



## IS E-COMMERCE KILLING BRICK-AND-MORTAR SHOPS?

# HOW WELL-TRAINED SALES PERSONNEL CAN TAKE THE IN-STORE EXPERIENCE TO A DIFFERENT LEVEL

Shoppers are increasingly turning to the convenience and economy of online. By 2017, 60% of all U.S. retail sales will involve the Internet in some way, according to a new report by Forrester Research Inc. Meanwhile, e-commerce sales in Western Europe are expected to grow at an even faster rate than the U.S. in the next five years, from €112 billion in 2012 to €191 billion by 2017. The desire for convenient, open anytime access to shopping makes online retailing an attractive option for consumers. As a result, even big brands like Media Markt and Saturn - which have been around for decades- experience severe competition from well-established e-commerce platforms. Many traditional retailers are at a loss about how to combat this trend and remain viable.

### **Personalize the shopping experience for your customers**

While the industry is certainly undergoing massive disruption, the transformation will not lead to just a pure virtual commerce existence. The good news is: Shopping for fun is not dead – customers still enjoy exceptional brick-and-mortar events. However, traditional retailers need to rethink the way they sell their wares, by offering shoppers different and new retail experiences - both in terms of brand and service.

Interacting with well-trained sales associates ensures that you receive a product you love and helps to avoid shopper's remorse. Engagement starts from the moment a customer steps into a store. Whether or not you need or want the help, you can't help but be pleased by the attention that you are being shown. Feeling important and welcome are two of our most basic needs.

Online shopping only offers the products you are able to find. Expert service provides consumers with a one-on-one conversation to enhance your overall shopping experience.

### **Why good customer service is essential**

Survey after survey shows that shoppers prefer face-to-face over any other form of customer service. If you want to leverage your retail presence to build loyalty and positive word of mouth, then you want to invest in the very best retail staff with the very best training. You want staff that is going to add value to the customer's experience, not staff that is just order takers.

It isn't just customers who benefit from good customer service. Staff, too, will be far more motivated to work for a professional company which prides itself on excellent customer service as it will give them a much deeper sense of job satisfaction.

Before you can train your employees, you need to be sure you are hiring the best employees. Begin by being careful about where you recruit, and be selective about their qualifications and education.

Successful leaders consciously try to help bring out the very best in their staff.

No other industry needs customer service more than the retail industry, but great customer service requires great management of customer service level employees. A retail manager will need strong leadership potential, the ability to maximize retail opportunities and be confident in making decisions. Honesty and transparency are trusted and required leadership traits when asking people to follow you. Each member of the team is necessary to be successful and good managers realize the importance of teamwork. Managers, who have their troops mentally prepared for battle, are in a much better position to execute a successful group strategy.

The stakes have been raised to deliver exceptional shopping experiences. It is no longer enough to ensure the retail sales floor is adequately staffed to process transactions. Instead, brick-and-mortar stores must capitalize on their proximity to shoppers to demonstrate concern, answer questions, and offer solutions. To personalize the shopping experience for your customers successfully you need to:

1. **Systematically focus on the client**
2. Provide encouragement in the area of personnel development and employee qualification.
3. Clearly communicate your expectations and goals.

### **Are you an employer of choice? Start a reality check:**

Personalizing the shopping experience for your customers can increase profit margins, strengthen customer loyalty and level the playing field with mobile and e-commerce.

At MFB Resultants we understand the operational issues you face and can help uncover opportunities for improvement within and across your contact centers and operations.

Our teams of seasoned expert trainers use data-driven marketing insights to empower your employees, so then these employees can elevate the customer experience and treat shoppers the way they want to be treated: as individuals with unique buying behaviors and preferences.

For further information please contact by Email or phone under 0049 (0)611 34 11 78 50.

### **MFB Resultants – We deliver results.**