

Unified Commerce

Can today's retailers adapt to the need for frictionless shopping?

By Columbus Consulting International
in collaboration with Island Pacific



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Executive summary

Retail is facing a seismic shift

New technology, the internet, social media and an empowered, fickle and less brand-loyal consumer have combined to create a new phenomenon. We now have multiple shopping channels from which we can shop 24/7 from just about anywhere in the world. To be a success in retail, new talents are urgently required, many of which are steeped in technology and the digital world.

Retail is going through an **unprecedented pace of change**. Although it has always been a dynamic industry, right now it is experiencing seismic changes that are driven by the changing wants, needs and desires of customers.

When did we think we would experience one of the biggest retailers in the world, Amazon, owns no stock. The biggest taxi company in the world, Uber, owns no taxis. Meanwhile, the biggest provider of accommodation, Airbnb, owns no facilities. The retail environment has turned on its head in the space of a handful of years.

Technology has forever changed consumer shopping patterns and the concept of “local retailers”. The ability to shop and receive products wherever, whenever, and however has created, in the customer’s eye, the expectation of a frictionless shopping experience. The consumer does not see or care about a retailer’s specific channel - the consumer cares about the experience and the ease by which a product can be purchased regardless if it is done in-store, on a mobile device or online. Unified commerce is the only way forward for many retailers and it is very much expected by the consumer!

We are a **‘time-starved generation’**; therefore, speed and convenience — not just price and brand — are differentiators in a world competing on customer experience. Retailers need to prioritise making sure their customers feel that any transaction is conducted quickly and efficiently and that their assortments are well edited for choice e.g. one-click shopping

As well as offering a seamless shopping trip, retailers need to make sure that, if a shopper chooses to spend valuable time in a particular store, or on a website, every single moment is believed to have been well spent. Consumers today are heavily under the influence of what is known as the ‘experience economy’. The most successful retailers are those that offer **‘time-poor shoppers’** experiential value when they shop and provide **relevance**.

Great, smooth customer experiences in all channels is the new normal. Contrary to recent sensationalised headlines about the demise of bricks-and-mortar stores, many studies demonstrate that consumers embrace all channels, including physical stores, and expect a seamless experience regardless of where or what they buy.

Key insights

1. What has led to frictionless shopping?
2. How will frictionless shopping impact retailers?
3. Why does frictionless shopping create a better customer experience?
4. Can friction be good?
5. What is the difference between frictionless shopping and frictionless retailing?
6. Omni-brand not Omni-channel, what does this mean?
7. How is the Internet of Things (IoT) impacting frictionless shopping?
8. Challenges retailers face when transitioning to their own version of frictionless commerce
9. What practical strategies can you employ to create a frictionless environment?





What has led to frictionless shopping?

Time-poor shoppers, less disposable income and competition has primarily led to customers wanting a quick and easy shopping experience.

Streamlining the process and reducing friction are key to a seamless omnichannel shopping experience. **The term “friction-free shopping” describes how each element of the journey becomes simpler and more intuitive**, making it easier to begin and complete the purchase. Smooth and convenient transactions are the order of the day.

This is not only an online issue, it is a real priority for physical shops to identify bottlenecks, or friction points, that might hinder shoppers from quickly and easily finding and buying products they want.

Consumers have come to expect instantaneous answers to their questions. They want information at their fingertips, literally, and to be able to easily find what they're looking for with a quick search on their smartphone. They don't want to wait in long checkout lines at stores, and they don't want to wait days to receive items ordered online. **Retailers have to provide a unified approach 'Unifiedcommerce' experience.**

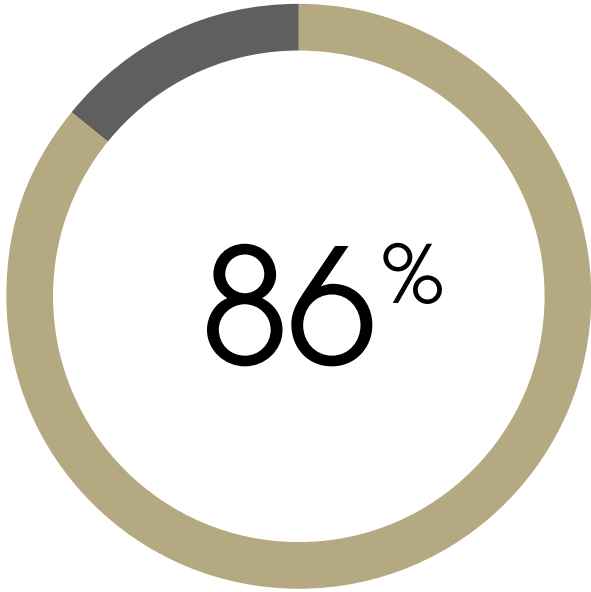
A recent example of the ultimate frictionless shopping experience is Amazon's rollout of Amazon Go. The technology is allowing customers to use a smartphone app that automatically adds items to their virtual shopping cart when they select them from the shelf. When they complete their shopping, they simply walk out. The items are then charged to their Amazon account.

Another example of a company that is embracing frictionless shopping is Walmart. The company recently launched Walmart Pay, a technology that allows customers to pay using a smartphone app. In its first few months, Walmart reports that 88% of customers who have tried it have become repeat users.

One of the big predictions for retail is that brands are going to double down on the customer experience: making shopping more personal and engaging, concentrating on building relationships and delivering added value rather than just securing a sale.

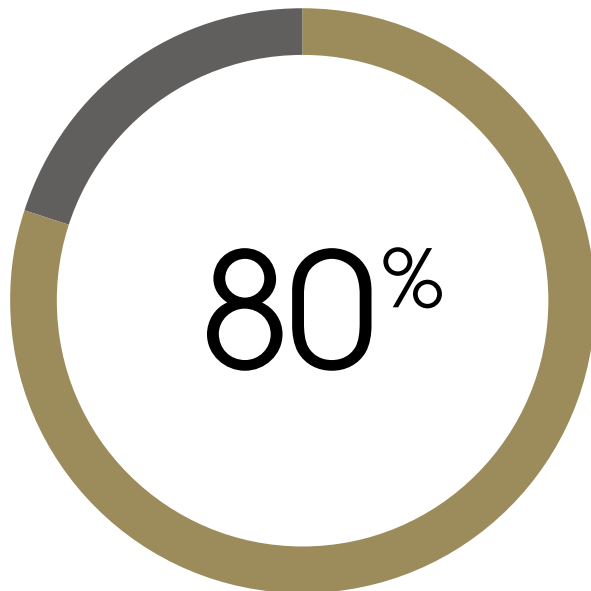
While many retailers are investing heavily in improving the in-store experience, we're not quite there yet. In fact, a recent study by Qmatic found 40% of UK retailers received complaints about items being unavailable, 37% about queue wait times, and 32% about store congestion. These are all fundamental elements of the in-store experience and the stats show many retailers today maybe still missing the mark.

Although more than 90 percent of retail sales still occur in-store, **consumers expect more from the brands they shop from**, and need a compelling reason to visit physical stores. And experience is key; according to The Annual Customer Experience Impact (CEI) report 86 percent of consumers are willing to pay 25% more for a better customer experience. Retailers must respond to stay relevant, earn loyalty, and be prepared for tomorrow.



of consumers will pay up to 25% more for a better customer experience

The Annual Customer Experience (CEI) Report



of companies say they deliver superior customer experience

8% of their customers think the same

Lee Resources





How will frictionless shopping impact retailers?

For retail businesses to thrive in a frictionless shopping environment, they must embrace technology and data throughout the process, from product innovation to the in-store consumer experience. Retailers can use technology to understand how consumers respond to packaging and displays, increase production to respond to demand, improve efficiencies in distribution, and alert retailers when fixtures need to be restocked. Smartphone push notifications can provide customers with useful information while they're shopping, eliminating the need for them to find a sales associate. **The aim is to unify the whole of the shopping experience.**

One of the most important new elements that retailers are having to consider, alongside usual payment methods, is a smooth mobile checkout process. Forms should be mobile-friendly and easy for consumers to complete. Minimise the authentication process by allowing third-party or fingerprint touch login. Make it easy for customers to find help via live chat, by calling, or with FAQs.

To stay competitive, embracing the concept of frictionless shopping across all a retailer's channels is a must. **Remember that your customers want to do business with retailers who understand the value of their time.** Some customers might actually want to chat at the checkout whilst others would prefer to scan a barcode on their smartphone. To be competitive, be sure you're giving your consumers what they want.

Why does frictionless shopping create a better customer experience?



There is a massive opportunity for retailers to manage friction and create customer experiences that not only provide value for both parties, but really help future-proof the industry. Brands are generally on board with the need to remove friction, believing it will encourage customers to return, bring more new customers in, and lead to happier employees. **So, what's involved?**

In a nutshell, look at what stops your customers from buying things, and fix the easy stuff first. **If you have stock issues, your shelving is a mess, your associates actively disengaged and your prices unclear, you have some obvious low-hanging fruit to start with:** get your inventory management sorted, train your staff and standardise your pricing.

Then you can look at more complicated areas. Are customers seeing content that encourages them to shop with you? Are you using customer data to create a consistent experience across all channels, or do you treat customers like strangers every time you encounter them? Are you engaging with people on their devices, on their terms?

The Internet of Things has created a bunch of new and exciting opportunities to remove friction and connect with customers: sensors and scanners, cameras and lighting, giving rise to concepts like Amazon Go and Alibaba's Hema. We can't cover off every possible use of smart technology to enhance in-store experiences, but here are a few ideas to get started:

Make sure on- and offline experiences are consistent

Most consumers will research products – especially high value items – before they decide to purchase, and will often look online before setting foot in a store. If they've done the research, decided you've got what they want and come in only to find the price is different or the product unavailable, you've created friction. Worst case scenario, the potential customer leaves with nothing and ends up buying from someone else.

These problems can be headed off at the pass by ensuring consistency across your channels, and showing physical stores with stock on your e-commerce site. You can offer an in-store ordering service if you don't have products in stock, with free home delivery thrown in. You can even use recognition technology and a bit of marketing magic to give the customer a personalized offer on that item when they walk into the store –



whether a discount, an add-on item, or extra loyalty points – to encourage the sale and make the experience memorable (positive friction!) Other ideas include:

- **Offer buy online pickup instore, minimise extra charges.** If people come into store, there's a good chance they'll buy additional items e.g. Dune, a shoe retailer in the UK. Once a customer has purchased a large item like a pair of boots, rather than carry them around, they will arrange for them to be sent to a shopper's home
- **Offer mobile order and pay,** with dedicated pickup counters to minimise in-store disruption while making it easy for customers to get in and out quickly
- **Consider connected technology** including kiosks, tablets and signage to make it easier to find additional information; or for customers to place additional orders while in store
- **Use a mobile loyalty program** that lets customers automatically earn points & claim rewards without swiping cards or giving phone numbers
- **Consider introducing mobile checkout technology** to minimise / eliminate queues – store associates can assist and check out customers wherever they are in the store

Essentially, you're looking to reduce friction through technology and people to make it easy for customers to find what they want – and to offer them more things they may like. **Above all else, it's about creating an experience that facilitates – not frustrates – the customer journey.** Want happy, loyal, high value customers who recommend you to their friends? Give them a reason: make your in-store experience easy to love.

When a "sales campaign" and actual "sale" are separated only by one click, brands gain the opportunity to reach consumers in new, exciting ways. Shift focus from sales fundamentals to perfecting experience fundamentals, generating smart content to deploy everywhere to forge new connections, facilitate sales conversion, and boost loyalty. Constantly refine and reinvent messaging for new missions and occasions.

In the world of social commerce, every consumer might be a mini-influencer; an active partner in social selling. Marketing capabilities and budgets should include the creation of engaging, relevant content for deployment on social media, either directly or indirectly. Sales teams and media agencies should think of online and offline touchpoints as media platforms, while marketers must care more about selling. Adopting a more integrated approach, learning as you go, will transform marketing from a brand expense into a brand asset.

A group of people, including a man and two women, are looking at a laptop screen. The image is overlaid with several circular icons: a photo gallery icon, a speech bubble icon, an envelope icon, and a cloud icon. The background is a bright, sunny outdoor setting with green foliage.

Can friction be good?

Interestingly, friction isn't always a negative. Surprise in-store giveaways or popup sales will almost certainly distract customers, but are more likely to be welcomed than, say, finding out the one thing they came in for is out of stock. **Positive friction helps build positive customer sentiment**, which goes a long way to ensuring an ongoing relationship. And, if we're being honest, happy customers are also likely to spend more. If I take you up on an offer for something I really wanted but had no plans to buy today, then I'm going to leave happy with the deal I've received, and you're going to be happy with my additional spend.

So, there's a definite distinction to be made between a smooth experience and a robotic one. **Removal of negative friction is a key way to improve the customer experience, but removal of all friction could have the opposite effect**, as there's not much of an 'experience' left to enjoy. So, what does this positive friction look like?

- Receiving a special offer for something on my wish-list that I might not have been planning to buy today
- Having a store associate come up and show me add-on item to go with something I've got in my basket, or to show me something cool (and relevant) that's just come in
- Being notified of an unexpected loyalty reward as I'm making my way through the aisles, or having one granted at the checkout
- Being alerted to a red-light sale currently running a few aisles over
- Getting an invitation to drop by the store café for a free muffin with my coffee

These are all interruptions that leave me feeling good about the experience, not frustrated that something's getting in my way. **Positive friction is about encouraging a positive mental attitude in customers** that will hopefully then result in an increase in both time and money spent.

The secret to a rewarding customer experience is to smooth away the negative friction while still finding ways to surprise and delight customers in store.

Bloomingdale's Manhattan flagship ran a Father's Day promotion in which it encouraged passers-by to interact with its digital windows via touch screens that showed the range (causing positive friction). If they liked what they saw, they could text 'POLO' for a link to a checkout page. This could even opt to have their options hand-delivered to the sidewalk outside – completing the entire impulse buy without even entering the store.

What is the difference between frictionless shopping and frictionless retailing?

A decade ago, IBM envisioned the future of retail, with no cash registers, no cashiers, and no checkout lines:

More recently, we have talked about frictionless commerce as the change brought about by the internet – through the lowering of transaction costs and the convenience/ease of online shopping. **But now, frictionless retail implies much more.** Amazon Go has established a higher standard – a new and improved customer experience that all retailers are going to have to deal with. We can now reframe frictionless retail as a **checkout-less shopping experience**. The customer simply picks up the product and walks out of the store. Artificial intelligence (AI), computer vision, deep learning algorithms and the Internet of Things (IoT) do the rest.

Here's how Amazon describes the experience:

“When you arrive, use the app to enter the store, then feel free to put your phone away—you don't need it to shop. Then just browse and shop like you would at any other store. Once you're done shopping, you're on your way! No lines, no checkout.”

Amazon Go integrates various technology components: computer vision, sensor fusion, IoT, and AI to create this frictionless shopping experience. The easy part for the system is identifying you as you enter through an identification gateway similar to a subway turnstile. The genius of Amazon Go is that from the moment you step into the store until you leave, AmazonGo keeps track of you, along with the items you select. As you simply walk out of the store with your items, it adds up your virtual cart, charges your Amazon account, and sends your receipt to the app.

What Amazon Go has developed today is a very interesting experiment. But is it really scalable?

Analyst Bill McBeath suggests that there are as many as 200+ cameras in the ceilings and 4000+ more cameras on the shelves along with weight scales on each shelf. Certainly, this would mean some very significant changes to existing retail, so the jury is still out especially for larger products like clothing with the need for packing etc.

The frictionless supply chain

To make retail truly frictionless, we should start at the beginning of the supply chain — the point of product innovation. IoT technologies enable retailers to play a more active role in product design and evolution. Video analytics and mobile data from Wifi on the showroom floor, or even weight sensing shelves and 3D cameras positioned over displays, can help retailers create a “living laboratory” in the store.

Combining advanced analytics with the data generated by these technologies provides real-time insights into the ways consumers respond to products, packaging and displays, as well as how they travel through a store and where they dwell. These insights can be communicated immediately up the supply chain to product designers and manufacturers, allowing them to optimize rapidly and change product design, packaging or merchandising — or even ramp up production to account for unexpected demand.

Frictionless distribution

IoT can also be used to reduce friction throughout the distribution process. **Retailers are using analytics, drones, computer vision and weight sensing shelves to track warehouse inventory in real time.** IoT-connected trucks enable retailers to better understand when products will arrive at or leave distribution centres and when stores should re-stock. Connected fleets, with sensors on the docks, trucks and drivers make distribution more predictable and cost-effective, helping retailers keep consumers informed and reduce costs. Many of these fleets are already employing frictionless fuelling by equipping trucks with RFID tags that automatically communicate their identity and location to the fuel pump so drivers can simply fill up, then pull away – all the transactions are taken care of frictionlessly.



Omni-brand not Omni-channel, what does this mean?

The buzz words we have got used to are firstly cross-channel, then multi-channel, then omni-channel. Should retailers just focus on Omni-brand, how their brand interacts with their customers no matter how and where they shop? **Consumers are pledging their loyalty to the provision of services, solutions, and experiences. They are using their increased control to create personal retail ecosystems**, populated with those best able to deliver the personalised, seamless, integrated experiences they are learning to expect.

Many brands are already doing this, preserving valuable retailer relationships and growing direct connections with consumers.

All this is putting an end to standard shopping processes and changing the relationship consumers have with retailers and brands. Consumers want good experiences. As they see and shop the brand, it's irrelevant which channel this occurs in. **Success depends on making meaningful, relevant, and appropriate connections with consumers.** This requires creating omni-brand not omnichannel experiences. This means providing integrated, constant brand experiences at every interaction, connecting with consumers one-on-one, while enabling unified online and offline engagement.

How is the Internet of Things (IoT) impacting frictionless shopping?

Reducing friction has long been a goal in the retail industry, but the promise of “frictionless retail” has remained elusive. However today, thanks to the Internet of Things, mobile, cloud computing, edge analytics and other digital technologies, the promise of frictionless retail is finally within reach.

The concept of frictionless retail is the elimination of any non-value-added activities that can negatively impact the customer experience, sales or operational efficiency. Often, these points of friction exist simply because until now there hasn't been a better way. For example, how many of us are tired of having to find our credit and loyalty cards, swipe them at the gas pump, punch in our postcodes, dismiss irrelevant offers, wait for a paper receipt and more, just to fill our cars with fuel? A much better, “frictionless” experience would be to simply drive up to the pump, fill the tank and drive off, getting a receipt via e-mail. Many consumers are already using their phone on the tube, paying for parking and picking up hire cars.

Today, with the emergence of the Internet of Things (IoT) we can finally connect the physical world with the systems, machines, technologies and processes used throughout the retail industry to reduce or eliminate friction every step of the way. This enables retailers to streamline operations, increase sales, improve the customer experience and ensure loyalty.

To achieve the goal of frictionless retail, retailers must first begin by identifying the stakeholders involved and the areas of their business that are the best targets for eliminating friction. Stakeholders include not only the retailer and its customers, but also employees and supply chain partners. Digital technologies can be used to reduce friction in every stage of the retail supply chain — from product design and manufacturing, to distribution, to the customer's in-store shopping experience and even after consumers bring their purchases home.

Even after consumers get their purchases home, IoT technologies are being used to further reduce friction. Retailers can take advantage of smart pantries or provide consumers with tools like the Amazon Dash buttons to provide the convenience of predictive, proactive ordering so consumers never run out of an item. Other products, such as smart cars and connected appliances, are able to recognize when service is needed and automatically schedule service appointments or prompt the consumer to renew their warranty. Proactive maintenance in this way can greatly reduce the need for service and extend product life.

The Internet of Things brings the promise of frictionless retail within reach for the first time. Retailers that want to reduce friction throughout their business processes should begin by examining their stakeholders, identifying the points of friction that currently exist and evaluating the areas of their operations that are primed for eliminating friction. Common areas to target include speeding sales through automatic payments, optimizing the in-store experience through the use of beacons, sensors and mobile payment options, connecting to smart objects in consumers' homes for proactive reordering and servicing, and even using real-time data to improve product design and short-run manufacturing. With these strategies and the IoT technologies that make them possible, retailers can streamline operations and provide customers with a truly frictionless experience, which ultimately increases sales.

The emerging Internet of Things (IoT) is making once-inert objects “smart” or “intelligent” and realising a vision of connecting just about everything online. A key link in that vastly expanded network is intelligent labels and other solutions empowered by radio frequency identification (RFID) and ground-breaking technology platforms. These innovations enable brands and retailers to track inventory more accurately and thereby meet customer demand as never before, while also delivering unique and personal experiences at the point of sale and beyond. **The same innovations enable brands and retailers to tell much deeper product stories** and increase transparency about sourcing, sustainability, and other criteria consumers increasingly base purchasing decisions upon.

Challenges retailers face when transitioning to their own version of frictionless commerce

1. An under investment in technology over the past few decades leaves most retailers with legacy IT ecosystems without the flexibility or capacity to adopt new technologies
2. The speed of innovation: retailers are faced with an ever-increasing host of new and innovative technologies hitting the market that impact how consumers live their lives. How do retailers figure out which technologies they should invest in that will bring long term benefits?
3. Organisational and system silos that cause inefficiencies, errors and the inability to access reliable, actionable insights on consumer preference and demand
4. Tighter labour markets and rising wages, making it harder to find and keep good associates
5. Retail COOs and CIOs may be hesitant to act due to the uncertainty of what innovations will come next, not to mention the daunting prospect of replacing legacy systems and infrastructures
6. In-store shopping experiences that don't meet their shoppers' demands and have friction points throughout the shopping journey
7. Increased pressure to get the basics right: accurate inventory planning, reducing shrink, and having to do more with less

In the wake of growing competition, changing consumer expectations, and technology advances, retailers are looking towards technology to reinvent the consumer experience inside the store. A media post recently reported that **100 percent of retailers surveyed are currently engaged in a "major digital transformation game plan."** According to The Store Experience Study, overall IT spending for 2018 is expected to grow by 5.6 percent, with store systems spending 5.8 percent higher than 2017. **Much of this investment is focused on "frictionless checkout," which essentially means technologies that remove the 'friction' (inconvenience, frustration, inefficiency) from the shopping journey to provide easier, happier shopping experiences inside the store.**



What practical strategies can retailers employ to create a frictionless environment?

The many preferences of today's consumer

Consumers across generations hold different values and shop in different ways. **Millennials may approach shopping with a self-service, mobile-first philosophy, while baby boomers are more likely to choose assisted POS** and prefer getting help from a customer service representative. It's important to understand and appreciate these distinctions, as baby boomers, gen x'ers and millennials all have relevant buying power. People are living longer, so we're seeing boomers still having a strong influence on the retail industry. **And, millennials are just coming into their full purchasing potential**, which means their influence will only grow in the future.

So, what's the best approach to create a frictionless environment?

Your customers are on the move

Meet them wherever they are and, most importantly, wherever they're going next. Remember that, to remove friction, you must start by being where your customers want you and need you to be.

Adopting smarter shopper-centricity

The best brands place the shopper at the heart of their operation, by considering the end-to-end experience, from awareness to purchase to referral. Better consumer connections can be enabled by embedding data and smart technology into operations, breaking down data silos for cross-functional interconnection, and extending links into the broader ecosystems of Alibaba and Amazon.

The final building block

joining up all the dots is leveraging data/artificial intelligence (AI) to identify meaningful insights from the plethora of data collected across the path-to-purchase, creating a holistic view of an individual consumer. This is smart shopper-centricity, and it is essential in providing omni-brand experiences.

Thinking like a customer

Understanding the complete value equation, and extracting the best results from it, is essential. For many consumers, saving time is as important as saving money, and we increasingly expect friction-free shopping. At the same time, we want experiences that engage and inspire, and are tailored to our needs and appropriate to the shopping mission.

Acting as a one demand team

Winning in this new world of retail requires rethinking and redesigning operations; creating integrated teams, with sales and marketing working in harmony, is a basic requirement. **Success requires working effectively in cross-functional teams** which include marketing, sales, consumer engagement, ecommerce, store, data analysis, and supply chain. Supply chains will need to be sufficiently flexible to adjust in real time based on sales results, and will increasingly incorporate a range of emerging technologies, from AI to the Internet of Things and to voice technology. **Successful brands will transform their operations to exploit the opportunities** represented by all of this, making them both more effective and more efficient.



Modernising route-to-market and retail formats

Old retail is fragmented, defined by multi-layered distribution networks, and riddled with pain-points. Costs are high, brands have limited control, poor transparency into sales, and legacy systems that are unable to accommodate new routes to the consumer.

In the age of frictionless retail, distribution networks will be simplified. The leading brands will cut out pain-points, remove middle-men, and create streamlined digital-enabled route-to-market models. Costs will fall because value chains will be less complex, coverage will be expanded thanks to greater supply chain flexibility, and sales performance and channel relationship visibility will increase thanks to real-time inventory and sales data. With greater control of the value chain, brands introduce targeted retail formats, and reduce communication costs, while increasing SKU productivity. Messaging is tailored, and insights generated from sales data relied upon to optimise product portfolios within a retailer.

This is a journey, not a destination

To thrive, brands must acknowledge that the changes they make now, the capabilities they develop, and the operating models they devise, won't produce instant results. **Incrementality is the wrong mentality**, with success requiring brands to constantly refine and reinvent themselves for new missions and occasions. By thinking omni-brand over omnichannel, and focusing on experience not sales fundamentals, we'll begin to erode the pain-points that irritate shoppers and enable the factors that win their loyalty to take over. As a result, fragmented retail will become frictionless

Grab-and-go shopping

Most recently represented by the Amazon Go store, is one of the more attention-grabbing paths for achieving frictionless checkout, but it's only one of the many paths that retailers could consider.

Rise above channel or device

The goal is to provide consumers with the ability to interact and shop across channels, creating a seamless, fluid and frictionless brand experience.

Personalisation and relevance

Consumers today demand the hyper-personalisation of everything. Personalisation is what happens when a retailer can both leverage a deep understanding of a consumer's preference and anticipate his or her needs. For example, consider how some retailers are using augmented reality to personalize and shape customer experiences.

Increase engagement

The path to eliminating friction and increasing engagement may seem intimidating; **digitalisation doesn't stop at your website or mobile apps.** It involves customer-facing interactions and, often, how your retail business operates on the back end. Creating on-demand services shouldn't be left to Uber and Airbnb, and offering in-app augmented reality (AR) features shouldn't be limited to Snapchat or Amikasa.

Find inspiration to stay ahead

Think of, for example, leveraging push notifications or chatbots to smooth out the customer experience or solving customer service issues more quickly for frustrated shoppers. Think of tapping augmented reality or simpler mobile interfaces to better engage with would-be buyers or upsell products. The technology itself won't be the cure-all. But good things happen when retailers leverage technology, take risks, and innovate.

Key Takeaways

- Understand your customers and listen to them
- Customers don't understand "channels" they just want to browse and shop in the most seamless and fluid way
- Some customers like browsing, others maybe time-bound, consider all customer journeys as make these as simple as possible
- Modernise and simplify your routes to market and retail formats
- Be consistent
- Act as one co-ordinated demand team – marketing, buying & merchandising, ecommerce should all act with the customer at the heart of what they do



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Island Pacific SmartOmni

Overview

Today, retail consumers have any number of options for viewing and purchasing products, whether in store, online, by catalog, direct mail, or over the phone. The same applies to business consumers and franchise partners. Managing stock and sales in a multi-channel retail environment is an increasingly challenging task with effective management of multi-channel operations requiring a holistic view.

Island Pacific SmartOmni provides a centralized view of your business in a real time environment. Allowing all customer orders such as online orders, reserve & collect and click & collect to be viewed in real time. All activity can be tracked using a single software solution. Customer Order Orchestration allows business rules to be defined in order to drive efficiency and on time customer delivery. For example, if an order is placed and your warehouse/store are out of stock, then the order can be fulfilled from the nearest store or fulfillment location.

Island Pacific SmartOmni allows retailers to easily manage sales and stock, streamlining multi-channel operations while keeping customers content. For an even more versatile solution, Island Pacific SmartOmni can be integrated with Island Pacific SmartWeb (or other third party e-commerce websites) and Island Pacific SmartChannel and Island Pacific SmartStore. For a demo, or to find out more, contact us today.



Island Pacific
SmartOmni



Central View of Customer



Central View of Stock



Order/Transfer Routing



Special Order Management



Click & Collect



Reserve & Collect

Benefits

- ▼ **Increase sales by making use of stock availability across the business**
- ▼ **React quicker to customer demand to drive customer loyalty**
- ▼ **Increase profitability by reducing markdowns and protecting margins**
- ▼ **Flexible delivery:** Let the customer choose their preferred delivery method
- ▼ **Full integration:** Integrate with other Island Pacific solutions or third party systems to guarantee a full view of sales, orders, allocations and warehouse operations
- ▼ **Intelligent shipping:** Automate shipping of stock from the most suitable/cost effective location, saving unnecessary transfer and shipping costs
- ▼ **Intelligent Order Orchestration:** Ensure customer orders are fulfilled and shipped from the most efficient and optimal location
- ▼ **Continuous improvement:** Track KPI's such as order acknowledgement and response times, and other performance measures to ensure quick and responsive customer order execution

Features

- ▼ **Central view of stock across all channels in real time:** Utilize the concept of virtual, consolidated stock availability across all locations to fulfill orders across all channels and reduce "out of stock" situations
- ▼ **Full inventory tracking of all activity**
- ▼ **Intelligent Order Orchestration:** Define business rules that make efficient use of available merchandise taking into account critical attributes such as delivery time frames, rate of sale & stock locations
- ▼ **Centralized and Real Time view of all activity associated with Omni Channel orders**