



Absent from omnichannel?

When online, every shopper interaction generates data, making it easy for retailers to recognise customers and tailor their experiences accordingly. Yet, those very same customers disappear from the retailer's view when they move across channel to bricks and mortar shopping.

While the rise of e-commerce has been well documented, physically shopping in the store is still incredibly popular, with a reported 94 per cent of sales still being generated offline in 2014. However, the store's role has changed; no longer a standalone operation, bricks and mortar must now fit into wider consumer interactions across multiple channels and devices, like the last piece in a complex jigsaw. And this is where the challenge lies. The store was, for many retailers, the first piece of the jigsaw, around which they have tried to construct their omnichannel strategy, often without any clear idea of what the finished model should look like. This 'retrofit' of bricks and mortar into an omnichannel model has created a number of significant challenges for retailers, including changing mindsets, personalising interactions across all channels, improving customer loyalty and managing cross-channel activity in a fully integrated fashion.

And these challenges haven't gone unnoticed by customers. Our recent research of 1,000 consumers across Europe showed that, after the customised experience of e-commerce, store encounters feel generic to shoppers. In fact, one in ten went as far as to claim that they feel like a retailer's friend online, but anonymous in-store (data source 2).



Many High Street retailers are still struggling to give customers a connected experience in all channels, with the store proving a particular sticking point, as Richard Kolodynski, VP of European Operations at iVend Retail explains

Bringing the store into a truly connected retail experience means having the capability to create digital (or digital-style) experiences within the physical environment, and that can only be powered by technology.

While the omnichannel landscape has shifted, the store remains the only place amongst the channels where customers can touch and try items before they buy, so shoppers still want to go there. The key for retailers when it comes to driving conversions and keeping customers happy will be ensuring shoppers aren't let down by their experience when they arrive into store.

For further information on how to reinvigorate bricks-and-mortar's role within an omnichannel strategy, download the 'Omni-Illusion: why are customer connections disappearing when shoppers reach the store?' report: <http://www2.ivend.com/ivend-resource-hubsbl>. For further information on twitter please follow @iVendRetail_EU.

Data sources:

1. A.T. Kearney Omnichannel Shopping Preferences Study. <https://www.atkearney.com/>
2. iVend original consumer research, July 2015