Putting Mobile At The Center
Of The Omnichannel Journey

It is apparent that mobile is playing a more central role in the browsing and buying journey, and consumers see their smartphones and tablets as their personal shopping companions, whether they're at home or in a physical store.

Best-in-class retailers across all categories, such as **American Eagle**, **lululemon** and **Total Gym Fitness**, are establishing mobile strategies that touch multiple stages of the browsing and buying journey.

Mobile commerce (m-Commerce) has experienced a significant surge and, in turn, is accounting for a larger share of overall e-Commerce sales. In 2013, retail m-Commerce sales in the U.S. increased 70%, reaching $42.13 billion, according to e-Marketer. By the end of this year, that figure will increase to $57.79 billion, or approximately 20% of total e-Commerce sales nationwide.

Consumers' ongoing acceptance and willingness to purchase products via smartphones and tablets is becoming more prevalent overseas as well. More than half (52%) of site visits in the UK were made via mobile devices, while 36% of online sales were completed on smartphones and tablets, according to the IMRG Capgemini **Quarterly Benchmarking Report**.

But with the majority of U.S. retail sales still occurring within the four walls of the store — 94%, according to the **U.S. Census Bureau Quarterly Retail E-Commerce Sales** report — retailers are encouraged to engage mobile-savvy consumers while they're browsing in store aisles and consulting their personal devices.

"We have reached a real tipping point in terms of the role digital — and specifically mobile — is playing for in-store consumers," explained Kasey Lobaugh, Chief Retail Innovation Officer, Principal and Owner at Deloitte. The company's latest **Digital Divide** report, in fact, concluded that more than 50% of in-store sales will be influenced by digital channels by the end of this year.

Yet currently, most retailers are still stuck in the mindset that mobile is an extension of the e-Commerce department, according to Lobaugh. "That's only 7% of total retail sales. If that's the lens we as an industry think about digital investments then we're dramatically underplaying its importance."

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>
> - eMarketer
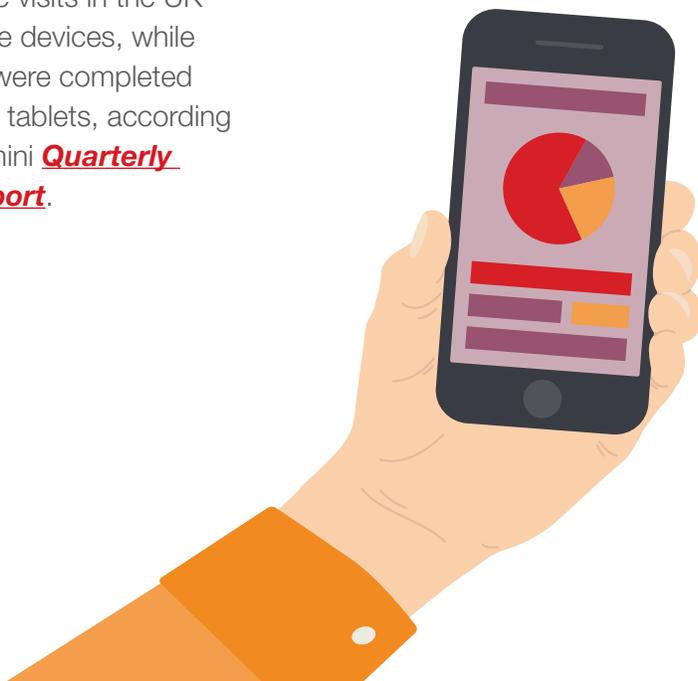
Adding Value To The Customer Experience

Confirming the increasing role of mobile in the customer shopping journey, 84% of consumers reported that they used digital channels for shopping-related activities before or during their most recent trip to a store, according to the Deloitte **Digital Divide** survey.

Some consumers also prefer to consult their mobile devices while in a store rather than relying on associates. For example, Deloitte indicated that while 59% of respondents said they use their own device to look up item prices, only 17% consult an associate. Mobile devices also play a pivotal role as shoppers seek out product information (52%), check item availability (51%) and even make payments (48%) in brick-and-mortar locations.

As smartphones and tablets become more entrenched in consumers' lives, how can retailers successfully harness the devices to connect the digital and physical worlds? What investments should they be making?

First and foremost, retailers can no longer see mobile as a drop in the digital bucket. Instead, it needs to be seen as a connecting point between e-Commerce and brick-and-mortar, and as a key influencer in the decision-making process.

While most shoppers today are showrooming (76%), even more (88%) are webrooming, or browsing online

and then buying in-store, according to Interactions research. Some consumers are participating in both activities, making it even more vital that retailers embrace mobility to connect with shoppers throughout the omnichannel journey.

"There's still a lot of urgency on the part of retailers to make that connection between digital and physical experiences more seamless," said Dave Wentker, CEO of Tapcentive. "There are clear ideas and use cases but using mobile as a common link between those two worlds is not the easiest thing in the world."

Retailers, overall, are at different stages of this very complicated mobile journey. About 18 months ago, "retailers were sitting on the sidelines and waiting for mobile to break out," noted George Skaff, CMO of TouchCommerce. "Now they're starting to drive the revolution and are asking how they can use mobility to succeed."

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> - Dave Wentker, Tapcentive

Many retailers are enabling and encouraging customers to use their personal devices by offering free in-store Wi-Fi. "They realize consumers are walking into stores and using their smartphones," Skaff said. "By offering free Wi-Fi, they can connect consumers to their network, and give them access to branded content and information."

Other retailers, however, are ensuring that a variety of core tools, features and functionality are available across all channels — from the e-Commerce site, to the mobile site/app and even in-store — to ensure customers have a cohesive brand experience.

"Consumers are promotion-ed out," Lobaugh noted. "Promotions are the new status quo, and consumers are addicted to and expect them. But if you're in a field with massive amounts of new competitors and it's everyone's game, then you have to determine how you differentiate."

Offering seamless access to product information, content, prices, among other elements, provides additional value to the shopping experience, which can have a profound impact on customer engagement and satisfaction. In fact, these educational and resourceful elements can be more beneficial to consumers than promotions.

"Retailers need to think about what experience they can create to capture value," said Josh Marti, CEO and Co-Founder of Point Inside. "The right mobile strategy will allow them to do that, and it should combine three key phases: the at-home experience, the in-store experience and the associate-facing experience. That's really how retailers should define their mobile strategies, and if they nail those elements they're ahead of the game."

Below, a variety of real-world use cases will uncover ways retailers can embrace mobile chat and customer service, mobile commerce, and in-store mobile marketing to boost engagement, loyalty and sales.

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Total Gym Fitness Nurtures Relationships, Drives Sales With Mobile Chat

As e-Commerce becomes more prevalent, consumers are relying less on call centers to place orders with brands, and more on digital solutions. Total Gym Fitness, a direct seller of workout equipment, has acknowledged this shift, and in turn, is investing more significantly in online and mobile chat solutions.

A heavy user of TV advertising, reaching out to more than four million homes using the medium, Total Gym Fitness executives began noticing that more consumers are participating in "second-screen experiences," where they're watching TV and shopping on their mobile devices at the same time.

"We're learning more and more about the role that mobile is playing in our business," said Joe Crowley, VP of Marketing at Total Gym Fitness. "We run a lot of infomercials and TV media, but we're noticing that consumers are picking up their phones and tablets and doing some research while they're watching."

While understanding these cross-channel shoppers is still a work in progress, Total Gym Fitness has seen a boost in e-Commerce sales since implementing the TouchCommerce mobile chat solution, which helps create an assisted selling environment for mobile shoppers.

Because of the high price point of its products, Total Gym Fitness requires knowledgeable sales associates to guide the browsing and buying experience. The chat tool provides that initial touch point of service. "Across the board, we're seeing the number of calls decrease and the number of online and mobile sales increase," Crowley explained in an interview with *Retail TouchPoints*. "We took the phone interactions we used to have and carried them over to chat. We view chat as a revenue driver. Although some service activities can be addressed, that's not our focus."

The Total Gym Fitness team analyzes feedback from chat logs to identify common issues and questions that may deter customers from making a purchase. The chat function is invaluable, according to Crowley, because "it allows us to really keep our finger on a pulse of what our customers are thinking and asking."

Chat representatives are trained continuously based on customer feedback and new selling tactics.

"We have regular sessions because we find you need to constantly be refreshed," Crowley said. "There are some bad habits that may hinder their ability to convert orders."

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>
> - Joe Crowley, Total Gym Fitness

Total Gym Fitness initially partnered with TouchCommerce approximately five years ago to implement online chat, and deployed mobile chat in 2013. Moving forward, the company plans to roll out a guided site experience, so customers can answer a few questions and receive information and recommendations, rather than having to engage with a sales representative.

Lululemon Launches New App To Power Mobile Shopping Experiences

Over the past decade, lululemon has established a loyal following of brand fanatics who rely on the retailer for all things fitness. The purveyor of high-end yoga pants and other fitness gear recently unveiled a new shopping app designed to allow consumers to shop conveniently — even while in stores or on the go.

"Mobile has been the fastest-growing segment in our e-Commerce business for the past few years and approximately 21% of our e-Commerce sales and 37% of our traffic currently comes from smartphones," said Paul Zaengle, SVP of U.S. Retail at lululemon. "The majority of that traffic and sales is from iOS devices. We believe the new shopping app will increase guests' ability to access our product quickly and efficiently, which we anticipate will have a positive impact on our product sales."

Launched in October 2014, the new iOS app is the first shopping app lululemon has developed, and it has generated more than 160,000 downloads since the launch, according to Zaengle. The app is designed to be "the fastest, most convenient way for guests to find and purchase our gear while shopping from a mobile device."

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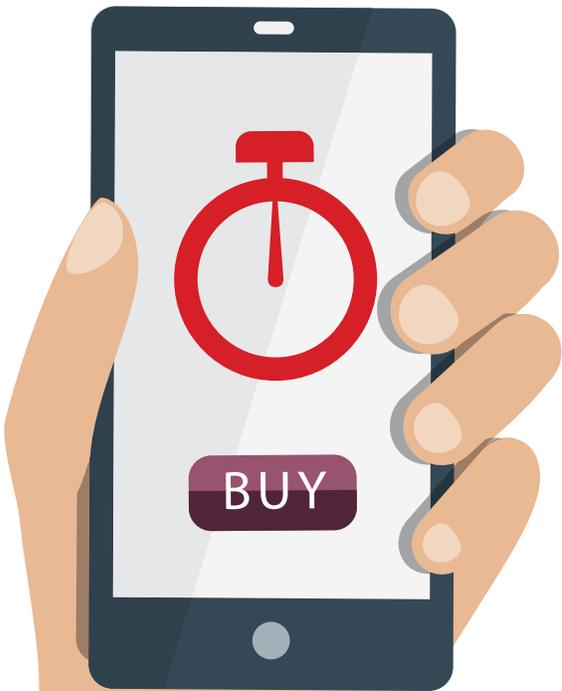
In addition to mobile-optimized navigation, the app provides guests with customized shopping profiles based on their preferred workouts. App users receive customized product recommendations based on their fitness routines. All purchase information, including credit card preferences and delivery addresses, can be stored in the app to ensure a secure yet convenient checkout process.

Accounts also are synchronized across all channels, which "allows guests to switch between desktop and mobile while ordering and checking out on the same order," Zaengle said. "If a guest has to run out the door before finalizing an order, she can finish it up on her iPhone."

The account synchronization feature speaks to lululemon's focus on tailoring its strategies to the lives of its target shoppers.

"We know our guests lead busy, active lives and as part of our focus on creating the best guest experience, this app was designed with features to help guests easily access and shop our gear, regardless of where they are in their day," Zaengle noted. "As a brand we're focused on creating a convenient, personalized guest experience."

Lululemon also was one of the first retailers to launch an app for iOS 8, which includes Touch ID integration. Shoppers who have downloaded the

new operating system can authenticate their identity using Touch ID and finalize a purchase by providing a fingerprint.

"For the initial release of our lululemon app, we knew that the majority of those who shop on their mobile devices do so with iOS operating systems," Zaengle said. "Therefore, we wanted to focus on the guests who we know are using their mobile devices to shop online so in turn, we can seek feedback and build out functionality if needed for potential future releases."

To ensure the mobile app constantly delivers on shoppers' wants and needs, Zaengle said lululemon encourages customers to share feedback via an online ideation forum, called Hey lululemon. "Guests can share their ideas directly with our design and production team to innovate, inspire and even co-create our future products."

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>
> - Paul Zaengle, lululemon
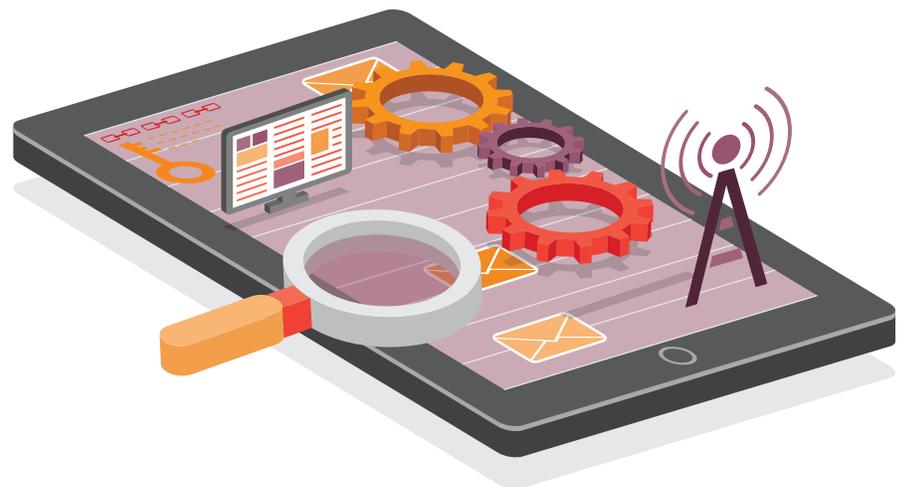
American Eagle Sees Success With Shopkick Beacons

Teen apparel retailer American Eagle Outfitters (AEO) was one of the first big-name organizations to embrace beacon technology, which has become a hot topic among industry players. Beacons are hardware sensors equipped with Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) technology that are designed to wirelessly communicate and transmit data with mobile devices — and other beacons — within a certain proximity.

Initially launching beacons in 100 American Eagle and Aerie stores in February 2014, AEO has reported positive results. Since partnering with shopkick to implement shopBeacon, the retailer has seen a boost in the number of customers visiting fitting rooms and an overall increase in sales.

"We've found that focusing on the customer and creating engaging experiences is core to customer satisfaction, and that translates into better sales," said Joe Megibow, Chief Digital Officer at American Eagle Outfitters. "So we were very excited about these results from shopkick's shopBeacon experiment."

With help from shopkick, AEO has tested and rolled out "new, innovative ways to interact with our shoppers, and we were excited to be the first to help prove the power of shopBeacon," Megibow added. "We found that being able to offer small, timely rewards for trying on clothes dramatically impacted behavior, and we love creating opportunities for our customers to experience our clothes and our brand."

During the initial test, some American Eagle customers received a shopBeacon message on their mobile device upon entering a store, and received a small incentive for visiting fitting rooms during their visit. Results from the trial showed that the percentage of shopkick users who visited fitting rooms were more than double for those who received the message versus those who did not.

Although industry experts are still considering the overall benefits of beacon solutions, retailers that are focused on providing value to customers will see clear benefits, according to Alexis Rask, Chief Revenue Officer at shopkick.

"It's about how to make it a positive experience for customers through beacons," Rask said in an interview with *Retail TouchPoints*. "Retailers should not annoy or bother their consumers. Context is key to the customer."

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>
> - Joe Megibow, American Eagle Outfitters

Because shopkick already has developed a base of loyal users for its mobile app, the company has an active and engaged user base that retailers can tap into when they implement beacon hardware in stores. But it's important that retailers remember to provide value to the consumer above all else.

"It may be a reminder to purchase something they had on their shopping list, a sale on a specific item they were interested in, or a notification about a great deal," Rask explained. "But you can't just spam the consumer about a million different things and assume they care about it all."

Retailers that embrace beacons also can see value by gathering new information about target customers — including products they buy, abandon and consider — insights that have been missing from in-store experience data.

"There are a lot of retailers that want to collect data from consumers but shoppers don't always have a reason to give them that data," Rask explained. "But if they receive value out of the experience they have that incentive to make their data recognized."

Empowering Shoppers Throughout The Browsing And Buying Journey

With smartphones and tablets in hand, consumers are empowered to make quick and efficient decisions, without ever leaving their couches.

"For smartphone and tablet users, the decision-making process is more instantaneous," said Samuel Mueller, Co-Founder and CEO of Scandit. "Retailers are thinking very hard about how they want to engage their customers and how

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> - Alexis Rask, shopkick

they're going to improve the experience so they can get their shopping done quickly but also discover new things."

A well-designed and highly engaging mobile experience delivers significant value to consumers, according to Mueller. However, Skaff of TouchCommerce added that convenience and simplicity also need to be top-of-mind.

"The one thing people don't part away from is their smartphone," Skaff noted. "To leverage that device in a way that makes consumers' lives easier means they will end up buying more."

By investing in customer-facing mobile experiences, retailers also have the ability to learn a lot about their customers, deliver messaging that's more relevant and increase loyalty.

In the currently, highly competitive business climate, retailers "need to make sure customers feel like individuals, not just one out of a million," Mueller added. "That's going to be the massive opportunity and big trend moving forward.

Mobile Helps Strengthen Associate-To-Consumer Engagement

Consumers are becoming more connected to their mobile devices. They rely on their smartphones and tablets to accomplish day-to-day tasks and instantly engage with friends, family and even their favorite brands and retailers.

Most (79%) adult smartphone owners have their devices with them 22 hours a day, according to IDC Research. Additionally, 80% of adult consumers said they check their phones within 15 minutes of waking up every morning.

Given consumers' increased obsession with their smartphones and tablets, it's easy to understand why retailers, such as **The Container Store**, **PacSun**, **Bespoke** and even small businesses such as **The Creative Wedge** are rolling out mobile devices in stores to boost customer engagement and drive sales.

From an industry perspective, 80% of retailers have armed — or plan to arm — their store associates with smartphones and/or tablets, according to the **_2014 Omnichannel Survey_** from _Retail TouchPoints (RTP)_. The number of retailers that have rolled out mobile devices in stores, in fact, has increased substantially year over year, from 45% in 2013 to 54% in 2014.

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- Retail TouchPoints Research

The potential benefits of rolling out mobile devices in stores are plentiful, with most retailers spotlighting associates' ability to provide a higher level of service (77%), according to RTP research. Retailers also noted that with mobile technology, associates are more informed and therefore more confident in their jobs (64%).

Mobile-enabled customer service is on the rise and many retailers (56%) also are training their employees to use tablets and smartphones to locate inventory across stores, according to research from the e-tailing group. The survey, titled: ***Investing For Impact In An Omnichannel Climate***, indicated that mobile devices also were being used to send e-receipts (48%) and complete transactions (47%). Retailers also can see myriad benefits if they arm their store managers with mobile devices.

"Mobile technology enables retailers to improve their workflows and processes as well as improve customer experiences by changing the way they work," said Dung Lam, Director of Enterprise Sales at Infinite Peripherals. "Managers no longer have to do their work behind a computer in the back of the store. Employees can meet customers where they are at, check them out or share with them product information. Retailers can leverage mobile solutions to improve their efficiencies with managing their store operations and reduce errors where pen and paper used to be used."

To successfully mobilize the retail workforce, merchants must ensure that data collected from all channels is readily available."

Yet currently, only 35% of retailers say the same information is available across all channels, from the store, to the e-Commerce site, via mobile, social and call centers, according to RTP research. As a result, most retailers are still struggling to break down the organizational barriers that they've been facing for so many years.

"Retailers still have legacy systems that are extremely siloed," said Shelley Bransten, Head of Retail and Consumer Products at Salesforce.com. "They have a legacy organizational model that is not designed to go after the omnichannel goal."

A successful mobile strategy requires "a lot of work in terms of integrating with existing systems. Not every retailer is as far ahead in this process," Mueller said. However, a variety of retailers across different segments are incorporating mobile technology into various areas of their business, including at the front of the store, in the aisles and even in the stock room and warehouse.

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> - Shelley Bransten, Salesforce.com

The Container Store "Scores" Big With MicroStrategy

Since its inception in 1978, The Container Store has evolved into a go-to source for all things storage and organization. With more than 60 stores dispersed throughout the U.S., the retailer stocks more than 10,000 products and adds nearly 2,000 new items each year.

For more than 15 years, The Container Store has relied on MicroStrategy for reporting across their merchandising, buying and finance departments. But recently, the retailer expanded its analytics capabilities by launching a mobile app called "The Score" that is focused on reporting for the stores.

"The Score" was conceptualized by the retailer's CEO to facilitate transparency across the entire business. The app went from concept to production within months, and provides executive sales recaps, payroll performance, company sales, store sales, flash sales and trend reports rolling three, six and 12 months.

Using the MicroStrategy Platform, The Container Store was able to acquire detailed information about payroll, as well as actionable insights to optimize schedules based on current trends and predictive analysis. The retailer also can compare sales per payroll hour to customer-facing payroll hours, making it easier to manage personnel hours.

Now, The Container Store lives by the motto: "There is no way your team can win the game unless everyone on the team knows the score."

During the planning process for the app, team members across a variety of departments aggregated to take a "whole brained approach" and keep all end-users in mind. The Container Store employees finalized Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and then created storyboards to conceptualize the look, feel and flow of the app.

In order to constantly evolve and improve the mobile experience, The Container Store plans to include a variety of new features and components, including: Store productivity, campaign performance, shrink and general damage reporting, employee ranking, in-store alerts, a custom design center/Elfa performance module, store operations module, and inventory control.

In the future, the app will include transactional services to further enhance the productivity of teams in the field.

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The Creative Wedge Receives Real-Time Updates On Inventory And Sales

Lacking the sophisticated tools their larger competitors have access to, small and mid-sized businesses (SMBs) have struggled to keep pace. Now, new solutions in the marketplace are empowering SMBs to improve their business processes while creating more compelling, streamlined and relevant shopping experiences.

With help from NCR Silver, The Creative Wedge, a Virginia-based gourmet market and gift shop, has captured a more comprehensive view of sales, inventory levels and customer behaviors.

Approximately two years ago, when the store was just opening, Co-Founders Barbara Densley and Sloane Solanto implemented two iPads in the store and purchased several peripherals, including a cash drawer, receipt printer and stand for the checkout counter. By adopting NCR Silver, the business owners were able to

"hit the ground running" and "get hooked up and ready to go with mobile from the day we opened," according to Densley.

The Creative Wedge is a gift shop, offering a wide array of inventory, Densley explained. "We carry cheeses and wines and have a lot of different products, so we needed a way to track all of that."

Now, Densley has the ability to track inventory levels at anytime, and from any device. "I know what's in stock and can pull up prices very easily," she explained in an interview with *Retail TouchPoints*. "We've been learning to use the mobile solution as we go. It is very easy to use, so every time there is an upgrade we see what we can use for our business."

Not only do the iPads help create a more fun and tech-infused in-store shopping experience, they also allow The Creative Wedge to expand the brand into the community. For example, Densley and Solanto frequently participate in farmers' markets, and use an iPad to ring up sales and run credit cards.

"By the time I get back to the shop, everything's already updated in the system," Densley explained. "I don't have to re-enter everything so it's been really helpful for us."

As The Creative Wedge prepares for the holiday season, Densley and Solanto plan to hire three more employees to keep up with demand, and teach them how to use the mobile devices for a variety of purposes.

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>
> - Barbara Densley,
> The Creative Wedge

"We anticipate they'll use the second iPad to ring people up, whether they're in an aisle or at the counter," Densley noted. "Last year, everything ran so smoothly with the mobile devices. During the holidays, people were very happy with the experience because they didn't have to stand in line and wait very long."

Having a system that is straightforward and easy to use will be especially helpful during this hectic time of year "because we don't want to spend a lot of time training someone on how to use the register," Densley said. "We want them out there selling and getting to know our merchandise and our customers."

Bespoke Collection Turns Customers Into Community Members With Salesforce.com

For some consumers, there's nothing better than an exceptional glass of wine. A provider of luxurious experiences, Bespoke Collection targets those consumers, who also appreciate fine art and high-end furnishings.

Using the Salesforce.com Service Cloud, the Bespoke team can identify consumers who are ready-to-buy and drive more traffic to the business — either online or in a nearby location.

"We use Salesforce.com in all aspects of our business," said Paul Leary, President at Bespoke Collection. "Every sale we transact goes into Salesforce.com, so we're able to see a 360-degree view of the client experience."

Because Bespoke Collection uses Salesforce.com as a processing system as well as a CRM solution, team members can see which clients interact with the brand, what marketing messages they receive, and what brands and channels they purchase from.

With this data, employees can build deeper connections with customers, especially at the company's brick-and-mortar establishments in Napa Valley. At these locations, Bespoke Collection has rolled out the Salesforce1 Mobile App, which allows employees across all areas of the business to obtain a real-time view of customer profiles and provide their own unique updates on interactions and sales.

For example, Bespoke Collection has a reservation system for wine tasting appointments. Each visitor has their own unique profile that includes a variety of data points, such as financial value and the last time they purchased an item,

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>
> - Barbara Densley, The Creative Wedge

Leary explained. "We're very fortunate that our retail setting has a massive hospitality component. The winery setting is all about interactivity: A story about the owners, the small business and all of its characters. Then, you're tasting the wine and interacting with the product."

When consumers complete a purchase, the next morning they receive an automated, personalized email, thanking them for their business. Consumers also receive an invitation to join the Bespoke community.

Moving forward, Bespoke Collection plans to develop an app that delivers push notifications to sales personnel regarding customer account profiles and membership updates, Leary reported. "Everything related to the app will go into and come out of Salesforce.com."

PacSun Engages Savvy Millennials With In-Store Mobility

Retailers that target younger consumers such as Millennials and tweens are faced with the daunting challenge of keeping pace with the latest and greatest tech trends. Whether they are posting on Instagram, pinning on Pinterest or rolling out campaigns on SnapChat, these retailers need to show that they're willing to connect and engage with customers wherever they are.

Since partnering with Demandware, PacSun has been able to stay socially connected to its young consumers and bring the best of the digital world into the store. The skate and surf retailer launched its e-Commerce site on Demandware in September 2012, and has remained focused on integrating its online presence with social channels, and even offering online access to the brand via tablets stationed in stores.

"We continue to have a great deal of pressure on us because of our target audience," explained Coleen McNally, VP of IT at PacSun. "Millennials are very tech savvy and they expect everything to come through and be available on their phones. We need to be able to understand them and read them."

We're very fortunate that our retail setting has a massive hospitality component. The winery setting is all about interactivity: A story about the owners, the small business and all of its characters. Then, you're tasting the wine and interacting with the product.

- Paul Leary, Bespoke Collection

Buy

Customer shopping habits constantly are evolving and changing, but PacSun relies on mobile tools and apps to provide utility and value to the in-store experience.

For example, consumers can use the PacSun mobile app to scan QR codes and receive expanded content such as behind-the-scenes videos, coupon codes and more. In the future, McNally reported that the retailer aims to incorporate barcode scanning into the app so consumers can learn more about the products they are browsing in stores.

PacSun also has had iPads in stores for nearly three years, providing customers with an endless aisle experience that helps save sales and boost transactions. Shoppers and associates also can use the tablets to access brand videos and lookbooks, which helps enrich the assisted selling environment.

"Our consumers and store associates are looking for technology in the store," McNally said. "They're looking at PacSun to see how we're going to make the store more fun and engaging."

scanning

In combination with the in-store mobile strategy, PacSun is expanding its omnichannel capabilities by offering buy online/pickup in-store and buy online/ship to store, among other order fulfillment options.

"We recognize that change is quickly happening and we are evaluating and thinking through the bigger picture to determine the right strategy for our organization," McNally said. "We're asking questions like: How is the store able to digest all this change? What's the right strategy for our company? As technology and adoption rates continue to increase, the retail industry as a whole is not stopping and looking holistically at all the different components and touch points."

Beacons, Wearables And The Next Generation Of Enterprise Mobility

Although smartphones and tablets will continue to be mainstays in consumers' and associates' everyday lives, new technologies are emerging to help make the retail experience more connected, engaging and relevant.

Beacons have been recognized as key tools to help retailers connect to customers in real time. However, industry experts indicate that merchants also can use the hardware to connect with smartphone-toting associates.

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>
> - Coleen McNally, PacSun

"For the retailers that have a well-deployed beacon strategy, it's safe to say they also have associate devices out there too," Marti of Point Inside said. "Every hour, when associates walk the floor, they have a set of pre-defined tasks, such as making sure items are in stock and folding clothes. But being able to log in and reassign fall-out work is going to be a huge advantage for them. Then, colleagues will receive real-time notifications on those changes, which ultimately creates a better experience for shoppers."

Wearable technology, such as smart watches and Google glasses, also present exciting opportunities for retailers to streamline communication between the headquarters, back office and in-store employees.

In 2015, 4.9 billion connected items will be running, a 30% increase year over year, according to Gartner estimates. And there's no sign that the Internet of Things (IoT) is slowing down, as the number of connected devices is expect to reach 25 billion by 2020.

"The next wave of opportunity hitting the retail industry is around wearables," Mueller of Scandit said.

"Consumers have the opportunity to receive notifications on their smart watches, for example, which helps make the transaction experience a little slicker, quicker and easier. But there also is an opportunity to support inventory management and back office procurement with wearables."

Wearables also can help alert associates when consumers venture in stores to pick up online orders.

"If I order something online or via mobile, and then have it shipped to the closest store, associates can pick and prep items once they receive alerts on their wearable devices," Mueller explained. "This is a great opportunity for brick-and-mortar retailers."

New mobile devices are entering the technology market at a rapid pace. By the time retailers have a strategy in place, new models and screen sizes are emerging. In order to keep pace in this ever-changing market, retailers must remain nimble and keep a constant pulse on the devices, marketing tactics and engagement strategies that truly resonate with consumers.

> **If I order something online or via mobile, and then have it shipped to the closest store, associates can pick and prep items once they receive alerts on their wearable devices. This is a great opportunity for brick-and-mortar retailers.**
>
> - Samuel Mueller, Scandit

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Retail TouchPoints is an online publishing network for retail executives, with content focused on optimizing the customer experience across all channels. The Retail TouchPoints network is comprised of a weekly newsletter, special reports, web seminars, exclusive benchmark research, an insightful editorial blog, and a content-rich web site featuring daily news updates and multi-media interviews at www.retailtouchpoints.com. The Retail TouchPoints team also interacts with social media communities via Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

About MicroStrategy

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Founded in 1989, MicroStrategy (Nasdaq: MSTR) is a leading worldwide provider of enterprise software platforms. The Company's mission is to provide the most flexible, powerful, scalable and user-friendly platforms for analytics and mobile, offered either on premises or in the cloud. The MicroStrategy Analytics Platform™ enables leading organizations to analyze vast amounts of data and distribute actionable business insight throughout the enterprise. The MicroStrategy Mobile App Platform™ lets organizations apidly build information-rich applications that combine multimedia, transactions, analytics, and custom workflows.To learn more, visit www.microstrategy.com and follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/microstrategy) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/microstrategy).