

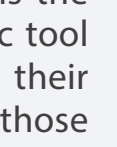
# The Holistic Approach to Your eCommerce Website

The ultimate goal of your website is to convert a virtual visitor into a loyal customer of your brand. But shopping journeys aren't always straightforward. They loop and swirl across your brand's touch points. Whether a customer buys online, in store, or from both channels at different times, what matters at the end of the day is that they ultimately become a happy customer. More so, COVID-19 has changed traditional patterns of shopping behavior, making it more imperative than ever that your brand's technology delivers a unified commerce experience.

**How can your website help you get there?**



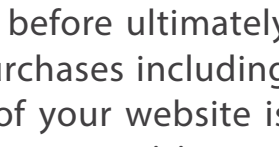
**"Customers want access to a single cart to shop across channels and be able to reach their cart via phone, computer, or in store. They want to start anywhere and finish anywhere."**



## Digital Shopping Carts

The technology connection that makes any multi-channel customer journey work seamlessly is the digital shopping cart. This experience-centric tool empowers your customers to move through their sales cycle from devices, both personal and those belonging to the retailer. Shopping cart changes made by both parties, whether in store, online or via mobile, ideally update in real-time for smooth transitions and an optimal customer experience.

**"88% of consumers research products online before buying in store."**



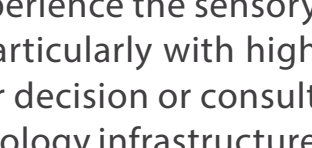
## RESEARCH ONLINE, BUY OFFLINE

The most prevalent consumer shopping behavior is to research online before ultimately purchasing in a store. This is especially true for significant big-ticket purchases including home furnishings, bedding, and appliances. Therefore a primary goal of your website is to drive educated shoppers into your store. The amount of stores a customer visits was trending down to only 2-3 retailers. With further reduced volume due to COVID-19, earning the store traffic of an attentive shopper is even more valuable. Using your website prior to the in-store experience can help expedite the customer's time in your physical store, which may be important to them today. For customers who prefer to make their final purchase in store, it's vital to optimize your website as a key digital marketing tool to drive traffic.

## Grow Research Online, Buy Offline with the support of these eCommerce features and functionalities.

- Eye-Catching Imagery**  
In-store offers sensory experiences that your website needs to work hard to replicate. Product imagery should be enticing and high-quality, yet optimized for site speed. Giving customers the ability to zoom in on product stills for detail and vignettes for context and scale provides the visual clues needed to narrow down their selections.
- Consistent Pricing**  
Customers value transparency from the retailers they engage with. In fact, lack of price clarity is a top reason for shopping cart abandonment. Customers want to do their research using accurate pricing information and see the information they come into your store prepared with reflected on your showroom floor, particularly with pricing.
- Detailed Product Knowledge**  
It is best to continue consistency related to all product knowledge. Provide clear details in searchable and filterable formats, to empower your customer. Retailers that make it easy for customers to conduct their research will be valued. Include specs, measurements, color alternates, materials, and construction in detail on product pages.
- Inventory Availability**  
A key feature for promoting cross-channel consistency is the accurate display of inventory availability. This can include current stock status, ability to view a floor sample in a local showroom, and anticipated time frame for the merchandise to be delivered. This further provides the accurate information customers need to conduct their research.
- Attractive Delivery Options**  
A reason many customers choose to transact in a physical store vs. online is to avoid shipping costs. While this is not always possible for large furniture deliveries, having attractive offers for customers that are looking to save on this particular expense can combat an objection. This can include a basic delivery option or free curbside pickup.
- Store Locators**  
Clearly promote location information. Allow customers to customize their experience by their zip code. Provide store location pages with maps and current business hours and safety procedures that are especially critical today. Personalize pages by showing the faces behind your in-store team and local community involvement.

**"Over 55% of consumers visit stores before buying online, emphasizing the idea that physical and seamless multi-channel experiences are critical for modern retailing."**



## BROWSE IN-STORE, BUY ONLINE

The goal in retail will always be to convert a sale with the path of least resistance. If the opportunity is in front of you, go for the close. Yet, numbers don't lie. "Browse In-Store, Buy Online" is a common shopping pattern. Customers come in-store to experience the sensory elements of a product and may ultimately want to purchase online. Particularly with high ticket items, it is reasonable that a customer may want to sleep on their decision or consult with family members. Retailers must be strategic and ensure their technology infrastructure is set up to accommodate this scenario. To avoid showrooming, where the customer purchases from a competitor, you want to make it convenient for them to purchase from your brand with a frictionless eCommerce experience. This path to purchase may become a rising trend in a COVID-19 impacted world, where customers may be hesitant to make a large purchase without seeing the product in person, but want to limit their time spent in store or utilize a touchless payment method.

## Here are key features of your eCommerce experience to support Browse In-Store, Buy Online Conversions.

- Excellent Customer Service**  
Before we dive into technology, there is no replacement for great customer service. An exceptional technology infrastructure is complementary to the exceptional people that are a part of your business. The technology supports their abilities to deliver a great customer experience and lays the foundation for a lasting brand relationship.
- Sales Person Recognition**  
To encourage your website as a place to be on board, it is important that they feel secure in doing so. Instill confidence by using a PCI-PA-DSS Compliant website platform and clearly display these credentials in your checkout process so customers have the reassurance they need. This can cut down on a common reason for shopping cart abandonment.
- Account Sign Up**  
When a guest enters your store, you want to capture their contact information and sign them up for an account. Sales associates can motivate hesitant guests through incentives and convenience. This includes tracking their product interests as you move through the showroom and adding relevant recommendations to their cart.
- Consistent Merchandising**  
For customers to be able to complete their order online, the merchandise represented in your store needs to be consistent with your website. Operating your in-store and online systems on the same database with real-time inventory syncs is fundamental to a multi-channel experience and seamless online checkout.
- Emailed Shopping Carts**  
It can be difficult to let a customer walk out the door without buying. When this does happen, it is best to provide them with an easy, simplified process to complete their order online. By emailing the customer their shopping cart with their relevant upsells and promotions, there is minimal effort to convert online.
- Streamlined Checkout Process**  
The best way to foster conversions is with a simplified workflow to complete an order. Using a single page, minimal step checkout streamlines the process and is proven to increase conversion rates. Clarity of instructions, transparent pricing totals, and articulated fulfillment options aid the customer in the self-service checkout process.

**Only 20-30% of customers purchase on the 1st visit, therefore your website needs to be designed for all points in the customer lifecycle and foster repeat engagement.**

## MODERN MULTI-CHANNEL CONSUMERS

To successfully serve today's market, your experience needs to be unified across all touch points your customer will have with your brand both today and in the future. This includes early shoppers, repeat customers, and long-term loyalists. Changes are most experiences won't be linear, especially when it comes to repeat engagement. That means both your technological-driven experiences provided in-store and on your eCommerce website need to promote customer convenience and strong branding at all times. Here we highlight some tried and true features of your website that will be valued by customers, no matter where they are in their path to purchase.

## Here are standout website features to win over the dynamic multi-channel customer.

- Product Reviews**  
Customers value social proof. An in-depth body of reviews can be an incredible asset for your brand and deliver motivation a customer needs to avoid buyer's remorse. Reviews are also an effective way to add original content to your website. Ensure your website is a tool to validate decision making.
- Payment Security**  
Once a customer is set to make a purchase, it is important that they feel secure in doing so. Instill confidence by using a PCI-PA-DSS Compliant website platform and clearly display these credentials in your checkout process so customers have the reassurance they need. This can cut down on a common reason for shopping cart abandonment.
- Chat and Click to Call Options**  
Good, old-fashioned communication goes a long way. Sometimes a customer doesn't need to make a trip to your showroom, but does require minimal assistance to continue self-service on your website. By enabling chat and making your phone numbers click to call, they can get the human assistance they need via your website.
- Digital Marketing**  
While product is king, giving customers softer engagement points to promote brand discovery is another important aspect of your website. Offering blog posts, product care resources, visual exploration features, social media connections, and rich-video content can all add value to the overall appeal of your retail business.
- Account Management**  
It is important to provide customers with visibility into their interactions with your business through an online Account Management portal. A centralized area where customers can check on order statuses, make financing payments, and schedule deliveries offers ease of use and helps answer many frequently asked service call questions.
- Unified Customer Profiles**  
To truly have a unified commerce experience, the interactions your customer has online and in-store should be recorded in your brand's technology as one holistic customer profile. This empowers your team to develop personalized relationships and curate their services, which leads to long-term loyalty and increased lifetime value.

**66% of customers in store and 80% online said retail technologies improved their experiences.**



The above features and functionality are available today through **STORIS Unified Commerce Solution** and our **integrated eSTORIS eCommerce platform**. eSTORIS technology is designed specifically with the unique attributes of home furnishings retail experience top of mind. Further, digital shopping carts move seamlessly between our website, in-store kiosk, and mobile Customer Experience Management solutions. From independent businesses to national Top 100 eCommerce websites, STORIS can support you in serving your customers along all points in their shopping journeys with your furniture retail business.

**Discover STORIS Unified Commerce Today**

