



# Enabling Commerce: Reshaping the Retail 'Basket' at Every Touchpoint

PCMS White Paper

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To achieve success both today and in the future, retailers need to create frictionless customer journeys spanning across more than 'just' a store front. Online experiences enable brands to connect with customers along a growing path but the customer buying experience needs to be consistent across these paths. The 'basket' refers to the idea that no matter where a consumer decides to begin their shopping journey—whether it is online, in a store, or on a mobile app—the product price, promotions and availability should be the same across the board so retailers can sell from anywhere.

The purpose of a brick & mortar store is evolving from driving sales of a product, to being a brand and product showrooms that drive revenue across all channels. Physical store environments remain key in delivering the tangible experiences many consumers still seek—but now physical stores only deliver value when they can operate seamlessly together with a compelling online experience.

## Giving Customers What They Want

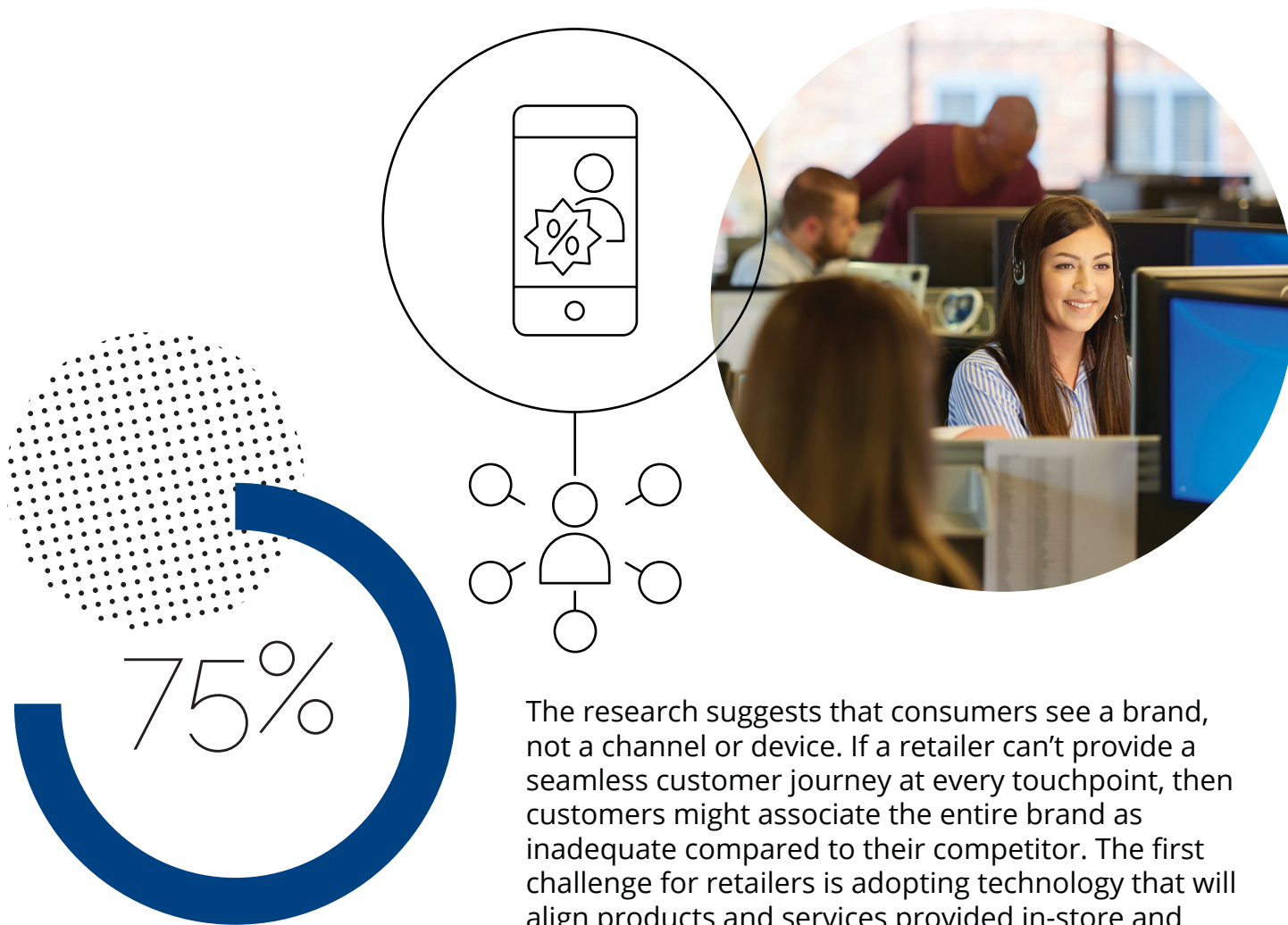
The retail 'basket' is constantly evolving; mainstream technology such as Amazon's Alexa already supports purchasing items by simply talking to smart home devices. The shift to digital is nothing new, in fact, some retailers are already in the midst of incorporating AI and virtual reality to enhance personalization. But, what customers expect from a retailer is now fundamentally different to what they would have expected even 12-24 months ago.



They expect to pick up their mobile device and find a retailer with a credible online presence. They expect to see them on Facebook or elsewhere on social media. Shoppers demand that if they find the product they want is out of stock in store, they can purchase the same item online, and get it delivered by the next day. Most importantly, the customer wants the comfort of returning a product with ease, through whatever channel is convenient.



There has been a revolution too in the way customers purchase products and services. People receive retail promotions via email or text, they may then do research on Pinterest or Facebook; reserve the product on a retailers website; go to their local branch to collect it; bring it back home, then call customer service if they have any questions. All of this is making the retail process increasingly complex.



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The research suggests that consumers see a brand, not a channel or device. If a retailer can't provide a seamless customer journey at every touchpoint, then customers might associate the entire brand as inadequate compared to their competitor. The first challenge for retailers is adopting technology that will align products and services provided in-store and those available online.

Of the same report, 75% of respondents thought retailers should have a single view of how they shop both in-store and online. With the onset of technology and mobility, customers will no longer accept an item is not available in the store, or waste precious time waiting in line to pay. Why would they? We live in an era of the "Amazon effect" where consumers are surrounded by technology that enables them to make digital purchases in a matter of seconds, often with convenient same day or next day delivery options.

More than one-third of the retailers surveyed in BRP's 2018 POS/Customer Engagement Survey are planning to replace their current POS software and hardware within the next three years. What are you waiting for?

## A Better Way Forward

The situation is clearly challenging today and is set to get even more so as the move online continues and retailers come to realize that the number and type of channels they need to support will continue to escalate over time. So how can they go about addressing these issues and deliver a better customer experience across all channels?

According to the "Navigating Modern Retail Report" 30% of respondents said customer experience was only 'quite consistent' indicating retailers have a long way to ensure digital routes meet consumer expectations. Amazon is currently dominating this space by creating a cohesive customer journey, be it online, a mobile application, or through Alexa. Two definitive choices will define a retailer's future. Retailers can continue to operate in self-denial or they can embrace the way consumer shopping has changed and as a result, recognize that their business model must adapt.

What's needed above all is an approach that brings everything together; coordinates customer service efforts, streamlines processes, accommodates returns and helps eliminate duplication. That's where a single commerce solution is critically important, enabling retailers to create one centralized place where all product information, both online and in-store can be held, and another where customer information across all channels can be retained. Customers will no longer settle for a retailer that does not offer consistent product prices and promotions!

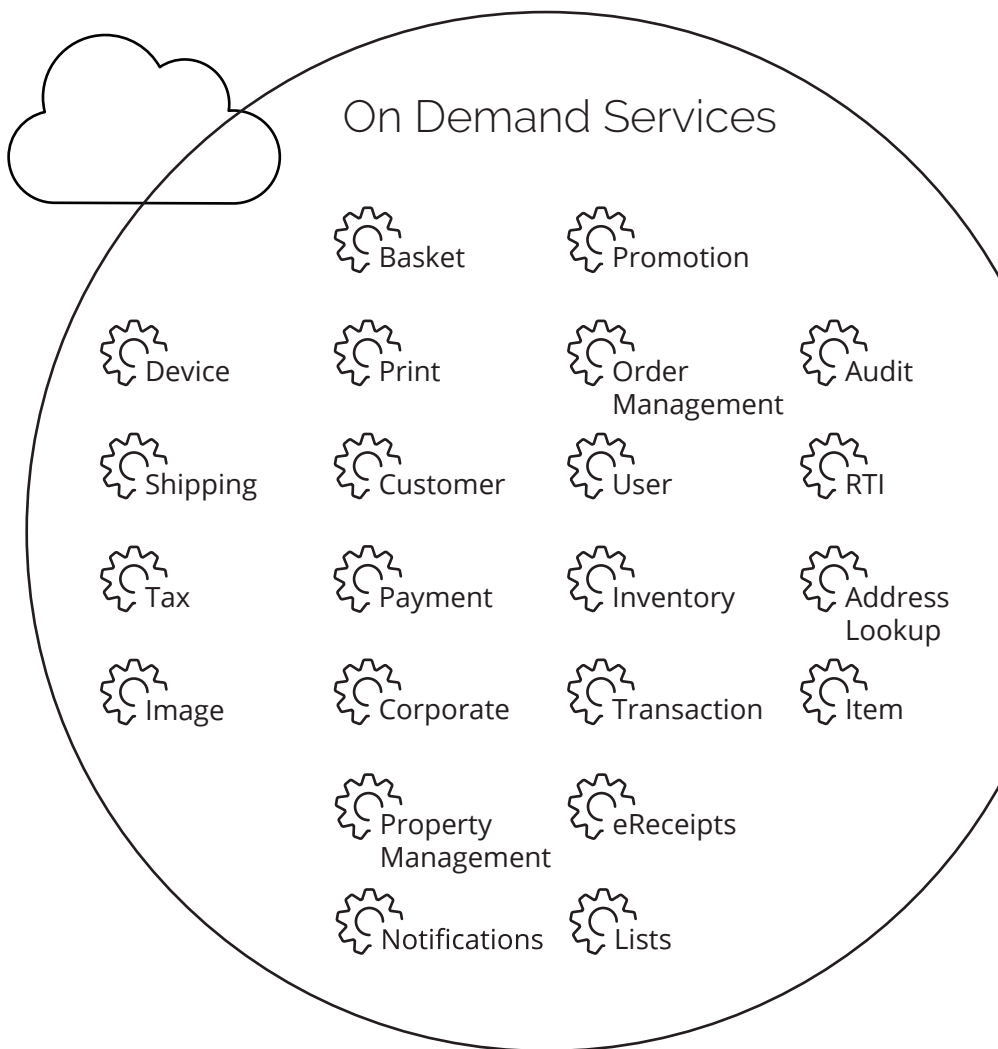
Retailers should start to wrestle back control of the whole commerce process. Organizations need an umbrella view of each customer – so they can instantly see when a shopper has purchased an item online and when they bought something in-store, as well as the volume of transactions across all channels.

With software solutions like PCMS VISION Commerce Suite, a single solution can provide widespread value to every channel and touchpoint impacting the customer journey. VISION Commerce Suite is more than just a traditional register or till because PCMS has evolved its architecture into a sophisticated application that can help connect customers to a channel, regardless of where they want to transact.



The business logic sits as a set of feature rich services in the cloud, to help retailers solve the problems of today and prepare for the future. When retailers use PCMS services, it is the same across the board when a customer is building a 'basket,' which speaks to a true unified customer experience.

In a field where it is difficult to keep up with the Amazons of the world, retailers need to work smarter, not harder. One differentiator PCMS can provide is a real-time channel distribution to push out tailored messaging to consumers. PCMS Personalized Offers gives retailers the ability to influence a shopper's journey by up-selling, steering them to a new product or directing them toward a new channel. This empowers retailers by allowing them to not only tailor the offering for a specific target, but also to track and understand the engagement. Customers are typically accustomed to receiving offers or promotions if they reach a certain threshold of activity. Personalized Offers is unique because it can pleasantly surprise and delight shoppers by rewarding them for specific actions a retailer finds valuable. Not to mention, added referral capabilities let consumers share rewards with friends and family!



With VISION Commerce Suite implemented, retailers can now put in place the functionality they need to drive retail sales across multiple channels; provide greater business insight; exceed customer expectations; build customer loyalty; support customer returns; and reduce time to return on investment.

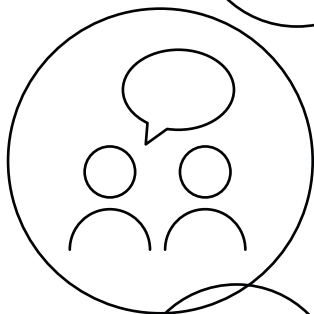
VCS allows 'baskets' to stay with the customer and not their device. Transactions track across channels, increasing consumer convenience and a retailers ability to up-sell. Whether it is online, in-store, on-app and on mobile, the experience is the same!



A few real-world examples of how VISION Commerce Suite can improve every aspect of a retailer's estate include:



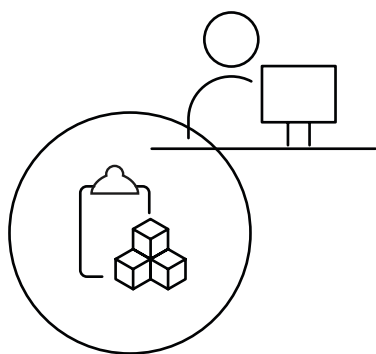
**Store Managers:** Drive store sales performance with Endless Aisle commerce conversions. Keep customers content through line busting and convertible lane options.



**Sales Assistants:** Have access to rich, reliable, real-time information about locations and up-selling opportunities. Tailor their approach using mobile POS. According to BRP's Customer Engagement Survey, 62% of retailers plan to increase their use of mobile devices for POS by the end of 2019.



**Customers:** Shop 'their' way with quick payment and short lines, including on their phones, self-scan or manned registers. They can receive more timely and personalized chances to not only save, but they can also pass promotions on to friends and family.



**Point of Sale Operators:** With a faster system at their fingertips, they will face smaller lines and happy customers. The ease of use avoids aggravations like system reboots.

**Track Inventory:** Track orders at the point of delivery and reduce waste with analysis.

## VISION Commerce Suite®



Here are five processes an organization should consider to enable a true unified customer experience across a retailer's enterprise:

1. Executive management needs to define business objectives and set a clear strategy across various channels.
2. Centralize your experience for easy management of your complex retail ecosystem. One version of the truth that can be shared and distributed across the customer experience is imperative for a consistent shopping journey.
3. Since every retail journey is different, the ability to affordably test and implement a proof of concept quickly is a key to success. Choose a solution that can quickly pilot with options to easily adjust.
4. Surprise and delight your customers through incentive based offers to define your store level experience for the customer. Use your digital footprint to offer something unexpected! This gives customers that 'feel good' experience they will want to repeat and in turn, will increase loyalty and increase visits.
5. Train your store associates to have common goals and understand the same process and priorities as your key stakeholders.

At the end of the day, customers like feeling when they need to purchase an item, it can be done through multiple avenues. The flexibility a retailer provides is reassuring for a customer to come back time after time. Retailers owe their customers a robust point of sale experience that can connect the dots along the way. The consumer should never worry about coupons, promotions and prices varying across touchpoints because it should be operating seamlessly in the background. This is even more imperative as unified journeys are already being perfected by a large portion of the retail market. With the influx of online purchasing, a recipe for success involves retail 'baskets' following customers at every touchpoint.

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