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The Fashion Playbook for Mobile Success

Build a Better Mobile Commerce Business.

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The Current State of Fashion Retail

In 2018, the average US adult spent over 4 hours per day on mobile devices. It's no wonder that 2018 also saw a 47% jump in YOY store closures.

Yet, despite shuttering doors being on-trend, global fashion retail sales are actually expected to grow by nearly $200 billion between 2019 and 2022, topping off at $716 billion.

So how is it that despite customers choosing phone time instead of store time, retailers are still anticipating profits to skyrocket? The answer is that consumers haven't stopped shopping; it's just that mobile phones are simply transforming how they do it. Forward-thinking brands can help their bottom line by embracing mobile devices and making them an essential part of the shopping experience. Instead of adopting an "in-store vs. mobile" mindset, retailers who have figured out how to evolve with their customers and deliver an exceptional mobile shopping experience (in-store and out) are leading the way.

Discover six simple steps that can transform your mobile experience and grow your bottom line.

Global fashion retail sales are expected to grow by nearly $200 billion between 2019 and 2022, topping off at $716 billion.

Step 1: Stay True to Your Brand

What does your brand stand for? How does it translate across channels? Understanding how, when, and where your customers shop, and knowing what factors lead to conversions (or abandoned checkouts) is critical to helping your bottom line thrive in the new world of mobile commerce.

Gilt is an industry leader in this; their ecommerce and mobile commerce experiences are a near-seamless, mirror image of each other, all the way down to the full-bleed photos and cross-device continuity. They understand that a purchase begun on one device shouldn't result in the customer having to restart the process just because they moved to a mobile device.

Perhaps Gilt and others prioritize this because they see the bottom line results in doing so: omnichannel shoppers have a 90% higher lifetime value than single-channel shoppers. Further, 86% of shoppers regularly switch between two or more channels. Retailers should provide a consistent experience across multiple platforms to create a smoother, conversion-focused shopping experience.

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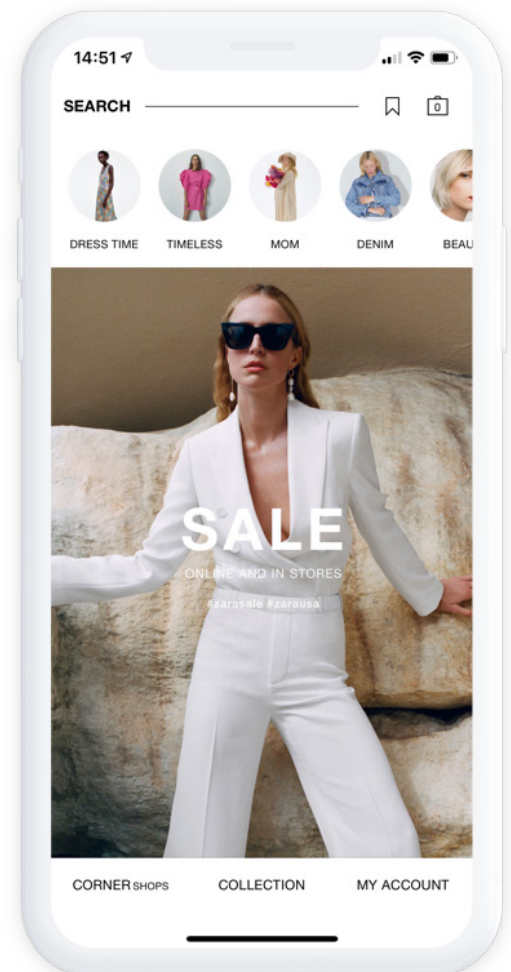
Step 2: Generate Aspirational Curated Content

Curated content encourages shoppers to buy multiple items at the same time. Instead of just advertising a thumbnail of jeans in a social media news feed, fashion retailers are leveraging apps and other mobile-exclusive capabilities to show curated collections of how those same jeans can be worn with different shirts, shoes, etc. Retailers like Zara have adopted this strategy, and also feature instructions on how customers can "shop the look" from photo shoots and seasonal previews.

There are many channels and strategies in which brands can leverage curated content, and according to Jeff Gennette, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer at Macy's, its rise was their reaction to shoppers' demands: "you...have a lot of customers that are looking for you to help them." Maximize your sales by giving them the clothes they want, along with suggestions on how to boost their style.

WEAR WITH

BASIC ANKLE PANTS
29.90 USD

MULTICOLORED NATURAL WOVEN HANDBAG
49.90 USD

ROUND HIGH HEEL SHOES
39.90 USD

"You have a lot of customers that are looking for you to help them."

Step 3: Be an Industry Expert

Do your customers know what colors and looks are on-trend? Can they preview what the next season's styles are? Or learn who the hot new designers you're collaborating with are? As part of the mobile commerce playbook, fashion brands should leverage the power and opportunities inherent to mobile devices to educate their customers about their products and how those looks will fit into their lives.

Net-A-Porter includes app content that highlights current trends so you know what colors, styles, and looks are in-season. They also leverage push notifications, especially ones tailored around prior purchases, to help boost sales. Engaging customers with relevant push notifications lead to a 4x boost in mobile engagement rates when compared to generic messaging.
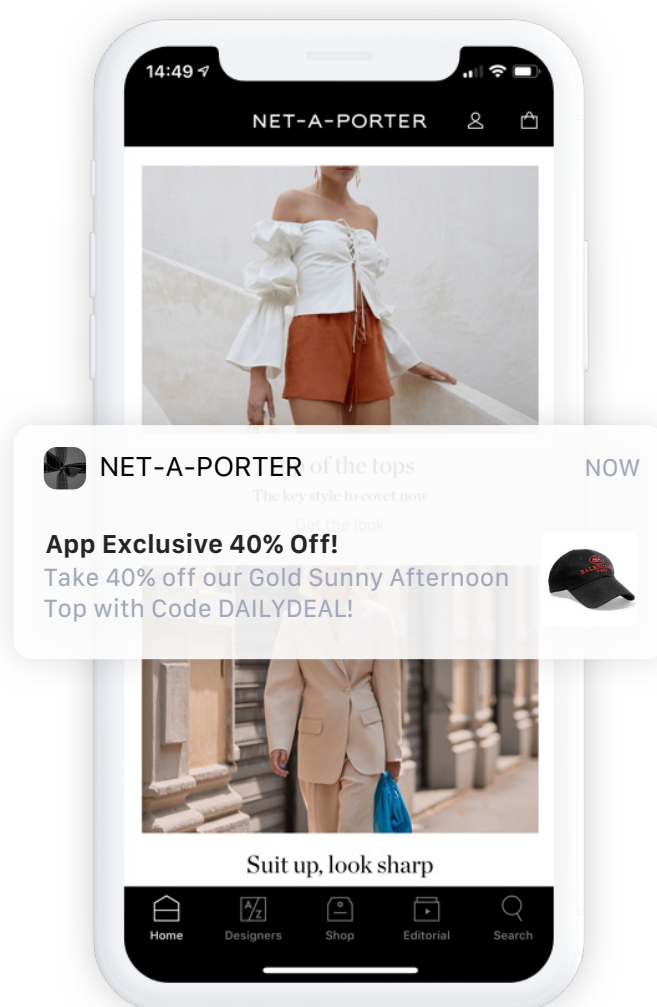
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Step 4: Think Like a Customer

Fashion merchants may become used to how their channels operate since they work on them every day. As a best practice, companies should continually put themselves in the shoes of the customer and experience their shopping journey as if it were their own.

The questions they need to ask themselves are: Is this an intuitive and easy-to-navigate experience? How many clicks and touch points are there in the purchase path? How quickly do pages load? Can I find the search bar? Are there any problems with the checkout process? Knowing the answers to these questions will provide a more seamless shopping experience that drives sales by reducing the amount of waiting and clicks that a user needs to make a purchase.

Also, while websites can be accessed via mobile devices, they're not really optimized to deliver a superior customer experience; as such, they often fail to convert sales. Brands should adopt a mobile-first mindset to drive revenue. In 2018, MVMT Watches doubled their mobile commerce conversions after offering native shopping for social and mobile.

Step 5: Offer Something Unique

Fashion brands can drive a higher ROI by offering customers exclusive content and experiences they can't get anywhere else. This ensures repeat purchases and better customer retention.

One example of this is through utilizing push notifications, which are clickable, on-screen messages and promotions sent to shoppers' mobile devices. Take Nike, for example; their SNKRS app enables customers to shop, explore, and share the latest shoe drops. It also fosters a social media-style community of sneaker fans (aka sneakerheads), who can upload pics of their purchases, leave reviews, and even comment on other users' shoes. Push notifications are sent to users' mobile screens with messaging related to products, communications, etc.

Brands should also harness their social media presence to drive shopping behavior. Foursixty is a company that enables merchants to turn their Instagram content into shoppable galleries for online stores or other channels.

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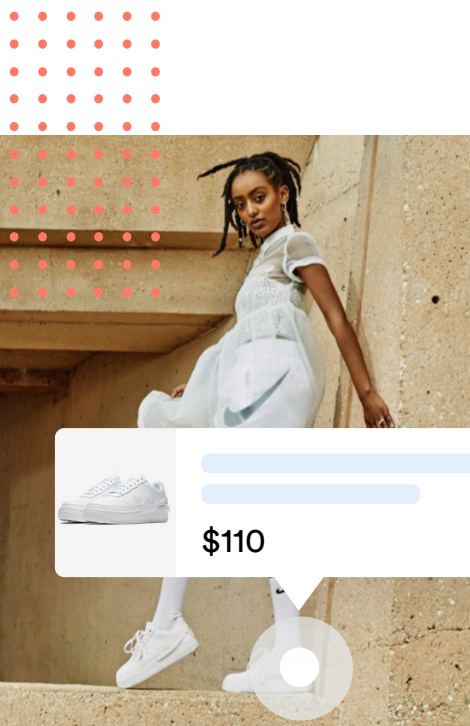
Step 6: Consider an App

Many of the trends and data discussed previously all point to the same conclusion: retailers, especially in fashion, need mobile apps and a corresponding customer engagement strategy to protect sales in the era of store closures. Consumers spent 60% more time in shopping apps in 2018 than in 2016, and with stores closing en mass, stakeholders can't afford to drag their feet in developing more creative ways to engage shoppers.

While users can still log on to websites from their smartphones, the limitations of both mobile-friendly and mobile-responsive sites make conversion a challenge. "Friendly" sites don't adapt content to the device they're being shown on, making navigation limited, especially with drop-down menus and arrows. Responsive sites fare better, but they're only feasible if 35% or more of your traffic comes from mobile, and they often require more resources to build and maintain. In each case, images may be reduced in size, or eliminated entirely, to make pages load faster, but users are less likely to buy a product if they have trouble seeing what it looks like or getting to a purchase page.

Consider Facebook users - when on their mobile devices, are they more likely to log on to Facebook.com or open the app? The app, of course. Apps aren't just a modified version

of the website, the way responsive, friendly, and optimized sites are. They were built and designed exclusively to be used on mobile devices, making them user-friendly versions of the main site that also provide shoppers with an unparalleled shopping experience on their phones. A Soasta report found that mobile-friendly and mobile-responsive sites are tough on the bottom line: 53% of consumers will leave a mobile page that takes longer than three seconds to load and 79% of shoppers who are unhappy with a site's mobile performance are less likely to make a future purchase.

"It's going to be the convenience revolution," said v. "That's going to be the thing that makes brands win the most. So, checkout has to be as quick as possible, mobile checkout has to have a few forms as possible, and as many different payment options as possible."

Apps mean users are less likely to abandon checkouts because the purchase process was designed to be simple and device-friendly. This simplicity makes them a low-cost/high reward proposition for brands. The ability to send push notifications helps keep your brand top-of-mind for shoppers, rather than open up their consideration set to competitors. Further, companies of all sizes, not just large ones, can benefit from apps.
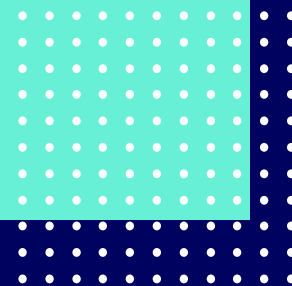
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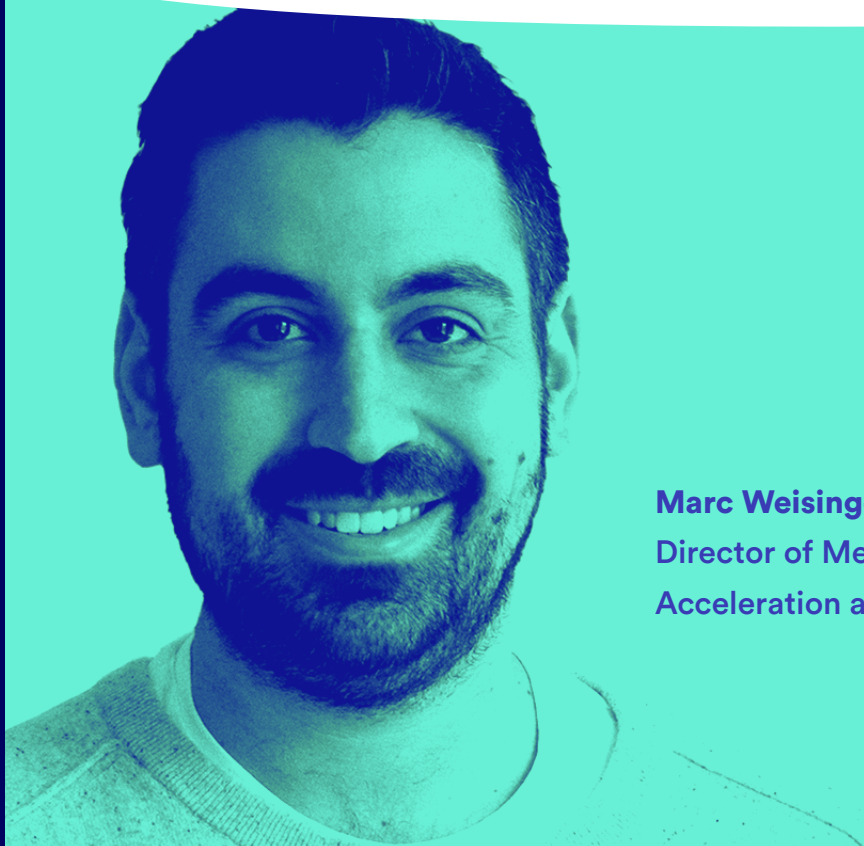
Marc Weisinger
Director of Merchant Revenue
Acceleration at Shopify

Key Takeaways

Stay True to Your Brand
Omnichannel shoppers have a 90% higher lifetime value than single-channel shoppers. Retailers should aim to create a near-seamless, cross-device experience.

Creat Aspirational Curated Content
Customers want help when pulling together multiple items. Retailers can maximize sales by giving them the clothes they want, along with suggestions on how to boost their style.

Be an Industry Expert
Shoppers want to know what colors and looks are on-trend and look to brands to provide this information. Engaging customers with relevant push notifications can also help boost sales.

Think Like a Customer
Companies should continually put themselves in the shoes of the customer and experience their shopping journey as if it were their own.

Offer Something Unique
Fashion brands can drive a higher ROI by offering customers exclusive content and experiences they can't get anywhere else. Brands should also harness the power of their social media.

Consider a Mobile App
Consumers spent 60% more time in shopping apps in 2018 than in 2016. Having an app makes users less likely to abandon checkout and more likely to keep a retailer's brand top-of-mind.

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If you're on Shopify and are looking to improve your mobile shopping experience, Tapcart can help.

Book a Demo Today