

## Putting Your Store Associate at the Heart of the Shopping Experience



*Overcome the challenge on how to deliver the omni-channel service customers expect by placing your store associate at the heart of change*

Becoming an omni-channel business demands a huge transformation for retailers, and store associates are at the heart of the change. With many customers still preferring to deal face-to-face, even in today's online world, associates are at the front line of the battleground for loyalty.

They need to be experts in digital selling and able to see and sell across channels. A product is out of stock? Alternative options must be easily available or you'll lose the sale to an online competitor. If the store is part of the distribution network, associates will need to become efficient at fulfilment, too.

Yet despite all this, 60 percent of customers say that they either find shop-floor assistants ineffective within the shopping experience or that they actually make the experience worse<sup>1</sup>. It's a challenge for traditional retailers to work out how to deliver the omni-channel service their customers expect. Many have tried to tackle the problem but have at best achieved a temporary fix. Most have become derailed by complexity. They simply can't see a practical way forward.

The secret is associate empowerment. With the right tools, your store staff can give customers everything they need to make the next step with you, so you don't lose the sale.

### Remove the Variables from Customer Service

Manhattan Associates brings together your disparate inventory systems with an Order Management solution that makes all of your stock available to any channel, including your stores. And making this information available to call centre agents positions retailers as more customer-centric. Retailers prove they put the customer first when they don't ask customers to share the same demographic information multiple times across different touch points.

Our industry-leading solution is designed specifically for the new retail world, bringing together systems and tools for everyone in the business to better serve customers, no matter how they get in touch or place their order.

The outcome is one truly omni-channel experience for every customer. Easy ordering from any channel. Simple returns to any location. Direct supplier shipping. Advanced reservations and purchasing. A single system that gives the whole business real-time insight into stock availability across the whole of your network.



*A smart Order Management solution gives you the information you need to optimise the shopping experience in your stores*

But this is just the start of the story. From increasing deal sizes and reducing abandoned carts to better brand reputation and greater loyalty, empowering your associates to deliver a great customer experience benefits the entire business.

### **Modern Shopping in Action**

There are three major benefits to empowering your store associates with the right systems:

#### **1. Create an amazing customer experience in seconds**

Despite the appeal of low cost online retailers, customer experience is still one of the main motivators for customers to choose a brand. It's one of the main reasons they leave, too.

With a smart Order Management solution integrated with point of sale (POS), your associates can deliver an outstanding level of service when they're face-to-face with customers. They have instant access to stock availability and delivery timescales across your whole store network, central distribution centres and warehouses. Information is clearer and more accurate – meaning that promises to customers are clearer and more accurate, too. For items with long lead times, or for special orders, business rules can choose the best options for the customer and your business. These may include fulfilling the order direct from the supplier, reducing delivery times for the customer and significantly increasing the available product range.

With a mobile POS (mPOS) system, an associate can assist a customer no matter where she is on the shop floor. mPOS-equipped associates won't need to interrupt conversations with customers when it comes time to close the deal.

#### **2. Deliver the operational support for associates to excel**

Stores have revenue targets, so if your associates can work smarter and more efficiently, then you'll generate greater revenues, without making them work harder or longer hours. It's about mobilising the right resources, at the right time for the right tasks.

A smart Order Management solution gives you the information you need to optimise the shopping experience in your stores, with accurate and real-time inventory values showing you where specific stock items are selling and where stock needs to be re-routed. Intelligent algorithms make hundreds of these decisions in real-time, while integrated advance ship notices (ASN) and visibility of store replenishment shipments give your associates an unrivalled ability to make promises about future delivery dates. With additional call centre capabilities, you can even start the process before your customers hit the store, by providing your contact teams with access to the same information as your in-store teams. It turns customer service calls into potential sales opportunities and helps all your customer service teams to work seamlessly together, with call centre staff advising on local store availability and reserving a product for store collection.



### 3. Unlock sustainable growth

Sustainable growth is key to your business: from keeping customers spending to protecting the revenues that your shareholders expect. The right Order Management solution gives you all this, and more.

Store associates can increase in-store revenues through cross- and up-sell quickly and efficiently, while providing revolutionary customer service. For customers, you create an endless aisle: network-wide business rules leverage your full network inventory and present a wider range of products to customers at point of purchase – whether it's across stores or direct from the supplier. Surfacing a single view of the customer through order management integration with clienteling allows associates to personalise the store experience based on a customer's past purchases and preferences.

#### Calculate the Possibilities

Customer loyalty isn't just about process and logistics. It's about empowered people. Store associates give traditional retailers an amazing opportunity to compete in ways that pure online brands can't.

The right Order Management platform transforms visibility and access, putting your whole supply chain network in their hands while helping your staff flex, promise and reliably deliver every time.

**Contact Manhattan Associates now on 0118 922 8076 or [uk@manh.com](mailto:uk@manh.com) to talk to the supply chain experts about how you can deliver a breakthrough approach to customer service.**

**Learn more about why Manhattan Associates is an Omni-Channel Order Management leader in the [Forrester Wave, Omni-Channel Order Management Q3 2016](#) report.**

1. OnePoll High Street Survey, April 2013

## About Manhattan Associates, Inc.

Manhattan Associates, Inc. makes commerce-ready supply chains that bring all points of commerce together so you're ready to sell and ready to execute. Across the store, through your network or from your fulfilment centre, we design, build and deliver market-leading solutions that support both top-line growth and bottom-line profitability. By converging front-end sales with back-end supply chain execution, our software, platform technology and unmatched experience help our customers get commerce ready—and ready to reap the rewards of the omni-channel marketplace. For more information, please visit [www.manh.com](http://www.manh.com).