Cronbach's alpha = .949). Intrinsic enjoyment was measured by two items: “*With the shopping experience described above in mind, shopping in this store is enjoyable for its own sake, not just for the items I may have purchased/can be done for the pure enjoyment of it*”, (Pearson Correlation = .770).

Shopping goal congruity manipulation was measured by one item: “*I perceived that the retailer had a well-integrated solution between the physical store, the mobile application and the online store*”. All items were measured on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree- 7 = strongly agree).

3.4. Results

Manipulation checks demonstrated that the shopping goal congruent promotion was perceived as more congruent than the generic promotion ($M_{\text{congruent}} = 4.92$ vs. $M_{\text{non-congruent}} = 4.22$; $p = .000$, $t = -4.55$).

3.4.1. Hypotheses testing

We first performed a MANOVA with our two dependent variables; promotion redemption and retail brand attitude and our independent variables, shopping goal congruent promotion and product category, simultaneously. The overall result from the MANOVA demonstrated a main effect of shopping goal congruent promotions $F(2, 521) = 35.92$, Wilks' lambda = .88 ($p = .000$). The result also demonstrated a moderately significant interaction effect between shopping goal congruent promotion and type of product $F(2, 521) = 2.06$, Wilks' lambda = .99 ($p = .063$). Next we test our hypotheses separately.

The analysis of [H1a](#) and [H1b](#) demonstrated a positive effect of shopping goal congruent promotion on promotion redemption ($M_{\text{congruent}} = 4.78$ vs. $M_{\text{non-congruent}} = 3.26$, $F(1, 522) = 70.50$, $p = .000$) and on retail brand attitude ($M_{\text{congruent}} = 4.80$ vs. $M_{\text{non-congruent}} = 4.41$, $F(1, 522) = 7.40$ $p = .004$). Hence, [H1a](#) and [H1b](#) is supported.

Moreover, the positive main effects on promotion redemption and retail brand attitude variables were explained by serial indirect effects as stipulated by [H1c](#) and [H1d](#). Based on a bootstrap analysis, using [Hayes \(2013\)](#) script PROCESS, we used model 6, 95% bias corrected confidence interval, and 5000 bootstrap samples in the analysis. See [Figs. 1 and 2](#) for a visual description of the analyses. Consistent with hypothesis 1c, the positive effect of shopping goal congruent promotions on promotion redemption was only serially mediated by the *utilitarian* aspects of promotional benefits and experiential shopping value .1050 (LLCI: .0310; ULCI: .2035) and not by the hedonic aspects of the promotional benefits and experiential shopping value .0384 (LLCI: -.0024; ULCI: .1144). See [Tables 1, 2](#) for additional statistical

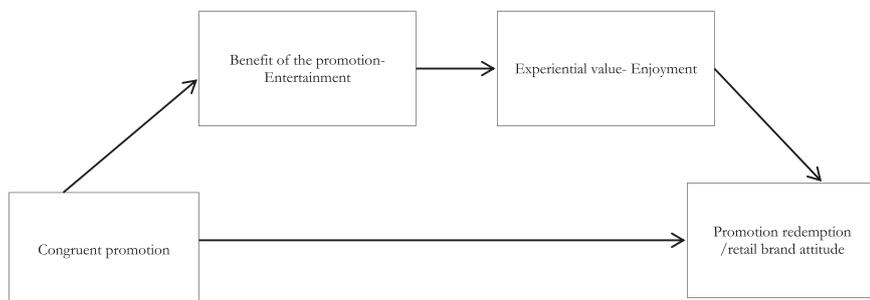


Fig. 1. Serial mediation with hedonic benefits and experiential values.

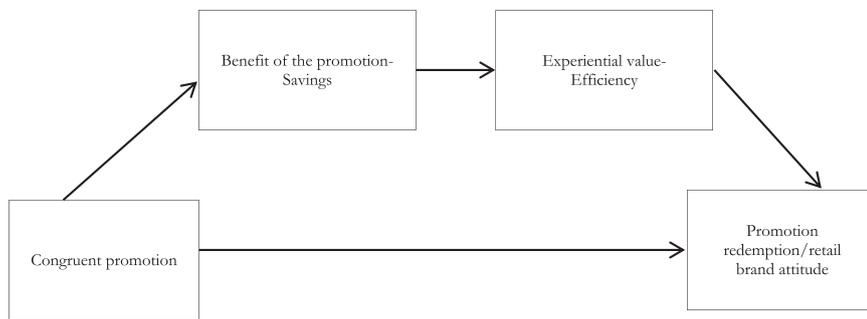


Fig. 2. Serial mediation with utilitarian benefits and experiential values.

information from the serial mediation (Figs. 3 and 4).

The positive effect on retail brand attitude is explained serially by both the *utilitarian* aspects and *hedonic* aspects of the promotional benefits and experiential shopping value, in support of H1d. The serial mediation analysis revealed a significant indirect effect from entertainment benefits and enjoyment .1569 (LLCI: .0653; ULCI: .2700) and a significant serial indirect effect from saving benefits and efficiency shopping value .3287 (LLCI: .2242; ULCI: .4634) on retail brand attitude. More information from the analyses is depicted in Tables 3, 4.

The moderating role of product category is also supported for promotion redemption but not for retail brand attitude. There is a strong significant interaction effect between shopping goal congruent promotion and product category from the MANOVA on promotion redemption $F(1, 522) = 3.65, p = .0285$ whereas the results for retail brand attitude are slightly above the .05 level of significance $F(1, 522) = 2.28, p = .0655$. Planned comparisons show that shopping goal congruent promotions increase promotion redemption both when consumers were shopping from a utilitarian product category ($M_{\text{congruent}} = 5.04$ vs. $M_{\text{non-congruent}} = 3.16; p = .000, t = 7.22$) and from a hedonic product category ($M_{\text{congruent}} = 4.54$ vs. $M_{\text{non-congruent}} = 3.37; p = .000, t = 4.74$). However, the absolute differences are larger in the utilitarian than hedonic product category. Planned comparisons reveal the following empirical results from shopping goal congruent promotions on retail brand attitude when consumers shopping from a utilitarian product category ($M_{\text{congruent}} = 4.85$ vs. $M_{\text{non-congruent}} = 4.24; p = .002, t = 2.90$) and when consumers are shopping from a hedonic product category ($M_{\text{congruent}} = 4.74$ vs. $M_{\text{non-congruent}} = 4.57; p = .191, t = .88$). H2a is supported, whereas H2b is not supported.

3.5. Discussion

The results in study 1 show overall support for our hypotheses (H1 and H2a) and especially for the main effect. Shopping goal-congruent promotions are related to desirable omnichannel retailing outcomes such as promotion redemption and retail brand attitude. Moreover, sales performance and customer experience are not driven by identical benefits and experiential values as our mediation analyses demonstrate. The interaction effect between congruity and product category were significant for promotion redemption indicating some moderating effects. However, one limitation in study 1 is that we examined the effects of omnichannel-based promotions in two different product categories,

consumer electronics and apparel, which may have influenced the results. We address this issue in study 2 where we use a single product category. Moreover, in study 2 we aim to extend our knowledge regarding shopping goal congruity in omnichannel retailing by examining the effects in a) a different retail industry (H1a-b again) and b) for a planned or spontaneous purchase (H3a-b).

4. Study 2

Hypothesis 1a-b and 3a-b were tested in an additional scenario experiment with a 2 (shopping goal congruent promotion/generic promotion) × 2 (planned purchase/spontaneous purchase) × 2 (types of promotional offers) between-subject experimental design. We chose travel retail as our category and two promotional offers (museum and musical) were included as a stimuli sampling method. Our results indicated that no significant differences were evident between the promotions for the two attractions. Thus, these two groups were collapsed into a single category.

4.1. Stimuli development

A pretest with 68 participants was performed to find appropriate activities that consumers would consider during a weekend trip to London. Museums and musicals were chosen as the two tourist attractions, as museums ($m = 5.25$), and musicals ($m = 4.78$) were ranked highest on a list of London attractions.

In the shopping goal congruent scenario, the travel agent had integrated customer data between the online store, mobile application, and hotel. In the congruent scenario, respondents received a 10% discount on the particular activity that they had looked at on the travel agent's online site. In the generic promotion scenario, the travel agent had not integrated customer data across channels and offered a 10% discount on a generic activity. In the planned purchase scenario, the respondents had planned a weekend trip to London five months in advance. The respondents were also told that they actively searched for information regarding hotels, flights and activities (museums or musicals) during a period of time. After this active information search process, they booked a trip and hotel on the retail travel agent's online site. In the spontaneous purchase scenario, the purchase of the trip (hotel and flight) was decided just the week before the trip, and less time was spent on information search about activities before the trip. The

Table 1
Serial mediation hedonic path on promotion redemption.

Study 1	M1 (BOFP-Entertainment)			M2 (Experiential value-Enjoyment)			Y (Promotion redemption)					
	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p			
X (Congruent promotion)	a1	.5116	.1548	.0010	a2	-.0966	.1048	.3568	c'	1.1710	.1496	.0000
M1 (Entertainment)	-	-	-	-	.6837	.0293	.0000	b1	.5940	.0597	.0000	
M2 (Enjoyment)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	b2	.1097	.0624	.0793	
Constant	iM1	2.2393	.2436	.0000	iM2	1.4123	.1759	.0000	iy	.1177	.2660	.6582

$R2 = .0204; R2 = .5134; R2 = .4101; F(1, 524) = 10.92, p = .0010; F(2, 523) = 275.88, p = .0000.$

Table 2
Serial mediation utilitarian path on promotion redemption.

Study 1	M1 (BOFP-Savings)			M2 (Experiential value-Efficiency)			Y (Promotion redemption)					
		Coeff.	SE	p		Coeff.	SE	p		Coeff.	SE	p
X (Congruent promotion)	a1	1.0373	.1516	.0000	a2	.0706	.1225	.5644	c'	.6306	.1343	.0000
M1 (Savings)	-	-	-	-	-	.6208	.0338	.0000	b1	.7284	.0475	.0000
M2 (Efficiency)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	b2	.1631	.0479	.0007
Constant	iM1	2.4196	.2386	.0000	iM2	1.1255	.2020	.0000	iy	-.4202	.2279	.0658

R2 = .0820; R2 = .4170; R2 = .5542; F(1, 524) = 46.82, p = .0000; F(2, 523) = 187.03, p = .0000 .

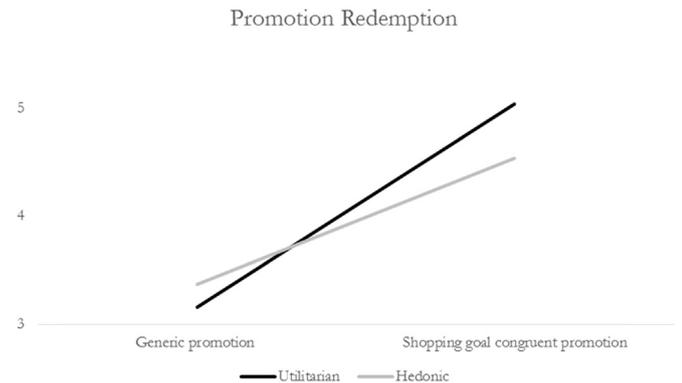


Fig. 3. Interaction effect between promotion type and product category on promotion redemption.



Fig. 4. Interaction effect between promotion type and product category on retail brand attitude.

scenarios used for study 2 are shown in the [Appendix](#).

4.2. Procedure and sample

The data was also collected through a research company with a different online panel. This panel was also representative of the general population in terms of demographics. A total of 550 respondents participated in the study. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents were

Table 3
Serial mediation hedonic path on retail brand attitude.

Study 1	M1 (BOFP- Entertainment)			M2 (Experiential value-Enjoyment)			Y (Retail brand attitude)					
		Coeff.	SE	p		Coeff.	SE	p		Coeff.	SE	p
X (Congruent promotion)	a1	.5116	.1548	.0010	a2	-.0966	.1048	.3568	c'	.1768	.1158	.1274
M1 (Entertainment)	-	-	-	-	-	.6837	.0293	.0000	b1	.1868	.0462	.0001
M2 (Enjoyment)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	b2	.4484	.0483	.0000
Constant	iM1	2.2393	.2436	.0000	iM2	1.4123	.1759	.0000	iy	2.2855	.2058	.0000

R2 = .0204; R2 = .5134; R2 = .3879; F(1, 524) = 10.92, p = .0010; F(2, 523) = 275.88, p = .0000.

female and the mean age of the respondents was 42.1 years. The respondents were invited to participate in the study by email, and were randomly assigned to one of the scenarios. After the scenario was presented, the respondents answered questions similar to those used in study 1.

4.3. Measures

Promotion redemption (one item) and retail brand attitude (three items, Cronbach's alpha = .934) were measured in the same way as Study 1. The manipulation check for the shopping goal congruity manipulation was measured by three items and adapted from [Sutanto et al. \(2013\)](#); "I perceived that the retailer had a well-integrated solution between the digital, the mobile, and physical interface which enabled me to benefit from 1) an integrated promotion based on my previous information search on the retailers online and mobile store, 2) a promotion that is based on my personal preferences, and 3) a tailored promotion based on my shopping information that I have left at the retailer (Cronbach's alpha = .937, (1 = strongly disagree- 7 = strongly agree)). The manipulation check for purchase planning was measured by one item; "I perceived this purchase to be; 1 = Spontaneous, 7 = Very well planned".

4.4. Study 2 results

Manipulation checks revealed that the shopping goal congruent promotion was perceived as more congruent than the generic promotion ($M_{congruent} = 4.71$ vs. $M_{non-congruent} = 4.19$; $p = .000$, $t = 3.67$) and that the planned purchase was perceived as more planned than the spontaneous purchase ($M_{planned} = 4.32$ vs. $M_{spontaneous} = 3.51$; $p = .000$, $t = 5.31$).

4.4.1. Hypotheses testing

We first performed a MANOVA with all our variables simultaneously. The two dependent variables, promotion redemption and retail brand attitude, as well as our independent variables, shopping goal congruity and type of purchase were included. The overall result from the MANOVA demonstrates a main effect of shopping goal congruent promotions $F(2, 545) = 20.05$, Wilks' lambda = .93 ($p = .000$) and an interaction effect between shopping goal congruent promotions and type of purchase $F(2, 545) = 2.59$, Wilks' lambda = .99, ($p = .038$).

The analysis of [H1a](#) revealed a significant positive effect on promotion redemption from a shopping goal congruent promotion

Table 4
Serial mediation utilitarian path on retail brand attitude.

Study 1	M1 (BOFP- Savings)			M2 (Experiential value-Efficiency)			Y (Retail brand attitude)					
	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p	Coeff.	SE	p			
X (Congruent promotion)	a1	1.0373	.1516	.0000	a2	.0706	.1225	.5644	c'	-.1693	.1132	.1355
M1 (Savings)	-	-	-	-	-	.6208	.0338	.0000	b1	.1836	.0401	.0000
M2 (Efficiency)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	b2	.5104	.0404	.0000
Constant	iM1	2.4196	.1516	.0000	iM2	1.1255	.2020	.0000	iy	2.2382	.1922	.0000

R2 = .0820; R2 = .4170; R2 = .4509; F(1, 524) = 46.82, p = .0000; F(2, 523) = 187.03, p = .0000.

(M_{congruent} = 4.54 vs. M_{non-congruent} = 3.81, F(1, 546) = 21.08, p = .000). However, the analysis of H1b demonstrated a non-significant effect from shopping goal congruent promotion on retail brand attitude (M_{congruent} = 4.83 vs. M_{non-congruent} = 4.89, F(1, 546) = .379, p = .269) H1a is supported, whereas H1b is not.

In testing hypotheses H3a and H3b regarding the moderating role of purchase planning, the MANOVA demonstrated a non-significant interaction between shopping goal congruent promotions and type of purchase for promotion redemption F(1, 546) = .001, p = .489. The results indicate that shopping goal congruity on promotion redemption works well for both planned and spontaneous purchases. Hence H3a is not supported. However, the MANOVA results demonstrated a significant interaction effect between shopping goal congruent promotions and type of purchase on retail brand attitude F(1, 546) = 3.29, p = .035. The results are presented in Figs. 5 and 6.

Planned comparisons are presented for retail brand attitude but not for promotion redemption. The analyses demonstrate that shopping goal congruent promotions and generic promotions work differently for planned and spontaneous purchases for retail brand attitude. When the purchase is spontaneous, the shopping goal congruent promotion leads to weaker retail brand attitude than when the purchase is well-planned (M_{spontaneous} = 4.61 vs. M_{planned} = 5.02, t = -2.093, p = .018). This effect does not occur for generic promotions. Thus, hypothesis 3b is supported. See Table 5 for mean comparisons for retail brand attitude and Table 6 for promotion redemption.

4.5. Discussion

Study 2 provided additional insight into our hypothesized relationships. We identified a main effect of shopping goal congruent promotions on redemption for a third product category. Also, the effect of shopping goal congruity on redemption is stable across planned and spontaneous purchases. We also identified a different pattern of effects for retail brand attitude. We found no main effect of shopping goal congruent promotion on brand attitude but a strong interaction effect



Fig. 5. Interaction effect between promotion type and type of purchase on promotion redemption.



Fig. 6. Interaction effect between promotion type and type of purchase on retail brand attitude.

Table 5
Mean values for retail brand attitude, study 2.

Retail brand attitude	Planned	Spontaneous	Significance
Shopping goal congruent promotion	5.02	4.61	.019
Generic promotion	4.86	4.92	.366

Table 6
Mean values for promotion redemption, study 2.

Promotion redemption	Planned	Spontaneous	Significance
Shopping goal congruent promotion	4.56	4.52	.415
Generic promotion	3.83	3.79	.429

between degree of planning and shopping goal congruity. More specifically, shopping goal congruent promotions had a more positive effect on brand attitude when the consumer made a planned purchase compared to a spontaneous purchase. In contrast, when consumers make a spontaneous purchase, brand attitude is higher when a generic rather than shopping goal congruent promotion is offered. Our results indicate that omnichannel retailers should consider congruent promotions as more important when consumers are making planned purchases. The brand-related benefits of working with goal-congruent promotions do not occur for spontaneous purchases. This finding is discussed more in the general discussion.

5. General discussion

In this paper we demonstrated that shopping goal congruent promotions have a positive effect on both performance (promotion redemption) and experience (retail brand attitude) across three different retail settings. These positive effects are serially mediated in Study 1 by the perceived benefits of the promotion that enhances the experiential shopping value. Different mechanisms drive these effects for performance (utilitarian) and experience (hedonic and utilitarian). Savings

and efficiency drive the effects on promotion redemption. Savings, efficiency, entertainment and enjoyment explain the positive effects on retailer brand attitude.

Shopping goal congruent promotions enhance redemption more for utilitarian than hedonic product categories and are preferred in planned purchases compared to spontaneous ones for retail brand attitude. An important general finding across our two studies is that omnichannel promotion initiatives produce strong congruity effects overall but there is attenuating effects in hedonic product categories (redemption) and for spontaneous purchases (attitude).

5.1. Theoretical implications

This paper contributes to omnichannel retailing literature by demonstrating positive effects of integrating customer data across channels. We found that shoppers are responsive to the use of digital trace in physical store environments compared to generic, traditional promotions. We also identified both performance-related and experience-related effects due to the use of digitalization across retail channels. Advocates for omnichannel retailing recommend the simultaneous use of performance and experience measures (Verhoef et al., 2015).

Moreover, we contribute to the omnichannel retailing research by empirically showing that the suggested mediators that drive performance and experience follow our overall theoretical propositions. The use of digital trace in promotions may produce both utilitarian and hedonic benefits and value for shoppers, and these benefits and values are linked in different ways to purchase behavior and attitudes. Utilitarian benefits are important for both redemption of a promotion and for brand imagery. However, hedonic aspects are primarily linked to brand imagery. In addition, we contribute to existing research on omnichannel promotions by including different types of shopping behaviors related to product categorization and degree of planning. Our findings reveal a strong main effect of congruity but this effect is attenuated for hedonic product categories and spontaneous purchases. Overall, these results indicate that examining different types of shopping situations is important to better understand omnichannel promotional initiatives.

Moreover, this paper also contributes to the research on congruity by demonstrating that congruity applied in an omnichannel retailing setting will have positive effects on performance and experience for both utilitarian and hedonic products. We also show, however, that the effect of congruity is smaller in the hedonic product category. Moreover, goal congruity seems to be highly important for planned purchases and drives performance and experience for these types of purchases. For spontaneous purchases, goal congruity enhances redemption but not the brand experience aspect of omnichannel retailing. It is not unlikely that variety seeking and lower level of involvement may have played a role for the brand evaluation during the spontaneous trip. Overall there are indications that congruity is more important for omnichannel performance than for omnichannel experience.

5.2. Managerial implications

The results have important managerial implications for retailers by providing evidence for when omnichannel-based promotions have a relatively greater effect on both promotional effectiveness and overall shopping experience. Omnichannel promotions are more effective if they are designed with in-depth knowledge about the shopping goals of specific shopping trips. The result from this research offers guidance for omnichannel promotions by demonstrating which type of retailer (type of assortment (utilitarian vs. hedonic)) that can experience greater effectiveness from omnichannel investments. The study also demonstrates that omnichannel promotions will work differently for planned versus spontaneous purchases. Retailers aiming to sell utilitarian products that are made with a high degree of planning that will benefit more from using digital trace than retailers aiming to sell hedonic

products without pre-purchase planning.

There is additional value to retailers from our mediating analyses. If retailers are interested in short-term effects on performance (promotion redemption), our results indicate that they should strive for designing omnichannel promotions that provide benefits and shopping value that are primarily utilitarian. However, if the main purpose from offering omnichannel promotions is to create more long-term effects on perceived omnichannel experience (e.g. affecting retail brand attitude), a retailer should offer both utilitarian and hedonic benefits and experiential values.

Moreover, this paper also contributes to multichannel retailers by providing direction on how to utilize customer data across channels and on how digitalization can be used to increase performance in the physical store. By integrating customer data across channels and then utilizing these digital shopping traces, multichannel retailers can make smarter omnichannel investments by focusing on certain types of shopping trips and optimize their utilization of the digitalization by creating more goal congruent shopping experiences in the physical store when it is likely to have the strongest effect.

5.3. Limitations and future research

In this paper, we have examined the effects of omnichannel-based promotions on purchase behavior and brand image using a shopping scenario. Future research should also examine if these effects also holds in field studies. One important aspect to cover in future studies is how attractive the mobile phone and other digital devices will be as shopping tools in the physical store environment. If shoppers will develop the necessary shopping habits is something that still remains to be seen.

Our research tested the effects of goal congruity in three product categories and with different degree of purchase planning. More research is needed to validate the results from this study and to extend these results to other relevant conditions. For instance, other types of promotions could also be tested to further investigate the effects of omnichannel-based promotions. In our study we used a relatively conservative promotion in the form of a 10% discount. Future studies may investigate the effects from offering a more varied range of monetary discounts to see if the effects found in our paper hold when the degree of monetary savings is greater or if promotions include non-monetary aspects. Non-monetary promotions may produce different results on performance (redemption) and experience (brand attitude) than monetary promotions.

Appendix A

Scenarios used in the studies (here are the ones used in Study 2)

The Planned Purchase-Scenario

Imagine that you and your partner are eating a lovely dinner during the weekend. You start to talk about how wonderful it would be to escape abroad a couple of days- perhaps in the beginning of fall to gets some energy to cope with the cold and grey winter. You start to discuss different weekend-alternatives and decide that London seem like a good destination for a weekend trip, especially since there are a lot of interesting museums and musicals that you can attend. During the upcoming weeks you search for information regarding flights and hotels among different retail travel agents and start to look for suitable dates in your calendars. After the search you decide to book a weekend trip in September, around 5–6 months later. You book the trip at the chosen retail travel agent online site, and start to plan which activities you want to attend during the weekend trip to London. You discover that the retail travel agent has a smartphone application that you download to your phone in order to keep track on the trip.

The upcoming months flies by. When there are three weeks left until your trip you get a push notification from the retail travel agent in the smartphone application that notifies you to check your travel and

booking information. You click on the smartphone application and sees that the retail travel agent gives you tips on possible activities that you could attend during your trip. You look though the activities, one of the activities looks more interesting than the others, namely Madame Tussauds (Mamma Mia- The musical). You click on that particular activity and start to read more about the museum (the musical) in the application. Then you send a text to your partner: “Hey you! I found a great suggestion for an activity that we can do during the trip to London, what do you say?” Your partner says that it sounds like a really good idea!

You and your partner have now arrived in London and have just found your pre-booked hotel. In the entrance the hotel personal welcomes you to the hotel with a smile. With the help of the hotel receptionist the check in goes by very smooth. When everything is set and you have got the key to your room, the receptionist turns to you and says politely:

The planned purchase and The Shopping goal congruent promotion-scenario

“I see that you have check out the Madame Tussauds museum (Mamma Mia- The musical) in our application! If you are interested in that activity, we can offer you through the retail travel agent a 10% discount on the purchase of the tickets. If that would be of interest, I can send a promotion code to your mobile phone, that you can use when you book the ticket. I can of course also help you with the booking if you would prefer that instead”

The planned purchase and The generic promotion-scenario

“If you are interested I have the opportunity through your retail travel agent to offer you a 10% discount on the musical Mamma Mia (Madame Toussauds). If that would be of interest than I can send a promotion code to your mobile phone, that you can use when you book the ticket. I can of course also help you with the booking if you would prefer that instead”.

The Spontaneous Purchase- Scenario

Imagine that you and your partner is eating a lovely dinner during the weekend. You start to talked about how wonderful it would be to escape aboard a couple of days-preferable as soon as possible. You get enthusiastic and start to look at different alternatives for a weekend trip. You grab your smartphone a start to look for alternatives on the web and relatively fast you find a suitable weekend trip to London next week both with flight tickets and hotel included. Perfect! You book the trip (Thursday-Sunday) for both of you the same night and starts plan which activities you want to attend during your spontaneous weekend trip to London.

You discover that the retail travel agent has a smartphone application that you download to your phone in order to keep track on the trip. You click on the application and to see if the booking information is correct, in the application you also notice that the retail travel agent gives you tips on possible activities that you could attend during your trip. You look though the activities, one of the activities looks more interesting than the others, namely Madame Tussauds (Mamma Mia-The musical). You click on that particular activity and starts to read more about the museum (the musical) in the application. You think that this is a great alternative for a weekend activity.

You and your partner has now arrived in London and have just found your pre-booked hotel. In the entrance the hotel personal welcomes you to the hotel with a smile. With the help of the hotel receptionist the check in goes by very smooth. When everything is set and you have got the key to your room, the receptionist turns to you and says politely:

The Spontaneous purchase and The Shopping goal congruent promotion-scenario

“I see that you have check out the Madame Tussauds museum (Mamma Mia- The musical) in our application! If you are interested in that activity, we can offer you through the retail travel agent a 10% discount on the purchase of the tickets. If that would be of interest than I can send a promotion code to your mobile phone, that you can use when you book the ticket. I can of course also help you with the booking if you would prefer that instead”

The Spontaneous purchase and The generic promotion-scenario

“If you are interested I have the opportunity through your retail travel agent to offer you a 10% discount on the musical Mamma Mia (Madame Toussauds). If that would be of interest than I can send a promotion code to your mobile phone, that you can use when you book the ticket. I can of course also help you with the booking if you would prefer that instead”.

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