

Strategic and Operational Marketing in the Digital Era: A Sustainable Omnichannel Framework

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Abstract. This article explores the articulation between strategic and operational marketing in the digital era, with a focus on sustainability and omnichannel/optichannel innovation. Using *Lanidor*, Portugal's largest women's fashion brand, as an instrumental case, it demonstrates how Marketing 6.0 principles can be translated into actionable strategies. Key contributions include the integration of digital personalization and sustainability into brand purpose, the transition from omnichannel to optichannel logic for contextualized consumer engagement, and the *ReLoved* line as an example of circular innovation. Findings emphasize that coherence between vision and execution is essential to brand resilience, and that physical stores remain vital as experiential hubs. Limitations arise from reliance on a single case and secondary data, restricting generalization. Nonetheless, the study provides valuable academic and managerial insights into how brands can align purpose, technology, and experience in increasingly fragmented and ethical consumer markets.

Keywords: Strategic Marketing, Marketing 6.0, Optichannel.

1 Introduction

Due to the technological revolution and the shift towards fractured consumer choice, marketing is becoming a strategic framework that promotes value creation, differentiation, and relationship building. Hyper-digitalization, user-centered lifestyle change, and increasing ESG awareness are presenting challenges to the brand's positioning and structuring of engagement channels [1,2,3]. Especially for brands in fashion, emotional connections, authenticity, and adaptability are essential for success [4,5]. Consolidation of e-commerce and multiplication of touchpoints mandates strategic alignment with operational marketing to ensure coherence of these hybrid customer journeys [6,7]. Digitized value chains [8], and hyper-fragmented audiences [9] reinforce the relevance of omnichannel and optichannel strategies to tackle consumer fluidity and experience consistency [7]. This alignment presumes clear definition of strategic marketing, which

emphasizes vision and differentiation, versus operational marketing that communicates in campaigns, pricing and channel actions [2,10,11,12]. Therefore, Marketing 6.0 appears as an integrated technology-emotional-responsibility model that promotes purpose-driven and inclusive business practices [2]. The increasing emergence of chameleonic and blended consumers undermines inflexible segmentation and fosters personalized and contextualized experiences, made possible and supported by data and real-time response [3,9]. Whereas omnichannel strategies facilitate integration, effectiveness is becoming ever more predicated on optichannel models that encourage the contextual channel choice facilitated by CRM and CDP systems [3,13]. Simultaneously, physical and digital points of sale have been repositioned as platform experiences that will require organizational, technological and cultural redesign, while marketing acts as the glue between purpose, channels and consumer experience [6,14]. Considering this context, this study explores the conversion of strategic marketing principles into operational application through a sustainable omnichannel lens, using a critical literature review and an instrumental case study in order to engage with both the academic field and managerial practice.

2 Literature Review

2.1 The Importance of Strategic Marketing as a Foundation for Operational Marketing

The traditional division of strategic marketing and operational marketing has pedagogical utility and is thus increasingly insufficient for a complex environment, in which both are interdependent domains whose alignment is crucial for brand competitiveness and coherence [10,15]. Strategic marketing is used to establish and define long-term goals and positioning by looking at trends, segmentation, and value propositions [3,10] and operational marketing implements these orientations into campaigns, channel management, product launches, and pricing policies [12,16]. As the literature consistently indicates, the mismatch between the two negates performance because the more you execute without strategy the less coherent your implementation, and without execution the less important your strategy [7,12]. Thus, integrative models like SOSTAC emerge relevant by integrating a long-term vision with adaptive tactics [17], thereby confirming strategic governance as a vital factor for brands being resilient, relevant, and emotionally connected [18].

2.2 Marketing 6.0 and the Growth of E-commerce and Digitalization

With the rapid development of digital technologies, marketing in general has become the leading brand-consumer interface [3,7]. In such a context, Marketing 6.0 couples cutting-edge technologies (such as AI, blockchain, and data personalization) with values of ethics, inclusion, and sustainability to re-characterize brands as socially responsible, customer-centered [3]. Expansion of e-commerce indicates a reorganization of the consumption journey where consumers demand dynamic, customized, and emotive experiences across multiple touchpoints [6], a finding validated in Portugal for its growth in online shopping of more than 15% during the past two years [19]. Marketing's evolution to orchestrate complex distributed experiences, requiring coherence

across their physical and digital touchpoints and integrated strategic and operational governance supported by CRM, CDP systems and automation aligned with organizational values [1,14], is increasingly the subject of literature.

2.3 Chameleon and Blended Consumers: Strategic Implications for Brand Management

New consumer profiles are emerging which directly challenge traditional segmentation models due to the fragmentation of lifestyles and the proliferation of digital touchpoints [2,9]. The hyperfragmentation of audiences means that fixed persona-based strategies are rendered inadequate, while hybrid consumers — simultaneously rational and emotional, digital and physical [7,20] — must be reached. The chameleon consumer adapts across social and technological contexts as a strategic response to market saturation [3], and the blended consumer integrates online and offline environments and demands coherent omnichannel experiences [7]. These dynamics further drive brands away from fixed segmentation and toward data-driven, adaptive, and relational marketing that acts as a transversal interface between brand, consumer, and culture and directly contributes to innovation, reputation, and value creation [1,9,14,21–24].

2.4 From Multichannel to Omnichannel: Strategic and Operational Challenges

It's no secret that digital transformation has expanded brand–consumer touch points, spurring the development of multichannel, cross-channel, and omnichannel approaches [2,7]. Compared with multichannel approaches, which guarantee availability across channels, they generate fragmented experiences [13], whereas omnichannel strategies incorporate channels consistently to provide uninterrupted, personalized journeys [6]. The effective implementation involves managing non-linear customer journeys, data integration through CRM and CDP systems [2,12,25,26], and moving performance metrics toward relational indicators such as CLV, CES, and omnichannel engagement [2,12,25,26]. Nevertheless, despite its potential, adoption of omnichannel systems is plagued by organizational fragmentation, resistance to change, legacy systems, limited analytical capabilities, and high costs [3,13]. So, omnichannel should be viewed as a strategic capability whereby culture, technology, and relational sensitivity are synchronized to provide integrated and empathetic experiences across touchpoints [2].

2.5 The Relevance of Optichannel Strategies for Brands and Customers

The growing complexity of consumption journeys has resulted in the emergence of the optichannel strategy as the evolution of omnichannel, focusing on choosing the most appropriate channel for each customer, moment, and purpose (rather than maintaining continuous presence across all channels) [2,13]. This strategy demands organizational maturity facilitated by data integration and automation with CRM and CDP platforms to deliver a 360° customer view and intelligent interaction activation [3,12]. Optichannel is one way to help brands enhance both resources and effectiveness of communication according to segmentation, loyalty, and profitability goals [13], while for consum-

ers it offers more relevant and context-sensitive experiences, notwithstanding implementation challenges related to prediction, internal coordination, and real-time performance metrics.

2.6 Emerging Trends in Hybrid Retail Management

A Digitalization and the growing emphasis on experience have transformed both The era of digitalization and increasing emphasis on experience are turning physical and digital points of sale into integrated brand identity enablers [6,14]. Physical stores have evolved into experiential environments where immersive design, interactive technology, and personalized service are intertwined [2,13], and digital spaces go beyond transactions to include curation, recommendations, AI-assisted services [3,7]. Integration of these two leads to the phygital model, where integrated data, messaging, and functions are required to deliver fluid hybrid experiences [6]. Simultaneously, sustainability has grown as a strategic axis, highlighting circular practices, transparency, and data-driven governance underpinned by predictive models and real-time metrics [12,27]. But although the Marketing 6.0 literature continues to grow, the studies focused on omnichannel strategy and sustainability are also fragmented and often operate as a separation between strategic intent and operational practice. To fill this void, this research presents a conceptual framework that synthesizes the pillars of Marketing 6.0 with omnichannel strategy as a way to explore their intersections in fashion retail contexts.

3. Methodology

Building on the literature review, this study proposes a conceptual framework that aligns strategic and operational marketing through a Marketing 6.0 perspective in the context of sustainable fashion retail, as can be seen on Figure 1.

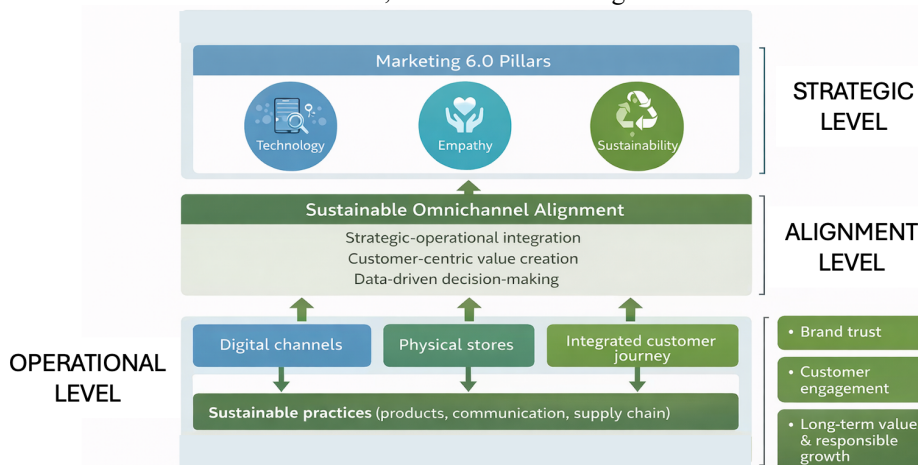


Figure 1. Sustainable Omnichannel Framework Integrating Strategic and Operational Marketing (Marketing 6.0 Perspective)

The framework integrates the Marketing 6.0 pillars (technology, empathy, and sustainability) at the strategic level, translates them into strategic–operational alignment through customer-centric and data-driven mechanisms, and operationalizes them across digital channels, physical stores, and the integrated customer journey, supported by sustainable practices. The framework highlights key outcomes, including brand trust, customer engagement, and long-term value creation, and serves as the analytical lens guiding the Lanidor case analysis.

4. Methodology

The current study is qualitative and exploratory in nature, appropriate for examining complex and context-dependent phenomena [28,29]. This study uses an instrumental single case-study design [30,31] while selecting Lanidor as a case study, a fashion and lifestyle brand with strong national and international relevance that was purposively sampled based on its consolidated identity and strategic challenges around omnichannel integration, customer-centric innovation, and sustainable value creation. Data were gathered using a systematic documentary analysis of secondary sources (2012–2025), including institutional and sustainability reports, validated academic studies, industry reports, theoretical contributions, and official brand communications. Data analysis was conducted using thematic content analysis [32,33,34] to utilise deductive coding from the Marketing 6.0 concepts (technology, empathy, sustainability) and omnichannel strategy, with inductive refining for emerging themes. The triangulation between the sources strengthened the analytical rigour and validity. Challenges are the single case nature, that emphasizes analytical transferability over generalization [35], and exclusively secondary data. Transparent sourcing, rigorous citation, and respect for intellectual property were employed to ensure ethical standards were maintained.

5. Case Study: Lanidor

5.1 Presentation and Strategic Assessment of the Brand

Founded in 1966, Lanidor is the largest Portuguese women’s ready-to-wear brand, present in nine countries with a diversified portfolio spanning apparel, accessories, food services, and e-commerce. Guided by the motto “*Making people happier*”, the brand pursues a relational and emotional vision that frames consumption as an extension of well-being and symbolic differentiation through positivity, comfort, and humanized aesthetics. Recent initiatives reflect adaptation to market shifts driven by digitalization, sustainability, and hybrid consumer behaviors. Studies and reports highlight the expansion of e-commerce, personalized in-store experiences, and circular economy initiatives such as a second-hand line, combining digital convenience, sensory engagement, and ethical commitment. Yet, challenges persist regarding channel coherence, data integration, personalization, and consistency of brand promise. At this strategic inflection point, aligning long-term vision with operational execution is critical. Lanidor’s trajectory illustrates the application of Marketing 6.0, omnichannel and optichannel strate-

gies, and experiential retail management, underscoring both the opportunities and constraints of contemporary marketing as a discipline integrating purpose, technology, and experience.

5.2 Adoption of Marketing 6.0 Principles: Analysis and Recommendations

The analysis of Lanidor's positioning highlights a progressive alignment with the principles of Marketing 6.0 [2], defined as an integrated, ethical, and purpose-driven system where technology, data, and automation support inclusion, sustainability, and meaningful value. This orientation is reflected in digital investments, openness to circularity, and empathetic communication, though still in consolidation. The vision "Making people happier" reinforces Lanidor as a promoter of well-being and authenticity but requires stronger translation into personalized services and measurable experiences. Key initiatives include the virtual assistant Lani and smart mirrors, which aim to merge physical and digital interactions, though needing integration into a coherent brand narrative. The proposed second-hand line *ReLoved* further embodies Marketing 6.0 principles by combining emotional memory, reuse, and aesthetic sustainability, positioning the brand as a responsible innovator in fashion. Overall, Lanidor's adoption of Marketing 6.0 demonstrates relevant but fragmented progress. A fully transformative transition demands an integrated strategy aligning technology, purpose, and operations, with consistency between declared values and consumer experiences as the decisive criterion for authenticity, social impact, and sustainable value creation.

5.3 Omnichannel Strategy and Proposed Optichannel Experience

The consolidation of an effective omnichannel strategy is central to Lanidor's development, enabling integrated and coherent experiences across touchpoints. Although the brand recognizes the need to connect physical and digital channels, it still faces challenges in operational coordination, technological interoperability, and contextual personalization. A transition toward an optichannel logic is therefore proposed, privileging the contextual and intelligent choice of channels at each stage of the customer journey. Supported by unified CRM and CDP platforms, such a model would allow real-time data integration, personalization, and adaptive messaging. Examples include personalized recommendations upon store entry, assisted redirection between e-commerce and physical outlets, or mobile booking of fitting rooms. The physical store, redefined as an experiential and emotional hub, could incorporate smart mirrors, personalized playlists, and exclusive collections, functioning as both a trend laboratory and a space for humanized engagement. In this framework, all channels form an interdependent ecology managed by relational relevance and impact. Loyalty thus depends less on repetition and more on the perception of the brand as useful, available, and emotionally close. The adoption of an optichannel approach may therefore provide Lanidor with a distinctive competitive advantage in the experiential and digitalized fashion sector.

5.4 *ReLoved*: A Case of Circular Innovation in Fashion Branding

Among Lanidor's most innovative initiatives is the second-hand clothing line *ReLoved*, conceived as an expression of circular innovation. The project merges environmental concerns with the aesthetic, emotional, and relational revalorization of garments. Its name underscores reusability, memory, and the potential for new cycles of meaning. In line with Marketing 6.0 [2], *ReLoved* positions the brand on a path of ethical commitment, sensitive innovation, and cultural differentiation, transforming clothing into symbolic artifacts of continuity, responsibility, and authenticity. Operationally, the line could launch as a digital pilot integrated into Lanidor's website to reduce costs, collect data, and test acceptance, before evolving into a hybrid model with in-store collection and curation. Storytelling tools as digital tags, shared memories, and consumer incentives would reinforce emotional bonds and foster community-driven loyalty. As part of a broader sustainable transition aligned with the sustainable development goals (SDGs), *ReLoved* demonstrates how circularity can create symbolic, economic, and environmental value, strengthening Lanidor's competitiveness in a sector often criticized for its ecological footprint while preserving its aspirational identity.

5.5. Managerial Implications for Brand Strategy and Operational Marketing

The integrated analysis of Lanidor's recent trajectory highlights key implications for brand management and operational marketing in a context shaped by digital transformation, fragmented consumption, and rising ethical demands. By combining emotional repositioning, omnichannel experiences, technological personalization, and sustainability, the brand shows potential to align strategy, values, and execution in a volatile environment. The first challenge is ensuring coherence between promise and experience. The narrative "*Making people happier*" must be translated into concrete practices at every touchpoint, supported by empowered teams, integrated processes, and interoperable systems. A second implication is the adoption of a customer-centered omnichannel approach, activating the most relevant channel in real time through CRM/CDP integration and digital literacy. Third, the physical store should be repositioned as an experiential hub, fostering engagement through storytelling, personalized services, context-sensitive technology, and community initiatives. Finally, the *ReLoved* line should form part of a broader purpose-driven strategy, requiring scalability, curation, traceability, and transparent communication. Together, these implications underscore marketing as a transversal and transformative function, where the boundary between strategy and operations dissolves in favor of coherence, relevance, and shared value. For Lanidor, this represents an opportunity to renew its legacy through smarter, more human, and post-digital marketing.

6. Discussion

The analysis of Lanidor's strategic evolution confirms the relevance of an integrated marketing approach that aligns strategic vision, tactical execution, and meaningful experiences. In a context marked by consumption volatility, ethical and environmental pressures, and digitalization, marketing emerges as a transversal logic of value creation rather than a mere organizational function. The study shows that separating strategic

and operational marketing is counterproductive where coherence, agility, and personalization are critical for relevance and loyalty. The motto “*Making people happier*” reflects a relational vision aligned with Marketing 6.0, but its effectiveness depends on translation into measurable and consistent actions. The adoption of omnichannel and optichannel practices marks a turning point, though challenges in interoperability, data management, and channel governance demand internal reorganization toward customer intelligence and data-driven decision-making.

Symbolically, the physical store gains renewed significance as a space of emotional connection and phygital engagement, requiring training and cultural adaptation. On sustainability, the *ReLoved* line exemplifies circular innovation with emotional and narrative value, though its impact hinges on integration into the value chain and avoidance of greenwashing. In sum, the Lanidor case illustrates that adopting paradigms such as Marketing 6.0, omnichannel, optichannel, and sustainable innovation requires deep incorporation into culture, processes, and governance to build resilient and authentically human brands.

7. Conclusion

Using Marketing 6.0 as an integrative theoretical lens, this study explored the alignment of strategic and operational marketing in a digital, omnichannel, sustainability-driven context. The case study of Lanidor further helps to shed light on the ongoing conversations on how brands can convert purpose-driven strategies into coherent, actionable marketing execution across their physical and digital ecosystem. The main contribution of the study is theoretical, to propose a conceptual framework that can combine the fundamental pillars of Marketing 6.0: technology, empathy, and sustainability with omnichannel strategy. These dimensions have been previously studied and defined separately but the proposed framework addresses strategic intent and operational implementation explicitly, provides a structured, practice-oriented approach and is particularly relevant for sustainable fashion retail. Such integration significantly contributes to the literature by revealing how omnichannel alignment can serve a strategic and long-term purpose as opposed to the mere technology-focused or distributional dimension. These insights have implications from a managerial point of view that emphasize the value to take omnichannel and optichannel strategies as an organization’s capabilities, not in their channel configuration. Implementation is difficult if it is not culturally aligned, can’t integrate your data and isn’t governed effectively to help you drive customer-centric and sustainability-oriented decision making. The Lanidor case is an example of how the consistent promotion of the brand through channels fosters trust, involvement and symbolic brand equity.

This study is not without limitation. Limitations of using a single case study and secondary data alone limit the potential of empirical generalization and reveal consumer-level perspectives. Future research should develop this framework with comparative studies, primary data collection, and mixed method approaches and explore the relationships among omnichannel alignment, perceived sustainability, customer engagement and brand performance in various contexts and industries. It shows, once again, that the future of marketing is not just about integrating digital technology, but a

strategic integration integrating technology, understanding, and sustainability in a coherent unified omnichannel approach that integrates both strategy and execution.

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