

The staying power of 'click and collect'

If you want to engage customers and drive foot traffic in your store, then an e-commerce presence is essential. It might sound counter-intuitive, but in this modern shopping environment, online and in-store work together, not against each other, to attract and retain customers.



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These days people are shopping online more than ever, so not having a digital storefront means you're missing out on a lot of potential customers.

The good news is, it's easy to create an e-commerce site. And if you're already using a point of sale system, you can even sync your online and physical stores to get a single view of products, customers, and sales data, without having to deal with double entries or discrepancies.

One of the best ways to bring your online and in-store world's together, is to offer 'click and collect'. Higor Torchia, the country manager for retail software company Vend, shares three reasons why it's a great idea to get started.

1. Click and collect presents a lot of upsell and cross-sell opportunities

Click and collect isn't just convenient, it also drives foot traffic and sales. Nearly a third of shoppers opted for in-store pickup over the holiday season, and according to the ICSC, 69% of shoppers who went in-store to pick up their orders ended up buying additional items.

Unlike retailers that sell exclusively online, having a physical presence means you can add more value to your click and collect sales based on personal interactions with customers. Use the power of conversation to figure out if there's anything in your store that can complement the items that a customer has purchased.

If you're selling fashion apparel goods, for example, it's helpful to have some classic accessories on hand – like belts, shoes, or jewellery – that you can recommend to customers. Or if you're a homeware retailer, you can try having some beautiful serving utensils or last-minute gift options near the counter.



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2. You'll have a competitive edge over e-commerce giants

Running an online store alongside your brick-and-mortar shop can be challenging, especially when you're competing with e-commerce giants like eBay. Luckily, you have something these e-commerce giants don't: a physical presence.

Make click and collect a strategic sales channel in your store by prioritising face-to-face relationship building when shoppers come in to pick up their order. Encourage staff to get to know customers better, tailor their shopping experiences, and give them reasons to come back through the door.

If your store sells items that require some initial setup, you might want to do what those e-commerce giants can't – help your shoppers get set up in-store so they can walk out ready for action. Or, you can offer on-the-spot exchanges for click and collect purchases so shoppers won't have to worry about painful postage issues.



Keeping physical retail alive, and growing

Higor Torchia 30 Jan 2019



3. You'll be giving savvy shoppers what they want

Today's shoppers expect to buy items on their own terms. For some, that means ordering a product online and then sitting back and waiting for their items to be delivered. But for others, a good shopping experience means not having to deal with shipping and waiting for deliveries.

Staying competitive in today's retail landscape requires you to enable customers to shop their way. In addition to letting shoppers select the usual shipping options, you should also allow them to pick up purchases at their convenience – no delivery fees, no tracking, no waiting. Click and collect lets you do just that.

Some retailers are even designating physical areas in their store for in-store pickup. Walmart, for example, has a special click and collect section where shoppers can go directly to pick up their order instead of waiting in line at the customer service counter where other issues (such as questions or returns) are being addressed.

If you're offering in-store pickup, follow in the footsteps of these retailers and see if there's something you can do in your store to make the pickup experience speedy for click and collect customers.

Retail success means continuously finding new ways to delight your customers. In a world overloaded with choice and information, it's crucial to cater to the needs of savvy shoppers to stay one step ahead of the competition.

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