

# REIMAGINING RETAIL COMMERCE... WITH THE RIGHT TOOLS

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Today's disruptive retail landscape is nowhere near what it was during the glory days of the department store, or even the advent of "click and mortar" in the not-so-distant past. New technologies and channels are emerging at breakneck paces, creating a retail future that's full of both challenges and opportunities. From direct buy options on social media to robots, voice-activated assistants, and even virtual dressing rooms, retailers are tasked with finding creative ways to stand out and support customer experiences across channels, even creating dedicated innovation labs and teams to explore the plethora of online and offline retail opportunities.

Why? Because savvy retail innovators know that to survive in this new age of commerce where the customer is boss, digital dominates, and competition abounds, brands must leverage engagement to build memorable shopping experiences—meeting customers wherever they are and with the specific technologies they choose. Lee Kent, principal at Your Retail Authority, LLC, perhaps said it best: "The important thing for retailers is to understand their customers' shopping journey and create great experiences that will have them coming back."

### Throughout this paper, we will cover:

- Where your opportunity for retail innovation lies
- How commerce is radically evolving to support richer experiences and deeper engagement
- The specific tools you need to build a compelling experience for your brand and gain newfound levels of agility, scalability, speed, flexibility, and ROI

# The land of opportunity

For many retailers, the challenge of building an innovative, forward-thinking, unique commerce experience is heightened by the growing presence of mega-companies like Amazon that continue to dominate the online market. And as phrases like "Retail Armageddon" and "innovate or die" splash across industry news headlines, you might wonder how it's possible to truly compete amid all of the noise.

But the truth is, you don't necessarily have to compete against the Amazon giants of retail to be successful. Let's take a look at why.

Companies like Amazon and Walmart thrive on selling "nondiscretionary" or commoditized products (such as batteries, dishwasher detergent, diapers, and socks)—the things consumers have to buy for day-to-day convenience and physical needs. For these buyers, it's less about interacting with a brand and more about convenience and product selection.

And while Amazon undoubtedly owns the nondiscretionary, commoditized portion of the retail market, the territory of discretionary, specialized products that consumers really want to buy is still up for grabs. It's within this space of interesting, high-value, and emotion-driven purchases that you can really make your mark. By using innovation to support customer engagement and make your brand experience inviting, authentic, distinctive, and personal, you can compete and succeed even in the wake of Amazon.

Two examples of retailers who have really found their groove in experience-driven commerce are Bear Naked Granola and Dollar Shave Club. While these companies come from entirely different market segments, they have an important thing in common: They both

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