

Retail convenience: meeting consumer demands

The desire for convenience is becoming a core consideration across all retail sectors. Speed, simplicity, and a personalised service are just some of the things that make the difference between keeping your customers returning and losing out to your competitors. In order to keep up, retailers need to put convenience at the heart of their offering.

"Gartner reports that by 2018, more than 50% of organisations will implement significant business model changes in their efforts to improve customer experience."¹



By 2020, customer experience will overtake price and product as the key differentiator between brands²



86% of buyers would pay more for a better customer experience³



56% consumers willing to share data to receive faster and more convenient service⁴

Today's consumer demands

As consumers, we all have our gripes. Whether it's having to queue too long in-store, waiting an extra day for a supposed next day delivery, or seeing something you like online - then being unable to find it in-store. So what solutions can retailers offer?

Assisted shopping

Having staff who are available and knowledgeable is key to increasing customer satisfaction both in-store and online. Without them, retailers face a loss of loyal custom.



Powered by personalised fit data from True Fit, **Levi's Virtual Stylist** offers fashion advice responding to customers in a conversational tone, akin to in-store advice. Shop Direct is another example; it's **Very Assistant** allows customers to find answers to questions, through multiple choice within a natural chat environment.

75% of consumers say it's important to interact with a salesperson who is available when needed⁵

67% of people expect to see or use messaging apps when talking to a business⁶

80% of customer engagements can be handled by bots⁷

When purchasing online, 71% of visitors expect help within five minutes⁸

42% switch companies because they are put off by rude or unhelpful staff⁹

Speed of service

Consumers have little time or patience, whether waiting to pay or for someone to come and help. A slow, inefficient service could put them off for life. Amazon is answering this expectation with its Amazon-Go offering. Using it's "Just Walk Out Technology", customers scan their phone upon entrance, grab their desired items and go. They are automatically charged the right amount, without the need to stop at a till.



58% of consumers say the ability to quickly and easily find what they want is one of the most important factors in selecting a retailer¹⁰

35% of millennial shoppers want the ability to search merchandise in a physical store using an image, and then receive product recommendations on the spot¹¹

66% of customers stop doing business with a company because of poor customer service¹³

40% of adults now use voice search at least once per day¹²



Personalisation counts

Without tailoring experiences to individual needs, retailers may lose out on customer loyalty. The more personalised the experience, the more likely consumers will be to continue their journey with that brand.

Furniture retailer **West Elm** last year unveiled its Pinterest Style Finder. The tool uses AI to scan customer Pinterest boards to create a list of personalised products. Unlike other AI-powered tools, the use of Pinterest boards vs browsing history helps the retailer really get to grips with personal preference.



93% of companies see an uplift in conversion rates from personalisation¹⁴



41% switch company due to poor personalisation¹⁶



59% of consumers who experienced personalisation say that it significantly influenced what they purchased¹⁵

Convenient payment options

When it comes to paying, consumers want more options and less waiting time. Footwear retailer **Schuh** use portable point of sale devices that enable customers to pay from wherever they are within the store; removing the need to queue at the till. While **Wagamama** have this year launched a new app that allows customers to pay for their meal via their phone, adding speed and convenience to the dining experience.

51% of consumers are influenced by a quick and easy checkout process¹⁷

58% of consumers' time spent in-store is spent at the checkout desk¹⁸

Mobile point-of-sale revenue around the world is expected to reach almost \$50 billion in 2021, (from just \$6.6 billion in 2016)²¹

1/3 point-of-sale terminals will accommodate mobile²²



51% of small business owners plan to add new mobile payment options by 2018¹⁹

By 2020, in-store mobile payments will reach \$503 billion - an 80% increase from 2015²⁰

Flexible delivery options

In today's instant gratification culture, customers will shop elsewhere if they consider delivery times too long or inconvenient. They also want the choice of delivery and returns.

When it comes to making lives easy, **ASOS** are leading the way. It's customers can choose from several delivery methods including same day, as well as many ways to return items. This includes via any of the 1,100 InPost lockers available 24/7, located at various supermarkets, petrol stations and retailers.



96% of consumers consider "fast delivery" to mean same-day delivery²³

49% of shoppers say that same-day delivery makes them more likely to shop online²⁴

93% say would shop more at a retailer that made the returns process easy²⁵

More than 25% of shoppers would abandon a cart online if same-day shipping isn't available²⁶



Putting convenience at the core of your business

"Our challenge is to build connected experiences... so that customers can enjoy a great shopping experience whenever, wherever and however they choose. It's important to ensure the organisation is aligned around 'end to end' customer experiences, rather than thinking about store versus online."

– Mark Steel, Digital Director, Argos²⁷

Consumers expect the same experience throughout the purchase journey, whether in-store or online. They want to be able to buy something they love, the second they see it – and to be served by brands who pay real attention to detail. Convenience should therefore underpin all touch points, to ensure their experience is an exceptional one and to create long-term loyalty.

Contact HSO to see what your business can gain by harnessing the power of convenience.

Sources: ¹ Gartner ^{2&3} Walker ^{4&5} Demandware ⁶ Chatbots ⁷ Accenture ⁸ Gary E Fox ⁹ Insight Squared ¹⁰ NRF ¹¹ Sales Force ¹² Branded3 ¹³ Insight Squared ¹⁴ Econsultancy ¹⁵ Infosys ¹⁶ Accenture ¹⁷ Planet Rail RING ¹⁸ PSF Web ¹⁹ Blue Snap ²⁰ Business Insider ^{21&22} Reuters ²³ Business 2 Community ²⁴ Invespro ²⁵ Matapack ²⁶ Invespro ²⁷ Campaign Live