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# Creating In-Store Customer Experiences in the Age of Frictionless Retail





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# What is Frictionless Retail?

A frictionless experience is about more than just fewer hassles. Today's shoppers are looking for greater speed, personalization, and "wow" experiences.

Frictionless is about **anticipating**, not just meeting, customers' needs.

The method of using data, technology and devices to integrate buying opportunities as seamlessly as possible into the everyday activities of shoppers.



Reduce the amount of time and hassle involved in the steps between desire for a product and receiving it.



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# 7 Types of Frictionless Retail

Chris Wren, Branding Strategy Insider

## ease of access

- How fast the customer can find what they're looking for?
- How fast can they pay for it?

## fulfillment



The all-important "last mile" for deliveries at home or work

## multichannel alignment



Shoppers choose how they complete purchases

## payment options

- Amazon's 1-click
- Apple/Android Pay
- Brand apps





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# 7 Types of Frictionless Retail

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## personalization



Tailoring the experience to the customer's needs

## positive friction

- A moment of pause
- Interrupting with value and personal service



## security



Unique challenges for offline and online retail



All friction isn't created equal!

## The Goal: Find the Optimal Experience

**+**

**Increase  
Positive  
Friction**



**-**

**Decrease  
Negative  
Friction**

- Engaged, informed associates who assist and understand your specific needs
- Being greeted by name
- Opportunity to taste/try out/experience the product
- Special offer for something on your wish-list
- Unexpected loyalty reward
- Personalized invitation for a freebie with purchase

“Interruptions that leave you feeling **good** about the experience”

Craig Herbison, CEO of Plexure

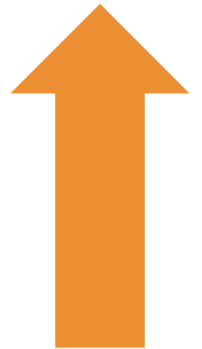


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**Increase  
Positive  
Friction**



Positive friction usually involves a human element.

- Disengaged or hard-to-find associates
- Long, slow checkout lines
- Annoying popups where online product reviews are posted
- Confusing store layout or poorly designed app or web experience
- Stock and stock-keeping/housekeeping issues
- Unclear, confusing, or inconsistent pricing
- Lack of consistency across channels

Create “an experience that **facilitates, not frustrates,** the customer journey”

Craig Herbison, CEO of Plexure



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**Decrease  
Negative  
Friction**

Negative friction typically involves the mechanics of the experience.



# Brick & Mortar is NOT Obsolete



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# 93%

of shoppers  
went to a  
physical store  
during the 2018 holiday  
season

# 60%

of shoppers cite  
the ability to  
interact with the  
product  
as the main reason for visiting  
stores

- International Council of Shopping Centers Survey
- 2018 Deloitte holiday retail survey

# Brick & Mortar is NOT Obsolete



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55% of Gen Z shoppers and 54% of Boomer shoppers say they'll do the majority of their 2019 holiday shopping in brick-and-mortar shops.

Across all generations, **84% will turn to mobile devices before making holiday purchases** for research, price comparison, reviews, inspiration, and other insights.

# Shopping Habits and Trends



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- 85% of shoppers still prefer to purchase at a physical store.
- They spend 4.7 hours a day on their smartphone.
- 72% perform product/price comparisons and look for deals online before entering a store.
- 2 out of 3 in-store shoppers check prices on their smartphone before purchasing.
- 84% of shoppers believe retailers should be doing more to integrate online and offline channels.



# Brick & Mortar is NOT Obsolete



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**“Shoppers want the best of both worlds.** They enjoy in-store experiences, but they want those experiences to be enhanced — and they want their purchase decisions to be validated by using their phones to find inspiration, check their wishlists, and more.”

Adam Sand, CEO, Shopkick

## Your opportunity for the **WOW!**

People go online to buy, but they go to stores to shop, and that’s where you can help customers find the items they didn’t even know they needed.

How prepared are your store associates to represent your brand and all digital channels today?



# Retailers'

# #1

# Overlooked Superpower



Shoppers rank **store  
associate knowledge**  
as the **#1** factor to  
making the shopping  
experience better



# 71%

of shoppers feel  
the retail  
associate **isn't  
knowledgeable  
or helpful**



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“In one case our analysis showed that every extra dollar the chain spent on payroll would generate anywhere from \$4 to \$28 in additional revenue, depending on the store. The retailer’s customer surveys revealed why: **The two most important drivers of customer satisfaction were the ability to find an associate who could provide assistance and whether that person was knowledgeable...**

**It’s high time for retailers to abandon old, ineffective ways of operating and recognize that store employees are one of their best weapons in the battle for consumers’ business.”**

“Retailers Are Squandering Their Most Potent Weapons”  
Marshall Fisher, Santiago Gallino, and Serguei Netessine  
Harvard Business Review



It takes

**12X**

more marketing dollars to sell to a new customer than to entice an existing customer to buy again



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The typical retailer loses

**~20-30%**

of its customers annually

**Every customer counts.**



# The Lost Art of Selling as a Service



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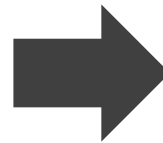
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## The Human Factor

- Eliminate assumptions about customer preferences
- Engage at a personal level while leveraging technology

## Key Selling and Service Skills



- Determine Needs
- Shape Agreement
- Test for Reaction

# #1 Determining Needs



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## Ask Purposeful Questions

- Ask open-ended questions.
- Personalize them to the customer.
- Press for specifics.
- Ask, don't assume.



What is most important to you \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_?

How will you be using this...?

Tell me about the features you liked on your old phone.

What color do you want to accent with the paint trim?

What other colors might work with your wardrobe needs?

Tell me more about your travels and where you are going.

# #2 Shaping Agreement



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Reinforce/Agree  
Expand By Adding Your Ideas



“You’re right—it is hard to find petite sizes in this style. Perhaps you should consider buying one in each color?”

“The car is the model you wanted and within your budget. And with the trade-in promotion, your first payment isn’t due until November.”

# #3 Testing for Reaction



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“It’s the style you liked, and it fits your budget. Should I ring it up for you?”



“You seem hesitant or unsure. What concerns you about this brand?”

# 75%

of consumers  
want *more*  
interaction in the  
future, not less.

“This is a time of revival  
and reinvention for  
retailers able and willing to  
deliver the experience that  
customers increasingly  
demand.”



Find the right blend for  
your brand and culture.

Chris Wren, Branding Strategy Insider



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## Focus on enhancing the customer's experience.

Look at where and how you might:

- speed things up
- slow things down
- allow customers to learn about and appreciate what they buy
- remove barriers
- reduce the customer's effort and perceived risk
- create sociability and community space

“Figure out what employees and customers care about and communicate your shared values.”

When asked what would most improve in-store shopping experiences, respondents to PwC’s 2019 Global Consumer Insights Survey ranked “access to sales associates with a deep knowledge of the product range” second, behind the ability to quickly and conveniently navigate the store.



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**The Human Factor**  
Your Brand + Your Culture  
**is your competitive  
edge in the age of  
frictionless retail**

# Are Your Stores Retail Ready?





# 3 Critical Steps



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- 1. Hire the right people** who represent your brand through their behaviors.
- 2. Develop the interpersonal skills and behaviors** that build customer loyalty and drive conversion.
- 3. Coach associates effectively** so you can be sure everyone working with your customers represents the brand and culture.



<https://mohrretail.com/what-online-retailers-need-to-know-for-a-successful-brick-and-mortar-launch/>



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