

What the customer wants from retailers

The customer is king, and the customer has always been king. What the customer needs and what they want is something that every retailer has to abide by. And there's lots of changes. There lots of disruptions that's actually changed the behaviour of what's happening now for customers-- for example, omnichannel, which means where a customer shops where they want, when they want.

It could be online. It could be on a mobile. It could be in a physical store. It could be a locker to collect things. They want this 24/7. They expect to know where things come from. They expect to know what the products are made from. It's important that the customer actually gets this information. Because if you, as a retailer, are not able to provide that, another retailer, one of your competitors, will provide that. So providing the best information at all times for your customers is really, really important.

Currently, people still make the majority of their purchases in the physical stores. So whilst e-commerce sales are growing significantly, the in-store sales are still continuing to dominate. And this is because, in stores, they offer unique social, tactile experiences. And these social, tactile experiences cannot be replicated in the digital world. And most leading retailers with physical stores are trying to position these physical stores now at the forefront of the experience to really give the shopper a physical experience around their products and around their brand.

Shoppers are now a lot more educated. 89% of consumers actually conduct their own research around the products using search engines and social before they come and enter the store. Omnichannel retail is very important now. It's where a customer may shop on a mobile phone, an iPad, and a desktop, and then they may walk into your store.

And from the customer's perspective, they expect you to know them in each of those different channels. They expect you to know what you're looking at, what you were ordering, what your past orders are. So omnichannel is really about being everywhere for the customer in any of the different channels that you're operating in.

Often with omnichannel, retailers are failing because they have different boundaries and different systems between the different channels. For example, the mobile phone, I may leave an order in my basket on the mobile phone. Then I have to get on a tube or do something. When I go home to my laptop, I log on to my account.

I expect to see the products that I added on my mobile phone because, as a customer, I'm dealing with you as one brand. I'm not dealing with you as separate online, offline, and mobile, et cetera. So it's very important that I see all what I want at the same time.

People want to shop wherever they are, whatever time of day. 21% of all tablet use occurs when the customer is actually in bed. Customers want you to make it relevant to their

needs, make it relevant to what I want as the consumer. And 35% of online buyers are willing to share personal information to receive coupons, to receive discounts, and to start to build a relationship.

Around about 23% of households have an average of 23 loyalty programmes. So speed, efficiency, and transparency are really key for customers now. Before we explore the answer to these challenges, we need to understand how the market dynamics have changed. This is what we'll discuss in the next chapter.