

Click-and-collect now part of retailer's omnichannel strategy

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With Black Friday and the festive season fast approaching, retailers are gearing up for a bumper shopping season. It is the perfect opportunity for retailers to offer an exceptional end-to-end customer experience by introducing click-and-collect as part of their omnichannel strategy.



Bluegrass Digital CEO Nick Durrant

Click-and-collect has become increasingly popular, it offers faster checkouts and product collection. Customers can now skip long delivery times and potentially costly shipping costs while enjoying the convenience of online shopping channels.

Shoppers can now do online purchases at leisure and then collect from a convenient location at a convenient time. Pick-up options include in-store, onsite drive- thru facility, third party convenience stores and public lockers accessed via a code emailed or sent by SMS.

Bluegrass Digital CEO Nick Durrant says click-and-collect will help retailers provide customers with additional options at check-out, whether customers visit physical stores or engage with brands through any online sales channel. “The fact is, today’s customers expect more fulfilment options, regardless of where or how they shop.”

“Retailers that provide an array of fulfilment options will provide a better customer experience and will be favoured. However, providing an efficient click-and-collect service is not without its challenges,” he warns.

E-commerce is predicted to grow by almost \$11tn between 2021 and 2025. This enormous growth reiterates the importance of omnichannel approaches as more customers adapt to seamless shopping experiences. Retailers can significantly boost their revenues with an omnichannel retail strategy, but failing to do so could also seriously impair sales potential.

Retailers need to rethink the store environment in order to offer an end-to-end customer experience. They must also learn how to enhance their omnichannel retail strategies to prioritise customer service to provide a seamless shopping experience.

Durrant says retailers have to invest in their omnichannel capabilities and enhance their existing ecommerce platforms. “It is clear that shoppers demand convenience and that means a plethora of options. Click-and-collect growth is a reflection of this need but it’s not quite as simple as supply and demand, the operational processes remain a massive challenge.”

Omnichannel fulfilment strategies

Retailers can effectively roll out click-and-collect options by providing customers with automated product collection confirmations and by refining the communication processes for a seamless collection experience.

For example, retailers should provide customers with a user-friendly navigation across apps and websites and more importantly, a responsive inventory system with product unavailable.

“They should embrace inventory visibility to streamline omnichannel experiences. By connecting all their channels and utilising a single source of truth of the inventory, they can obtain real-time data on how transactions affect inventory levels across all locations,” he explains.

Giving customers real-time inventory insights is crucial for retailers. This visibility gives retailers the ability to re-allocate stock when needed and enables an improved click-and-collect experience for customers.

An advanced order management system (OMS) equips retailers with critical insights and capabilities to fulfil omnichannel demands at scale. Modern OMS help retailers streamline every aspect of their order management, optimising omni-channel experiences at each touchpoint.

Using customer data

Although many brands integrate customer data in their omnichannel strategies, they still lack the same personalisation for offline experiences. Using customer data throughout the omnichannel strategy gives retailers a comprehensive view of shopper behaviour, driving seamless customer engagement and loyalty according to key purchasing practices.

Durrant says retailers also need to be able to record every touchpoint, regardless of where they occur. “This provides a more comprehensive insight into customer interactions, which can be used to improve the overall shopping experience.”

For click-and-collect to succeed, retailers need an order management system that effectively covers the entire lifecycle of every order. A success omnichannel strategy will give a brand fulfilment capabilities and visibility, something that retailers don’t have if they use manual processes to handle their inventory and orders.

The solution

Digital experience platforms (DXP) like Optimizely empower retailers with the tools and insights they need to create and optimise in new and novel ways. It provides a strong foundation to support any retailers ongoing roadmap for a customer-centred omnichannel strategy.

Retailers can create experiences customers can't live without. Optimizely B2C commerce is a complete suite for digital commerce and content management that uses artificial intelligence to deliver personalised experiences, individualised search rankings and product recommendations.

It also helps retailers align with their customer's needs by delivering meaningful and exclusive experiences that inspire shoppers to act. As human interactions are increasingly replaced or augmented with digital experiences, retailers can quickly adapt and align their brand to what matters most to their customers.

Modern retail omnichannel strategies include an array of channels including in-store purchases, app-based platforms and social media marketplaces. With Optimizely, they can now launch fast and grow faster by combining critical digital commerce capabilities such as Product Catalogue Management, Order Management and Site Search with modern

marketing tools such as Personalisation, Optimisation and Experience Management.

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