RETAIL CHECKLIST:

Are you providing your customers with the right digital experiences, in-store and online?

Retail is evolving and digital is the thread that ties together the customer experience. Customers expect your website, mobile apps and in-store experiences to be integrated. They expect store inventory to be available online. They expect promotions in your mobile apps to match promotions on your site. They expect an enhanced digital experience when they are standing in your stores and they expect payments to be simple and fast. It is the retailers responsibility to keep pace and provide the customers with great experiences. Check out these five topics to see if you are doing digital right.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

1. DOES MY ONLINE BRAND MATCH MY PHYSICAL BRAND?

Why It Matters: According to a Harvard Business Review survey, omnichannel shoppers who engage with retailers through online and offline channels spend 4% more, on average, every time they visit a brick-and-mortar store, and spend 10% more when shopping online.

Customers expect to be able to interact with your company online and in-store. Maintaining consistency across all channels is paramount to your shoppers' experience. For example: if your brand is premium, do your digital properties reflect that? If your brand is fun & innovative, do your digital properties show this?

If your in-store experience is top notch, providing customers with unintuitive, slow, or buggy applications could seriously damage their view of your brand.

Additionally, if your shoppers "showroom" or "webroom", providing them with consistent experiences will make it easier for them to buy when they want, how they want, and at the price point they expect - all from you.

2. IS YOUR SHOPPERS' DATA INTEGRATED ACROSS CHANNELS?

Why It Matters: According to a study by Criteo, cross-device shopping now accounts for 31% of online transactions in the US, with 35% of smartphone purchases starting on a desktop.

90% of retail customers are using their mobile devices while physically shopping in-stores and consumers expect that any information they've provided via one channel will be immediately available in the other channels. Integrating your customers' data should be a priority to not only boost sales, but also to increase customer satisfaction. Retailers can make use of this data to send push notifications, make personalized product offers, and provide timely coupons. Beacon technology can even be leveraged to make in-store recommendations based on the shoppers location.

Some questions to ask yourself: Is my loyalty program applied seamlessly across channels? If a customer provides contact, billing and shipping information, is it automatically known across all channels? Am I providing a personalized experience for every customer regardless of how they interact with our brand?

Of course, these are only beneficial if the data is accurate and the promotions are bug free.

3. IS MY CHECKOUT PROCESS SEAMLESS AND EASY TO USE?

Why It Matters: According to a study by Jumio, 22% of survey respondents have abandoned a transaction due to a payment process that was too complicated and 36% due to slow load times.

Whether it is online or in-store the checkout process can be the biggest pain point for retail customers, and if yours is anything but flawless your customers will simply find a better one. Common issues that impact smooth checkout processes both in-store and online include:

- Complexity – is it quick and easy to make the payment?
- Speed – whether it's a long line or slow shipping customers do not want to be waiting for their items.
- Reliability – Does the payment go through the first time? Is the barcode scanner dependable? Simply put it needs to just work, each and every time.

For your online store consider the following: Is it intuitive and simple to use? Does it make errors easy to fix? Do you only ask for necessary information? Do you accept a wide variety of payment methods? Are refunds fast and simple?

For your brick-and-mortar stores consider the following: Do you offer in-store pick up? Do you offer door–to-door delivery? Does your store have enough self-checkout kiosks? Is there on-site support available?

If the answer to any of these is not a resounding YES then maybe it is time to look into the usability of your checkout.

4. HAVE I PROPERLY MAPPED THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY?

Why It Matters: According to a survey by Fluent, nearly 50% of customers who engage with retailers through 10+ channels say they make a purchase at their favorite retailer at least once a week, compared to 21% for those who engage across 1-4 channels.

A customer journey map tells the story of how customers interact with your brand. This spans the discovery of your brand, initial contact, introductory period, and all the points along the journey that (hopefully) lead to a long-term relationship. Each individual customer can interact through different touch points at different times, and a single bad experience could drive them away.

Properly understanding and mapping the customer journey is crucial to a brand's success. But have you considered that you may be making erroneous assumptions that do not align with your customers' reality? Additionally, with the complexity of omnichannel and its array of potential customer paths, this is difficult to accurately map. This practice is only as helpful as the amount of unbiased information you have from customers, and real people who can stand-in for your customers.

5. DO I LISTEN TO WHAT MY CUSTOMERS ARE NOT SAYING?

Why It Matters: Silence is golden, right? Wrong! 96% of unhappy customers do not complain, and further 91% of those customers will simply leave and never come back. And while you may convince yourself that the main factor of retail customers' satisfaction is price, a study done by Bain & Company says a customer is 4 times more likely to defect to a competitor if there is a problem with the experience rather than the price or product.

Leveraging a community of real people to test and provide feedback on all aspects of your customer experience from physical to digital is the best way to identify and ensure you fix the problems you simply do not know you have.

Applause lets you detect real-world issues before your users do. Before every launch, test your websites, mobile apps and in-store experiences with digital experience experts and real mystery shoppers off the street, using their own devices in real locations. Post-launch, monitor what your actual customers are saying about their digital experience and run additional tests as needed.

ABOUT APPLAUSE

Applause empowers leading brands to deliver flawless digital experiences for their customers on any device, in every location. Applause testing, feedback and research solutions enable businesses to delight customers, drive topline revenue and innovate faster.

Applause ensures digital quality for websites, mobile apps, IoT products and in-store interactions in a way no other approach can - via our technology platform and managed global community of over 300,000 professional and on-demand testers. Only real people on real devices in real locations can provide the real issues and feedback that brands need to deliver great digital customer experiences. You can't hire, outsource or automate the increasingly converged digital-physical experience that defines real customer interaction, but you can replicate it with the crowdsourced approach provided by Applause.

Thousands of companies of every size – including Google, FOX, Nike, BMW, PayPal and Slack – rely on Applause to dramatically decrease the time and cost of delivering great digital experiences for their customers. Learn more at **www.applause.com**.

AMERICAS INQUIRIES

Applause U.S. HQ
100 Pennsylvania Ave
Suite 500 Framingham, MA 01701
1-844-300-2777

EUROPE INQUIRIES

Applause Europe HQ
Kopenicker Str. 154
10997 Berlin, Germany
+49 30 57700400

ISRAEL INQUIRIES

11 Galgaley Haplada
1st Entrance – 2nd Floor
Herzliya, Israel
+972.74.701.4240