Unified commerce solutions for customer-centric retail success

Today retail is more about customer experience and the brand promise and less about technology.

Source: © 123rf [123rf](123rf) Today retail is more about customer experience and the brand promise and less about technology

Peter Ludi, MD Solutions at redPanda Software, says there has been a shift in focus from technical proficiency to customer experience and brand promise.

Therefore, understanding the changing consumer journey is paramount in today's ever-evolving retail landscape, as retailers need to embrace agile and responsive strategies to meet rising customer expectations and seamlessly navigate a vast array of shopping experiences.

This is particularly crucial in South Africa, where intermittent power supply often requires shoppers to adjust their habits to 'follow the power.'

Unified view

It is within this context that an effective Order Management System (OMS) can deliver exceptional customer experiences.

By providing transparency on order fulfilment, the OMS enables retail stores to optimise their fulfilment routes, effectively

becoming distribution centres for customers.

Keith Dipple, sales director for connected commerce at Planet, emphasises the goal of facilitating seamless shopping journeys and higher shopper frequency through accurate order promises and proactive customer communications.

Having sight of the entire retail estate, both in-store and online requires access to a unified commerce platform.

"This empowers retailers with a unified view of their in-store and online inventory, ensuring near real-time visibility," he says.

"In turn, this enables retailers to fulfil their order promise consistently, enhancing customer convenience and loyalty.

"The ability to fulfil multiple products differently within a single transaction further simplifies the shopping experience and increases conversion rates – whilst often reducing carrier costs in parallel", explains Dipple.

Integration enhances customer experience

In a dynamic retail environment, resilience is key.

To provide accurate product promises, inventory data must be unified and aggregated in the cloud, creating a centralised master of stock data.

Integrating the OMS with other solutions, such as a Point of Sale (POS), enhances the customer experience and delivers a competitive edge.

Retailers leveraging unified commerce platforms have seen conversion rates double in many cases, with in-store revenue boosts of approximately 20% through the introduction of the endless aisle concept.