



## Newsletter Vol. 79 - Introduction

Softengine News is dedicated to keeping you up to date with the latest information regarding SAP Business One systems, Softengine solutions and Best Business Practices.

### What's New?

#### Spotlight on: UPS Pulse of the Online Shopper™ - A Customer Experience Study

UPS commissioned this Global Study with comScore for the second year to provide perspective for retailers on consumer behavior in today's fluid shopping culture. Global e-commerce growth, which continues to fuel retail expansion, is estimated to reach 16% in 2015, moving from \$1.47 trillion in 2014 to \$1.7 trillion. Growth in the market is expected from expanding online and mobile user bases in emerging markets, increased m-commerce sales, and growth in new international markets. One of the great opportunities provided by online retail is the ability to sell to customers in previously unreachable marketplaces. In this survey, shoppers worldwide said that almost one in four (24%) of their purchases were made with online retailers outside their own country. Half of these (12%) were made with U.S.-based retailers, and the other half elsewhere. In the U.S., more than half (54%) of shoppers said they had made purchases with retailers based outside their own country.

#### Study Goals

This year's study goes beyond other retail industry studies to give a 360° perspective of online shopping. The scope has been expanded on key customer experience topics and now explores what drives the consumer's complete path to purchase. It delivers insights into shopping preferences and current levels of satisfaction with online and omnichannel shopping, taking the consumer's pulse on what tactics influence positive shopping experiences – from pre-purchase to purchase to post-purchase. Featured throughout this white paper is a series of "Retail Watch" recommendations that can help drive retail sales.

## The Flex Shopper is Changing the Retail World



Shoppers everywhere are hungry for convenience on their own terms. Choice continues to be paramount to global shopping behavior as consumers navigate among channels and devices. They want to be in control of everything -- from retailer selection and product reviews to delivery options and returns. Today's shoppers expect to be able to seamlessly shift from one channel and device to the next. The online shopping population within each region worldwide, and even within each country, has varying levels of device adoption and technological sophistication that drives their shopping habits and preferences. As expected, Asia shoppers lead the world in tech adoption, while Mexico and Brazil fall slightly behind, followed by the U.S. and Europe. Mobile is often the catalyst fueling heightened omnichannel expectations along the customer journey. Mobile has become indispensable -- from researching products in advance of store visits and previewing retail email, to hunting down the best price and checking on delivery status.

Stores are still core to the shopping experience, particularly in some regions (Mexico and U.S., for example). Checking for inventory availability and store information via mobile serves as the bridge to the store visit. Use of mobile devices when visiting the store has also become commonplace as consumers access product reviews and price check, gaining confidence along the way that they are making the right purchase. Then, mobile is used to verify delivery status for home or in-store pickup. Retailers face significant pressure to ACT on the global shopping behavior. While in the past, retailers had the luxury of optimizing each channel on its own, the challenge today lies in making sure the channels are well integrated. Inventory transparency will form the foundation of many cross-channel efforts. Investments will be forthcoming that foster consistency of marketing and customer experience across channels. The future of the store will most certainly involve mobile as well. Line-busting checkout via handheld devices, Wi-Fi access storewide and associate-aided, tablet-based selling may be the new standard in a few short years. Though change won't happen overnight, prioritizing initiatives that ensure consistency across every touch point is a must-do to engage the global flex shopper.

## THE RETAIL LANDSCAPE SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions should be assessed in the context of specific country and retailer needs, and adopted as appropriate.

### MOBILE

- Define the optimal user experience for mobile (smartphone and tablet) and build a roadmap to achieve those goals
- Make sure emails render properly on all mobile devices
- Leverage responsive site design to deliver a mobile-optimized experience
- Review imagery needs and upgrade to ensure customers gain a clear view of the product to facilitate decision making
- Evaluate the role of apps for your business (note: recent studies have revealed that having strong basic functions, such as searching and purchasing products and easy checkout, is more critical than the latest technology feature)

### STORES

- For store-based retailers, explore the technology that can be deployed to educate, inspire and service the shopper in store
- Allow shoppers to have a choice in receipts (electronic, paper or both)
- Utilize product locators online and in store to find inventory and deliver it to the customer
- Be forward-thinking with POS (point of sale) systems and evaluate mobile tools

### SOCIAL

- Be creative in your marketing strategies to grow your social channels and utilize them to market, message and merchandise to your fans
- Monitor social media for both positive feedback and complaints and respond in a timely fashion
- Encourage consumers to “Like” your brand through onsite placement and extended marketing efforts
- Reward those who “Like” your brand with deals and offers

For more information about the **UPS Pulse of the Online Shopper™**, please download:

[https://upssite.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/2015\\_ups\\_global\\_pulse\\_of\\_the\\_online\\_study\\_white\\_paper.pdf](https://upssite.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/2015_ups_global_pulse_of_the_online_study_white_paper.pdf)

Please contact Barry Lederman: 818.704.7000, [blederman@softengineusa.com](mailto:blederman@softengineusa.com) for Retail and eCommerce solutions.

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