



Three Strategies to Improve the Retail Customer Experience

Introduction

Today's retailers face the challenge of delivering seamless, personalized interactions across a growing number of engagement channels. Yet, many are struggling with yesterday's siloed systems which hinder the ability to meet rising customer expectations. With a patchwork of point-to-point integrations choking the ability to develop and advance the customer experience, it has become increasingly challenging to keep pace with the competition.

And, customers are not the only ones impacted by these complexities. More than half of retail associates feel they no longer have the tools they need to stay engaged and motivated. The result is rising turnover rates and training costs, service inconsistencies and an inability to achieve desired business outcomes.

With customer experience rapidly overtaking price and product as the top brand differentiator, digital innovation has become an imperative. In this ebook, you'll gain insights into current retail customer experience challenges and what's needed to overcome them to achieve ongoing success.

Common Goals That Today's Retailers Are Striving to Achieve:

- Deliver seamless, omnichannel customer experiences
- Personalize recommendations
- Empower retail associate performance

Retail Trends – What’s Hot Now

Although customers have always had the ability to vote with their wallets, they now have more choices and less patience. Empowered by their digital devices, customers expect the brands they engage with to offer immediacy, personalization and convenience.

This reality is driving a variety of technology trends that are shaping today’s retail customer experiences.

Omnichannel – Customers shifting between channels quickly become frustrated by fragmented experiences caused by a lack of channel integration. Achieving a true omnichannel customer experience that overcomes the challenges of information silos has become a driving goal for many retailers.

Advanced Data Analytics – With the expectation for personalized experiences comes the need for greater customer insights. But it takes more than just collecting data. There must be a purposeful strategy to use the data to make better customer recommendations and business decisions.

Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning – Retailers are infusing artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning into business analytics, merchandising and inventory, marketing technology and customer engagement.

Digital Store Technology – Retailers are investing in mobile point of sale (mPOS), point of sale (POS), in-store analytics, digital signage, associate enablement and RFID.

Progressive Web Applications – Blending the best of the native and web worlds, progressive web applications (PWA) are helping retailers increase mobile traffic and improve their customer experience.



THE NUMBER OF COMPANIES INVESTING IN DELIVERING AN OMNICHANNEL EXPERIENCE WILL JUMP TO MORE THAN 80% BY 2020.

**Source: PWC*



Today's Retail Challenges

Outdated Technology

The fundamentals of retail have moved beyond having the right product at the right price at the right time. More than ever, retailers must understand who their customers are, what they're trying to accomplish and how they can best be helped.

Making this happen is no simple feat, especially when facing the limitations of legacy systems. Costly, time-consuming integrations, siloed channels, hard-coded customer experiences and long test cycles all prevent the ability to deliver the personalized, omnichannel experiences that customers expect.

Retailers are struggling to overcome these challenges – especially when they don't want to undergo a disruptive and costly rip and replace of systems.

87% OF ORGANIZATIONS AGREE TRADITIONAL EXPERIENCES NO LONGER SATISFY CUSTOMERS.

** Source: Accenture*

The Limitations of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) and predictive capabilities have become valuable technologies in a retailer's arsenal to deliver greater personalization. However, systems still must have the ability to understand and process customer information across channels to develop customized communications to make a sale or recommend a next best action. As well, the time it takes to effectively leverage predictive

capabilities and AI can slow down the ability to deliver personalized, contextual experiences now. These technologies also solely rely on prior behaviors to anticipate current needs. In other words, they offer no ability to reveal or address a customer's current intent.

The Evolving Role of Retail Associates

While the popularity of self-service continues to grow, retail associates still play an important role in delivering great customer experiences. However, they struggle to be engaged and motivated when they lack the tools and knowledge to be successful. When you consider the rising costs of employee attrition, training and service inconsistency, it's clear that the role of the retail associate remains one of the top considerations of customer experience planning and innovation.

90% OF COMPANIES ARE PLANNING TO DEPLOY AI WITHIN 3 YEARS YET, ONLY 25% OF CUSTOMER INTERACTIONS ARE CURRENTLY AUTOMATED THROUGH AI AND MACHINE LEARNING.

** Source: Gartner*



Overcoming today's retail challenges requires the ability to deliver seamless, personalized journeys across channels. The following strategies can help make that happen.

Strategy 1



Enable Seamless Engagement Across Channels

Delivering a personalized, omnichannel customer experience requires a series of technology capabilities that allow systems to share customer information and integrate it easily into existing and future channels.



At the heart of the Synchronoss Digital Suite for Retail, the Digital Experience Platform (DXP) is an intuitive, no/low code, cloud-native platform that enables both IT and citizen developers to create unified, omnichannel customer journeys, once—not for each and every channel. With a toolkit of capabilities and drag-and-drop functionality, DXP enables users to:

Leverage existing back-end systems without the need for replacing existing systems.

Create seamless, consistent, cross-channel experiences that customers can pause and resume.

Launch and test promotions in real time to determine which product, offer or message resonates best with customers.

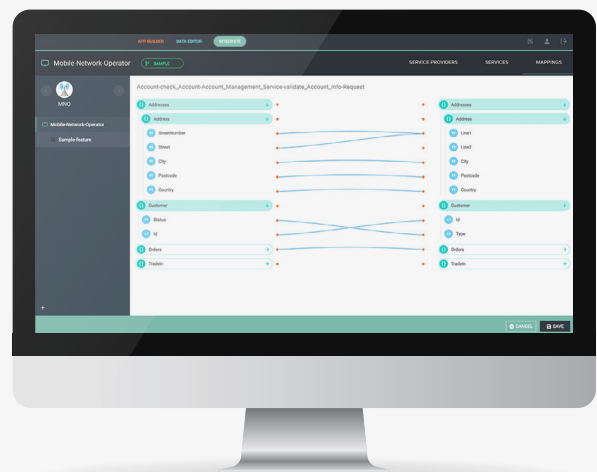
With DXP, customer journeys become one continuous, contextual customer experience across all customer engagement channels.

Pause and Resume Functionality – Customers can start an interaction on one channel, pause it and then automatically resume on another channel.

Consistent Experiences – Enable customers to experience the same steps in a journey for a given interaction across all channels. Standardize the process or workflow for a given journey in all channels and create consistent customer experiences.

Optimized Experiences – Continuously fuel and inform improvements to customer journeys and experiences, identifying opportunities to reduce the number of steps in a transaction as an example.

Faster Time to Market – Quickly deploy customer journeys across all channels without time-consuming integrations and testing.



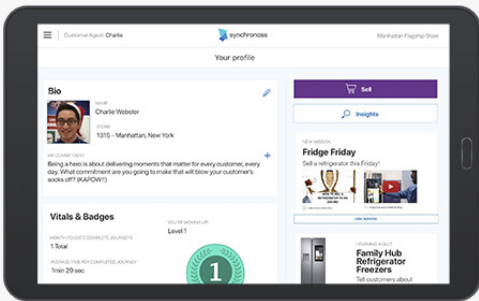
Strategy 2:



Optimize Retail Associates' Performance

Retail associates require the right mix of tools and knowledge to achieve success. This requires being able to heighten their performance, along with optimizing customer journeys.

As part of the Digital Suite for Retail, Digital Coach gives retailers the tools to inspire the behaviors of customer-facing employees and align their efforts to performance objectives. Each associate has their own customized dashboard that displays alerts, new product announcements and notifications to help improve the transfer and retention of knowledge.



Digital Coach delivers:

Increased KPIs, including lead conversions, sell-through rates, products per sale and NPS.

Improved team morale by aligning retail associates to store, district and regional sales goals.

Alignment of efforts to key strategic corporate initiatives by setting appropriate objectives for each representative.

Near real-time visibility into retail associate performance to coach to winning behaviors.

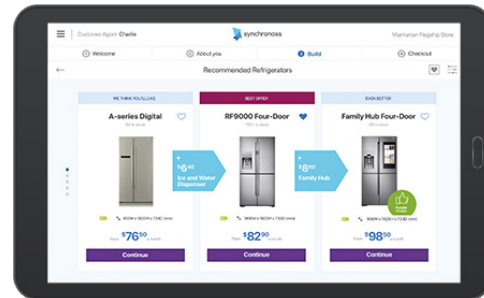
Strategy 3:



Personalize 1:1 Recommendations

To remain competitive, retailers are quickly discovering that they must move from generic, non-contextual engagement to 1:1 conversations to achieve a greater level of personalization. And personalization means presenting the right recommendation in the right channel, at the right time.

Decision Engine is an additive module to DXP designed to gather customer inputs on needs and interests in order to yield dynamic recommendations based on those inputs. Thus, there's no longer the need to wait to collect customer data. By presenting recommendations based on customer journey intent, you can increase sales, while promoting customer trust and loyalty.



With Decision Engine, you can:

Deliver 1:1 personalized experiences that present the best products, based on the customer's needs, by asking the customer very simple questions

Optimize upsell and cross-sell opportunities by dynamically bundling products to drive additional conversions – delivering value to your customer and optimizing your business.

Reduce training and improve compliance for new retail associates with access via a tablet experience available on the sales floor.

Make the personalization of recommendations even more meaningful and relevant to customers, while gaining new insights to further optimize journeys.



Why Retailers Love DXP

01 Go to Market 4x Faster

Any to Any Integration – Integrates to any IT back office system with speed and flexibility.

Simplify Localization – Implementing and managing consistent journeys, localized by regional language, behaviors and preferred channels.

No Rip and Replace – Sits alongside your existing technology stacks in a complementary fashion and doesn't require you to "shut down" when changes need to be made.

02 Deliver Better CX

Omnichannel Experience – Single journey state across channel – start an interaction in one channel and continue in another.

Personalized Recommendations – Make relevant and personalized recommendations, based on customer journey intent via qualifying questions.

Front-End UI Control – Informs and populates any existing UI affording you total control of the desired customer experience.

03 Easily Design and Deploy Journeys

Drag and Drop UI – Simply drag and drop steps in a customer journey – no complex coding required. Ability to copy and paste steps into other journeys.

A/B Testing – Real-time environment allows for infinitely faster time to market for new experience, offers and services.

Publish to Any Channel – Seamlessly publish journeys to one or all customer engagement channels simultaneously.

04 Have Confidence in Compliance and Security

Secure – Single ingress, point-to-platform provides an inherently more secure platform than today's systems.

Not a System of Record – We only hold data for as long as the journey state exists and send the appropriate information onto client systems of record for proper storage and management.

Putting It All Together

Synchronoss Digital Suite for Retail

Yesterday's systems are not able to meet today's customer expectations and business requirements. With customer experience today's biggest competitive differentiator, the time is right to move forward with a solution that enables exceptional, personalized customer experiences across every channel. And the good news is that it's faster and easier than ever to accelerate your digital transformation with a solution that works with existing technology investments, across channels.

With the Synchronoss Digital Suite for Retail, you gain the advantage of a complete suite of solutions that's easy to implement and configure, interfacing effortlessly with all your existing back-end systems. Designed as the ultimate, purpose-built, cloud-native experience management platform, it's your solution for exceeding your customers' expectations today and tomorrow.

Synchronoss Digital Suite for Retail

DIGITAL
EXPERIENCE
PLATFORM
(DXP)



DECISION
ENGINE



DIGITAL
COACH



**Advanced Catalog optional*

Find out more about Synchronoss Digital Suite for Retail at synchronoss.com/products/digital/