

## Leading Retailer Focuses on Unified Commerce and is Reaping the Benefits from its Digital Transformation

### **Increased demand prioritizes urgency for becoming unified.**

Like all great brand stories, Columbus Consulting's client started from humble beginnings. This mid-20th century business grew from being homegrown to one of America's leading retailers with a network of distribution channels and an array of brands and product categories. Although operational, the evolution of their technology solutions was not scalable, nor sustainable.

Customer experience is central to the mission of the company as it

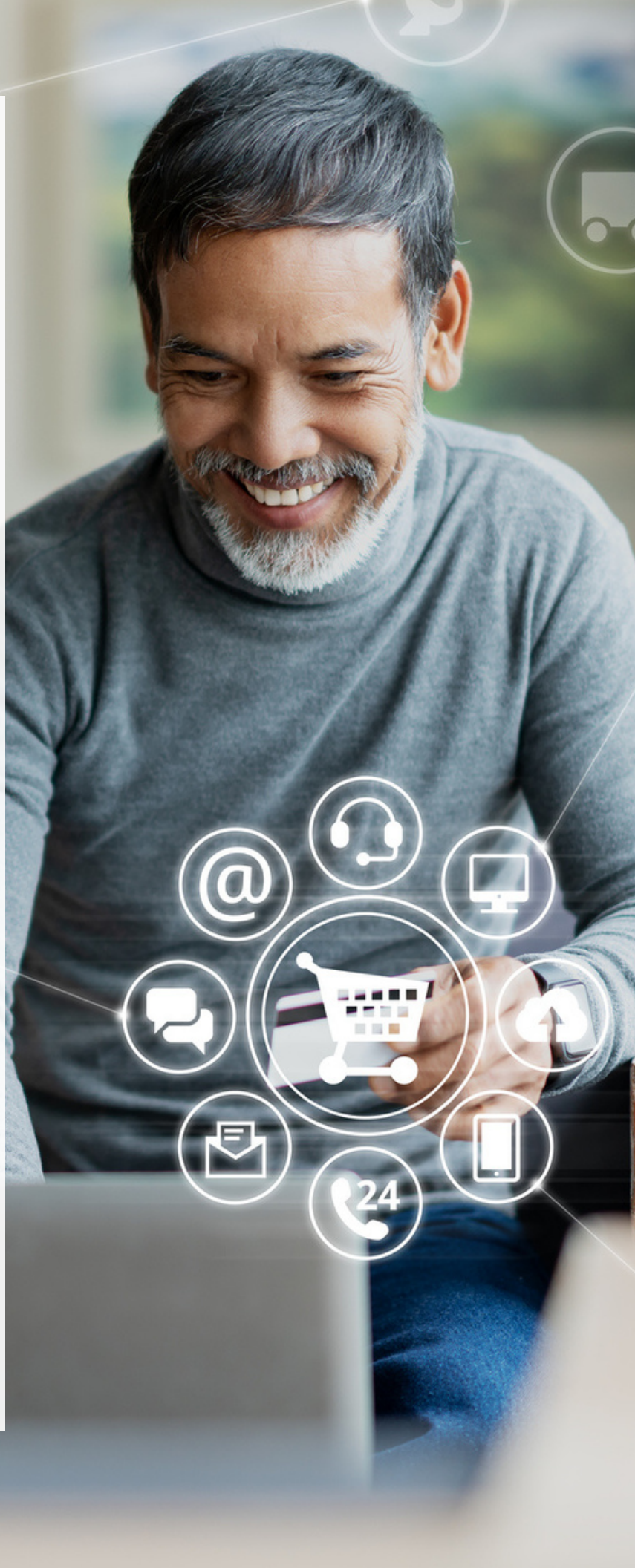
strives to maintain its reputation as the most trusted authority in its category. The company encompasses a variety of brands and product categories. However, the associated brands were at one time spread across seven separate websites. This led to competition within brands and a disrupted customer journey that had the potential to stunt growth for the company.



### Looking for a place to start.

Achieving an omni-channel experience for shoppers of the brand required a total business transformation, as each underlying issue impacted another area of the business. After internal reflection, the corporate team determined that the key issues were within the order management system and the complex separation of the multiple brands across its e-commerce websites. Ultimately, the brand was challenged by a misshapen view of the customer journey that could not be resolved without a unified customer relationship management approach that would combine the data that had resided separately by brand and by store and by 7 different websites.

The retailer realized they did not have the capabilities in-house to manage a cross-functional, multi-brand, transformational project of this scale. They knew they needed a unified commerce transformation but they also had to carry on the day-to-day operations. Additionally, they needed to be mindful of the impact of the timing on their seasonally heightened business model. The team sought the expertise of Columbus Consulting, a 20+year old retail consulting company composed of retail practitioners all of whom held senior level positions at retailers themselves and could hit the ground running.



### **Collectively, the team sought to:**

1. Provide a single transactional view of the customers to optimize the consumer experience and enhance business efficiencies while streamlining service operations.
2. Implement industry best practice solutions for the Commerce Foundational layer, synchronizing their brands while allowing extension of omni capabilities.
3. Adapt a multi-channel sales approach for customers across devices, platforms and shopping outlets which was seamless.
4. Ensure the adequate functioning of the retailer during the busy season with minimal disruptions.
5. Enable a strategy and solution that would allow for the company's future growth.

### **The team gains traction.**

With clear business priorities and the right partner in place with Columbus Consulting, the team was confident they were ready to start their transformation.

Columbus Consulting, executed a three phased approach to addressing the current business roadmap.

1. Partner on the appropriate systems selections to establish the right tech stack for implementation and scalability.
2. Create foundational enablement establishing the right organizational structure and processes, practices, and technology.
3. Build out an omni-channel business model that included data cleansing, standardization and governance.



### Project Scope:

- E-commerce – Re-platforming the company's cloud solution and customer service capabilities to the Salesforce Commerce Cloud
- Order Management – Restructuring the retailer's OMS to Manhattan Active Omni, in order to support distributed order management, customer service and returns, across all DCs with integration for vendors, warehouses and 3PLs
- Change Management – Engaging stakeholders, transferring knowledge and training, and aligning the organization
- Supporting Projects – Achieving one view of the customer through a new CRM to enable unified promotions management, among other initiatives

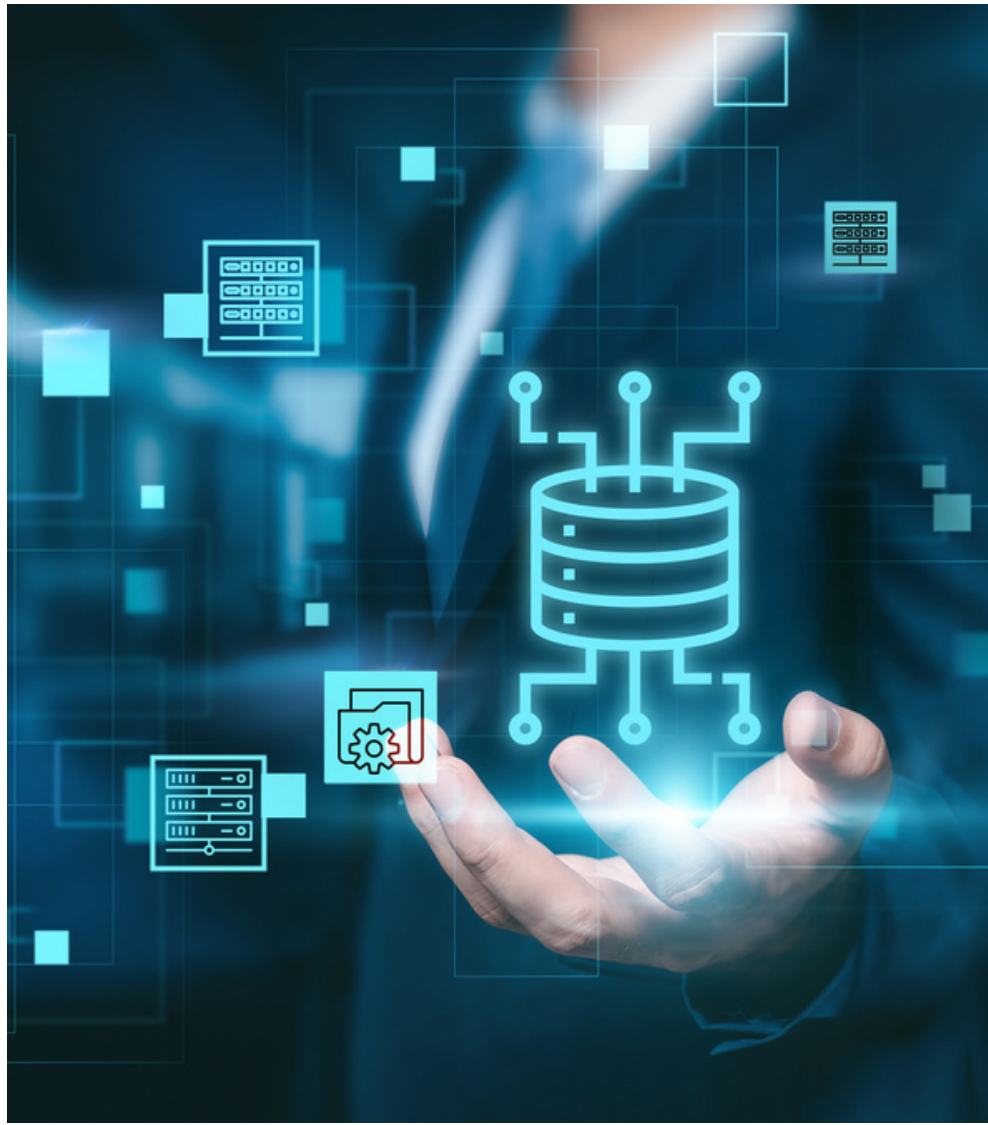
In addition, the project scope included engaging with all stakeholders to share knowledge, implement training and oversee change management. And, finally, it also encompassed the achievement of the main goal to provide one view of the customer through a new CRM to enable unified promotions management and enable other initiatives long-term.



### Early success.

The retailer credits Columbus Consulting for the overall endurance through and successful completion of the project. They acknowledged that the team took responsibility for the challenges that surfaced, understood the urgency and remained agile throughout in order to complete phase one within 1 year from vendor selections and fulfill the goal of becoming unified shortly thereafter.

The brand not only secured a new IT structure, it consolidated its seven brands into three B2C websites, implemented B2B solution, unified the customer CRM, built out both PIM and DAM systems in the process, launched gift card and loyalty programs, standardized its SKU master data, implemented order management processes, and initiated multi-channel services like BOPIS and BORIS. Additionally, the project implemented updates to adhere to new SOX compliance regulations.



### A new beginning.

The retailer is now on its way to achieving the ROI associated with the deliverables from this project. They are seeing greater efficiencies from fulfillment, sales and site performances and have a revamped unified business model to compete in the new digital retail universe.

The Project Sponsor commented "I have never seen a digital transformation of this extent launched on time or under budget, much less both," said the IT Vice President. "The project required us to put so much trust in Columbus Consulting. I was essentially managing the manager of delivery, so I couldn't be in the weeds. I found myself asking 'What insurmountable challenge will we find today?' and then watching the team handle it with ease. Their due diligence and commitment to our success made all the difference."

According to Columbus Consulting's client manager, Eric Bunfill, "This is exactly where Columbus shows its strengths as a true partner to retailers. Embedding our experts into the day-to-day world and sitting side-by-side with our clients enables us to anticipate challenges, address issues real time and deliver true results even through difficult times and conditions. Our brand partners trusted us and empowered us to help them reset for the future."



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