Proposed Integrated O2O Strategy to Bridge the Sensory Gap: A Case Study of Aldiva

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Abstract
The rapid growth of the digital economy has transformed Indonesia's modest fashion retail landscape. While e-commerce provides convenience and market access, it creates a sensory gap—consumers' inability to touch, feel, or try products before purchase. For SMEs like Aldiva, this heightens perceived risk, causing purchase hesitation and cart abandonment. Despite dual physical and digital channels, Aldiva's operations remain siloed, failing to support customer webrooming (online search, offline purchase) due to inventory disconnections and misalignment. This study identifies internal/external drivers of Aldiva's performance, assesses readiness, and formulates an integrated O2O strategy to bridge the sensory gap: a case study of Aldiva. Using a qualitative explanatory sequential single case study design grounded in the stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) framework, data came from semi-structured interviews with management and digitally active consumers, revealing operational silos and manual inventory as key hindrances amid rising webrooming opportunities. Aldiva holds high asset value via physical stores but low operational readiness. The proposed integrated online-to-offline (O2O) commerce strategy features real-time inventory integration, incentive alignment, and a secure click-and-collect (pick-up and fit) model. This positions stores as experience hubs, reduces risk, and builds sustainable competitive advantage.

Keywords: Integrated O2O Strategy, Sensory Gap, Webrooming Behavior, Modest Fashion SME, Omnichannel Retailing.

Introduction

The development of the digital economy has fundamentally reshaped the global retail landscape, creating a dynamic and intensely competitive environment (Rong, 2022; Shi & Wei, 2025). Within this transformation, the modest fashion industry has emerged as one of the most significant and rapidly growing sectors. According to the State of the Global Islamic Economy (SGIE) Report 2024/25, consumer spending in the modest fashion sector reached $318 billion in 2023 and is projected to grow to $428 billion by 2027.

Indonesia, with the world's largest Muslim population and ranking third globally in the modest fashion indicator, is a key player in this market (Jailani et al., 2022; Masuwd, 2024; Poulis et al., 2025). The Indonesian market is estimated to constitute approximately 10% of the global market, translating to a Serviceable Available Market (SAM) of roughly $31.8 billion. It is within this substantial domestic arena that the brand Aldiva operates. To formulate a focused strategy, this research defines the company's Serviceable Obtainable Market (SOM) the specific segment of the SAM that Aldiva realistically aims to capture. With a strategic goal of obtaining a 0.1% market share, Aldiva's SOM is calculated to be $31.8 million.

To capture this market potential, brands have widely adopted multichannel strategies, integrating physical stores with various online platforms (Jailani et al., 2022; Masuwd, 2024; Poulis et al., 2025). This evolution is highlighted by marketing

frameworks like the MarkPlus OMNI Channel Matrix, which illustrates how modern consumers interact with numerous channels throughout their 5A journey (Awareness, Appeal, Ask, Act, Advocate). The model emphasizes that a mere presence across channels is insufficient, success hinges on creating a seamless and integrated customer experience (Kondo & Vicente, 2023; Patel, 2022; Pedewad et al., 2024; Samson, 2025; Vazirani & Jaiwant, 2025). However, this integrated model also reveals a deeper challenge: ensuring the quality of the customer experience within each channel, especially in digital environments where physical sensory input is absent.

This challenge manifests as a significant sensory gap in fashion e-commerce. Consumer behaviors like webrooming (researching online, then buying in-store) are a direct symptom of this gap, indicating a need for physical validation. The sensory gap the inability for customers to touch the fabric, see the true color, and try the fit acts as a primary psychological barrier to online purchasing decisions. A preliminary survey conducted for the case study of Aldiva confirms this, with most respondents citing the "desire to see and feel the material" and "uncertainty about sizing" as key drivers for shopping offline.

Despite the growing recognition of the sensory gap as a critical barrier in online fashion retailing, there remains a significant theoretical and practical void regarding how modest fashion SMEs can effectively bridge this gap through integrated O2O strategies. Several prior studies have examined related phenomena, yet they reveal important research gaps that this study seeks to address.

First, while Bilovodska and Poretskova (2023) identified barriers to online purchase in the fashion industry, including concerns about product quality, fit uncertainty, and the inability to physically examine products, their study focused primarily on consumer perceptions without proposing operational solutions for SMEs to overcome these barriers. The research highlighted the problem but did not provide actionable strategic frameworks for businesses to implement, particularly in the context of resource-constrained SMEs operating in emerging markets like Indonesia.

Second, Arora and Sahney (2023) conducted a comprehensive review of webrooming behavior and developed a research agenda acknowledging that consumers increasingly research products online before purchasing offline. However, their work was largely conceptual and did not empirically investigate how firms—especially modest fashion SMEs—can strategically leverage this behavior through integrated O2O infrastructure. The gap between understanding webrooming as a consumer phenomenon and translating it into a viable business strategy remains unaddressed.

Third, Lee (2022) examined the impact of omnichannel integration on Millennials' purchase intention for fashion retailers, finding that seamless integration across channels positively influences purchase decisions. However, the study was limited to large-scale retailers with substantial technological and financial resources, leaving unclear how SMEs with limited budgets and manual systems can achieve similar integration. The contextual differences between large corporations and SMEs in terms of operational

capacity, technological readiness, and organizational structure were not sufficiently explored.

Fourth, Yao et al. (2022) proposed an O2O marketing strategy framework for retail businesses, emphasizing the importance of inventory visibility and customer journey integration. While their framework was theoretically sound, it lacked empirical validation in specific industry contexts, particularly in modest fashion where cultural values, product characteristics, and consumer expectations differ significantly from conventional fashion retail. The study did not address the unique challenges posed by the sensory gap in faith-based fashion consumption.

These gaps collectively point to a critical need for research that: (1) empirically investigates the sensory gap phenomenon within the modest fashion SME context; (2) formulates an actionable, resource-appropriate O2O strategy that SMEs can realistically implement; (3) integrates both consumer behavioral insights and operational constraints into a unified strategic framework; and (4) provides evidence-based implementation roadmaps that account for the technological, organizational, and financial limitations of SMEs in emerging markets.

The urgency of this research is further underscored by several contemporary developments. Globally, the modest fashion industry is experiencing unprecedented growth, yet Indonesian SMEs in this sector face intensifying competition from both domestic and international players who are rapidly adopting digital technologies. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated digital adoption among consumers, making omnichannel capabilities no longer a competitive advantage but a basic requirement for survival. Furthermore, consumer expectations for seamless, personalized, and risk-free shopping experiences have escalated, placing pressure on SMEs to modernize their operations despite resource constraints. Without timely intervention through evidence-based strategic frameworks, many modest fashion SMEs risk losing market share to more agile, digitally integrated competitors.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrated approach that synthesizes consumer psychology, operational strategy, and technological feasibility within a single analytical framework specifically designed for modest fashion SMEs. Unlike previous studies that examined either consumer behavior or business strategy in isolation, this research bridges both domains by grounding the strategic formulation in empirical insights derived from actual consumer experiences and operational realities of a case firm. Methodologically, the study employs the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) framework to systematically analyze how sensory deprivation in online channels (stimulus) influences consumer psychological states (organism) and subsequently shapes webrooming behavior (response). This psychological grounding enables the development of strategies that are not merely operationally feasible but also psychologically resonant with target consumers. Furthermore, the research contributes a novel "Integrated O2O Commerce Strategy" model that is specifically tailored to the resource constraints and operational characteristics of SMEs, offering a practical alternative to conventional omnichannel frameworks designed for large enterprises. The proposed model integrates

three critical pillars—digital infrastructure, organizational alignment, and customer experience—into a cohesive implementation roadmap with clear success metrics and phased deployment plans, thereby providing immediate practical value to practitioners.

Therefore, this research aims to address this gap by designing an integrated O2O strategy model to overcome the sensory gap in modest fashion e-commerce, conducted through an in-depth case study of the Indonesian brand, Aldiva. Specifically, the research objectives are: (1) to identify and analyze the internal and external factors that influence Aldiva's business performance in the context of sensory gap and webrooming behavior; (2) to assess Aldiva's operational readiness and strategic position in implementing an integrated O2O strategy; and (3) to formulate a comprehensive and actionable Integrated O2O Commerce Strategy supported by clear implementation mechanisms and success metrics.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative exploratory research approach using a single case study design focused on Aldiva, a modest fashion SME in Indonesia. The research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the sensory gap, perceived risk, and webrooming behavior within an Online-to-Offline (O2O) retail context. The study is theoretically grounded in the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) Theory, which is suitable for analyzing consumer perceptions and behavioral responses to digital and physical marketing stimuli.

The population of this study consists of digitally active Muslim fashion consumers in Indonesia who engage in cross-channel shopping behavior. A non-probability purposive sampling technique was employed to select informants who could provide rich and relevant insights into the research phenomenon. The sampling criteria included female consumers aged 35–45, individuals with experience interacting with both online and offline channels, and consumers who had experienced hesitation related to fabric quality or product fit. A total of six informants were interviewed, with sampling continuing until data saturation was achieved.

Primary data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews with two groups of informants: digitally engaged consumers and Aldiva's internal management team. This approach allowed flexibility while maintaining focus on key research variables derived from the S-O-R framework. In addition, secondary data were obtained from internal company documents and external industry reports to support contextual analysis.

The collected qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and meanings related to the sensory gap and consumer behavior. The findings from internal and external analyses were then synthesized using SWOT Analysis to diagnose Aldiva's strategic position. Finally, a TOWS Matrix was applied to generate actionable O2O strategic alternatives that are empirically grounded and aligned with the company's operational capabilities. internal capabilities.

Results and Discussion

1. SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is a fundamental strategic tool used to evaluate a company's competitive position by identifying its internal Strengths and Weaknesses, as well as external Opportunities and Threats. According to Gürel and Tat (2017), this framework allows organizations to diagnose their core capabilities and align them with environmental conditions to create a sustainable competitive advantage

In the context of this research, the SWOT framework serves as a diagnostic synthesis. It integrates the empirical findings from the Internal Thematic Analysis and the External Market Analysis to map Aldiva's strategic readiness in bridging the Sensory Gap. The consolidated SWOT matrix for Aldiva is presented in Table 4.3 below.

Table 1. SWOT Analysis Matrix

Strengths (S)	Weaknesses (W)
• Physical store (S1) • Product quality consistency (S2) • Loyal customer database (S3) • Content production capability (S4)	• Inventory disconnect (W1) • Operational silos (W2) • Digital sensory gap (W3) • Passive CRM (W4)
Opportunities (O)	**Threats (T)**
• Consumers prefer researching online but purchasing offline to reduce risk (O1) • Access to affordable POS and omnichannel system (O2) • Growing modest fashion market (O3) • Hybrid shopper segment (O4)	• Digital consumers are highly price-sensitive and prone to switching (T1) • Agile competitors (T2) • General consumer skepticism regarding "Fake vs Real" product photos (T3) • Easy for new online sellers to enter and disrupt pricing (T4)

Source: Analysis by Author (2026)

a. Strenghts

The analysis confirms that Aldiva's most potent asset is its Physical Store (S1). As identified in the VRIO analysis, this resource is rare among SME competitors and provides a definitive solution to the Sensory Gap. The General Manager confirmed that the store adds to customer trust, acting as a safety net for hesitant buyers. Additionally, the Product Quality (S2) serves as a strong retention tool, once a customer visits the store and touches the fabric, the conversion rate is high due to the premium handfeel that matches the digital promise.

b. Weaknesses

The primary internal bottleneck is the Inventory Disconnect (W1). The thematic analysis revealed that manual stock coordination leads to lost sales opportunities. The Owner admitted, "Before Shopee is updated, it is already sold in the store". Furthermore, Operational Silos (W2) create cultural friction; without a shared O2O incentive, store staff view online inquiries as a burden rather than a sales opportunity, hindering the implementation of a seamless customer journey.

c. Opportunities

The external environment presents a significant opportunity in the form of Webrooming Behavior (O1). The Consumer Analysis (Section 4.2) highlighted that

customers want to visit the store after browsing online. The Owner observed this pattern "They check the Live first... then come to the store". This behavior aligns perfectly with Aldiva's physical assets, offering a chance to capture the webroomer segment.

d. Threats

The digital landscape is hostile due to High Price Sensitivity (T1). In the online channel, Aldiva faces intense price competition, where the perceived risk of buying expensive items without trying them is high. The General Manager noted that "in online, the price issue is very sensitive". Additionally, Agile Competitors (T2) like Wearing Klamby set a high standard for O2O experiences, threatening to steal market share if Aldiva fails to modernize its service delivery.

e. Strategic Conclusion

The SWOT analysis reveals a critical strategic disconnected:

1) Aldiva possesses the Assets (Strengths) to win, physical store and high-quality product.
2) The Market (Opportunities) is ready, consumers are actively "Webrooming."
3) The Operations (Weaknesses) are blocking success, manual systems and silos prevent the brand from connecting its online traffic to its offline store.

Aldiva must transition from a Multi-Channel approach to an Integrated O2O approach. This strategy will leverage the Physical Store (S1) to capture Webrooming Traffic (O1), thereby neutralizing the Online Price Sensitivity (T1) and fixing the Inventory Disconnect (W1).

2. TOWS Matrix

Following the identification of key internal and external factors in the SWOT analysis, the TOWS Matrix is utilized to generate specific strategic options. According to Weihrich (1982), the TOWS framework facilitates the matching of external threats and opportunities with internal weaknesses and strengths to formulate actionable strategies.

This synthesis process yields four distinct strategic orientations for Aldiva. First, SO Strategies (Aggressive) focus on leveraging the physical store network to maximize the growing trend of webrooming behavior. Second, WO Strategies (Turnaround) aim to overcome critical inventory disconnects by adopting O2O technology to fix internal bottlenecks. Third, ST Strategies (Diversification) utilize superior product quality to counter high online price sensitivity. Finally, WT Strategies (Defensive) are designed to minimize organizational silos and cultural friction to ensure survival against agile competitors. The comprehensive TOWS Matrix detailing these specific strategies is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. TOWS Matrix

	Strenghts (S)	Weaknesses (W)
Opportunities (O)	• Click and try integration (S1+O1), Develop a seamless journey where customers browse online and are actively driven to the store to try the product	• Real time inventory system (W1+O2), Implement an Omnichannel POS to sync online and offline stock automatically • Create specific content that visualizes texture OR movement to

	Strenghts (S)	Weaknesses (W)
	• Digitize customer database into an integrated app-based loyalty program (S3+O2)	encourage store visits for verification (W3+O1)
Threats (T)	• Counter price sensitivity by positioning the store as a quality guarantee, justifying the premium price point (S1+S2+T1) • Use the physical store presence in digital ads to signal legitimacy against fake online shops (S1+T3)	• Eliminate silos by merging online and offline sales targets into a Shared O2O KPI to prevent internal competition (W2+T2) • Automate manual checks to reduce labor costs and administrative errors (W1+T1)

a. SO Strategy

The click-and-try model this strategy capitalizes on Aldiva's strongest asset the Physical Store (S1) to exploit the Webrooming trend (O1). Since the analysis confirmed that customers are hesitant to buy online due to the Sensory Gap, the strategy is not to force online sales, but to use the online channel to drive high-intent traffic to the store. This turns the store from a passive sales point into an active where validation occurs.

b. WO Strategy

Technological and cultural transformation, this is the most critical intervention area. The Internal Analysis identified Inventory Disconnect (W1) and Operational Silos (W2) as the root causes of failure. Adopting an O2O POS system (O2) is mandatory to solve W1. This eliminates miss-stock issue that currently frustrates customers. But, the technology will fail if the people are not aligned. Therefore, responding to W2 requires a redesign of the incentive structure (KPIs) so that online staff are rewarded not penalized when a customer completes a purchase offline.

c. ST Strategy

The online market is often characterized by intense price competition (T1). Rather than competing on price against mass-market brands, Aldiva utilizes its Product Quality (S2) and Physical Presence (S1) to compete on Value. By positioning the physical store as a guarantee of quality, Aldiva mitigates the customer's purchase risk. This strategy justifies a premium price point that purely online competitors cannot sustain, effectively protecting Aldiva from price declines.

d. WT Strategy

Internal consolidation strategy focuses on survival against Agile Competitors (T2). Competitors who are already digitally integrated can move faster than Aldiva. To survive, Aldiva must execute organizational restructuring. The current siloed way of working where online and offline teams compete is a vulnerability that makes the company slow and inefficient. By merging these functions under a unified O2O structure, Aldiva can eliminate internal friction, reduce administrative errors, and become agile enough to defend its market share against aggressive new entrants.

The TOWS analysis converges on one central theme, Integration. To survive and grow, Aldiva cannot simply improve its marketing, it must fundamentally restructure its operations to be Omnichannel-Ready. The proposed core strategy is therefore titled "The

Integrated O2O Commerce Strategy," which focuses on unifying Inventory (Tech), Incentives (People), and Experience (Customer Journey).

3. Integrated O2O Strategy

Based on the TOWS strategic formulation and aligned with the framework of Omnichannel Retailing, the core strategy proposed for Aldiva is The Integrated O2O Commerce Strategy. This strategy aims to dismantle the existing operational silos and transform Aldiva into a unified ecosystem where online and offline channels complement rather than compete with each other.

a) Pillar 1: Digital Infrastructure Integration

The internal analysis revealed a critical inventory disconnect caused by disjointed manual systems. Addressing this is the prerequisite for any further strategic development. Verhoef et al. (2015) emphasize that inventory visibility is the foundational capability for successful omnichannel retailing. Without real-time data integration, cross-channel operations cannot function effectively.

b) Strategic Mechanism

Implementation of a centralized Cloud POS system to act as a single source of truth.

1) Synchronization: Establishing a real-time bridge where stock depletion in the physical store triggers an immediate update across all digital marketplaces.
2) Operational Impact: This mechanism mitigates the risk of stock-outs, a key factor that drives customer dissatisfaction in the digital customer journey.

c) Pillar 2: Organizatonal Alignment

Technology implementation often fails due to resistance from human resources, identified in this study as operational silos. Neslin et al. (2006) identify channel conflict as a primary threat in multi-channel firms. They argue that alignment is only possible when online and offline teams share a superordinate goal rather than competing targets.

d) Strategic Mechanism

Transitioning from channel-based KPIs to an Attribution-Based Incentive Model.

1) Shared Commission: Implementing a referral reward system where Online Admins receive credit for directing high-intent leads to the offline store, while Store Staff receive the closing credit.
2) Cultural Shift: This structural change aims to transform the internal mindset from protecting individual channel revenue to maximizing total corporate revenue.

e) Pillar 3: Clik and Collect Strategy

This strategy implements a standardized BOPIS (Buy Online, Pick-up In-Store) model with a service guarantee. Bell et al. (2014) highlights that BOPIS is the most effective O2O strategy because it secures revenue upfront while driving foot traffic to the store, creating opportunities for cross-selling.

f) Strategic Mechanism

Customers purchase items via Web or WhatsApp with a "Pick Up in Store" option. Upon arrival, customers are encouraged to try the item immediately in the fitting room. If the size or material does not meet expectations during the pick-up session, Aldiva guarantees an Instant Exchange or Store Credit Refund on the spot. This secures the cash

flow for Aldiva while solving the customer's anxiety about buying the wrong size, as the return process is instant and shipping-free.

Implementation Plan

To Execute the proposed strategy effectively, a phased implementation roadmap is designed based on the Fix, Build, Scale framework over a 12-month period.

Table 3. Implemantion Plan

Phase	Timeline	Strategic Focus	Key Initiative	Success Metrics
Foundation Fix	Month 1-3	Capability Building	• Month 1: Vendor selection and stock opname • Month 2-3: Data migration, system Go-Live, and staff training on the new shared commission scheme	• Vendor selected & contracted • Inventory Accuracy >99% • Staff adoption rate: 100%
Journey Integration	Month 4-8	O2O Activation	• Enable pick-up & fit shipping option on website or whatsapp • Establish instant exchange SOP at the store to facilitate seamless pick-up experiences.	• Increase store traffic from online • Cross selling rate >10%
Relationship Scale	Month 9-12	CRM Optimization	• Launch Aldiva community to captur data for the next year's cycle • Merge transaction history for personalized Year-End & Pre-Ramadan campaigns.	• Active member ratio >30% • Increase repeat purchase

1) Phase 1: Foundation Fix

The roadmap strategically commences in April 2026 (Month 1), immediately following the peak Ramadhan season. This timing is critical because the post-festive period typically sees lower traffic, making it the ideal window for major operational overhauls.

a. Month 1: Focuses on vendor selection and a comprehensive Stock Opname. Before migrating to a digital system, the physical inventory data must be audited and cleaned to prevent errors.

b. Month 2-3: Focuses on Deployment. Once the vendor is selected and data is cleaned, the system goes live. Simultaneously, the new Shared Commission Scheme is being socialized to staff to ensure they are ready to support the O2O transition.

2) Phase 2: Journey Integration

After the internal foundation is stable, from Month 4-8 onwards, once inventory accuracy exceeds 99%, the "Pick-Up & Fit" (BOPIS) feature is activated. At this stage, the store staff is fully trained to handle instant exchanges, transforming the store from a transactional point into a service hub. This phased approach prevents the risk of launching a feature that the operations team cannot yet handle.

3) Phase 3: Relationship Scale

The final phase targets long-term sustainability. By Month 9, the system will have accumulated six months of clean transactional data. This data becomes the fuel for the Unified Membership Program. Aldiva can now accurately identify high-value customers who shop across both channels and target them with personalized retention campaigns, ensuring strong sales momentum entering the next year's cycle.

Conclusion

This study formulates an Integrated O2O Commerce Strategy to boost Aldiva's competitive edge in Indonesia's modest fashion sector by addressing internal barriers amid the webrooming trend (online research, offline validation). Despite high asset value from physical stores acting as trust anchors, Aldiva's performance suffers from operational silos, manual inventory systems, and siloed teams, as revealed by SWOT analysis and yielding low operational readiness. The strategy unifies online-offline ecosystems via three pillars: (1) Cloud POS for real-time inventory visibility; (2) shared commissions to align teams and foster collaboration; and (3) a secure Pick-Up & Fit click-and-collect model, transforming stores into risk-reduction hubs that neutralize the sensory gap, secure upfront revenue, and enable cross-selling for sustainable advantage. For future research, longitudinal studies could evaluate the strategy's long-term impact on customer loyalty and sales metrics post-implementation, comparing Aldiva against competitors.

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