Hive

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THE RETAIL HIVE LIVE

Collaboration for Innovation

SkyLoft, London
September 2018

A summary of the day...

The Retail Innovation Hive 2018 was our biggest and best Hive to date with over 80 senior retailers in attendance at London's stunning SkyLoft. One of the leading themes was how important it is for retailers to recognise that online and high street strategies need to be viewed as one customer journey, with mobile being the glue that binds both together; and subsequently how innovation needs to simplify this for both the customer and for retail staff.

Our chairman, Robin Phillips, CEO at The Watch Shop, opened the meeting by sharing an analogy which compared retail disruption to military warfare. "In the 20th century, retail was pretty simple; now, it's flipping complicated!" he said, suggesting that sending your teams over the top unarmed with innovative ideas is practically suicide.

Nick Lansley, former Head of Open Innovation at Tesco Labs, shared his belief that at the core of innovation is 'simplification'. He explained that when we think about innovative and disruptor businesses, the common thread between them has been to simplify the user experience. While the technology behind the scenes may be complicated for the retailer, for the user it's now simple to hail a taxi with one click, or tell Alexa to add milk to a grocery order. According to Nick, innovation should "remove unnecessary or repetitive complexity from our day to day task." But are retailers really simplifying through the innovations they introduce?

This was at the heart of many discussions that took place at the meeting, as The Retail Hive members deliberated how they can ensure success through innovation. Key topics of discussion included:

- The Future of the High Street Store
- Differentiating Yourself from the Digital Giants
- Omnichannel Fulfilment
- Innovation in Customer Delivery Experience
- AI in Online Trading
- Customer Journey Mapping
- Creating & Delivering Cutting Edge Content
- Omnichannel Customer Service & Post-Purchase Partnerships
- Integration of Data, Tech & People
- Meeting Customer Expectations on UX

We'd like to thank everyone for their fantastic energy and contribution to the meeting and very much look forward to seeing you again in 2019!

With thanks,

Noj Mather and Sally Green
Co-Founders - The Hive Network

Thank you to our partners:

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Data Tech UX Online Trading

Customer

Cutting High-Street Experience

Post-Purchase-Partnerships

Omnichannel

Digital Differentiating Meeting

Edge Delivering

Expectations

Giants Service

CHAIRMAN:
Robin Philips
CEO - The Watch Shop

> *In the 20th century retail was pretty simple. Now it's flipping complicated.*

KEYNOTE:
Nick Lansley
Former Head of Open Innovation - Tesco
Founder, Nick Lansley's Innovation Lab

> *The core to innovation is 'to simplify' - that is, remove unnecessary or repetitive complexity from our day to day tasks.*

1 THE FUTURE OF THE HIGH STREET STORE

Moderated by Paul Simms - VP Business Development, Adyen

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

Quote of the Day...
"Interactions not Transactions"

The roundtable "The Future of the High Street Store' created an interesting talking point. What surprised me was that pretty much all comments were reflective of initiatives to make stores compete with other channels, rather than to complement them. Ikea stood out as they very much want their high street presence to enable other sales channels.

The feeling I got was that many retailers were seeking to turn the high street into a theme park destination, and I really wondered whether this would in fact turn shoppers off, rather than encourage them. The discussion around convenience did not come up; the concept of someone wanting something now and choosing to collect it themselves did not seem to be a big issue.

Themes that were discussed included:

- The use of mobile within the store environment to deliver improved experience (e-receipts).
- Creating new touchpoint in store to complement online sales.
- Challenges recreating instore experience in online channels.
- Stores purely as distribution nodes is a tough business case to make.
- Changing the selling culture: some are employing actors rather than sales staff.

> "
> *The most useful industry get-together by far - must attend events if you are lucky enough to get an invite.*
>
> **Fruugo**
> "

1 THE FUTURE OF THE HIGH STREET STORE

Moderated by Paul Simms - VP Business Development, Adyen

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Retail isn't dying, it's reinventing itself

Things are starting to come full circle in retail: whilst traditional brick-and-mortar retailers are flocking to digital channels to avoid store closures, at the same time, many digitally native brands are attempting to do the opposite and opening physical stores (even Amazon are turning to physical retail!). Contrary to the leading theory that the high street cannot exist in the shadow of digital giants, the truth is that physical retail provides an experience that simply cannot be replicated online.

"Experience is everything"

Customers crave a sensorial, physical or emotional interaction with brands. Know your customer and what makes them tick and then provide a fun, instore experience that stimulates engagement and encourages footfall – but make it scalable! Also remember that different customers will react differently to different stimulants so make sure you provide different experiences to cater to different needs. Every store is different; it's all about the experience – make each of your stores unique and tell a story!

It's a major challenge where the brand remains key

Let your brand stand out with instore experiences that resonate with your brand values. Be brave - be yourself! Use your brand to drive and reveal desirability and want through differentiation.

Understanding the value of stores

It isn't just about sales. Customers are using the store as a reference point and to engage with the brand. Understand the value to your customer of researching a purchase online and use your retail space innovatively to complement this. As an industry, it is imperative that the high street as a whole gets better, not just individual stores.

The reimagining of high street stores is happening faster than ever

...But the expectation/vision is still way ahead of tech capabilities. Essentially we are heading for a world of channel-less business. It's hard to get there but there are lots of opportunities for those who are passionate and prepared for change.

But remember, innovation is not about technology – its about making it right for your customer! Understand your international partners; be aware of international payment methods. Leverage mobile!

Let's get "Phygital!"

Customer problems are channel agnostic. It's not digital vs physical – it's one strategy! The key opportunity is instore; blend the channels - join the bricks and clicks!

About Adyen
Adyen is the technology company reinventing payments for the global economy. The only provider of a modern end-to-end infrastructure connecting directly to Visa, Mastercard, and consumers' globally preferred payment methods, Adyen delivers frictionless payments across online, mobile, and in-store. With offices all around the world, Adyen serves more than 4,500 businesses, including 8 of the 10 largest U.S. Internet companies. Customers include Facebook, Uber, Netflix, Spotify and L'Oreal.

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW

with Robert Amor - Store of the Future Innovation Team, Farfetch

In light of recent store closures, how can retailers protect their high street presence?

Robert: I think it's about using a blend of technology that can help personalise an experience but also using the people that you've got instore. You can have the best technology algorithms but at the end of the day they are just never as good as one's own knowledge and expertise. Store associates will know brands better than an algorithm; they can use conversations they're having with people to personalise the experience. When it comes to technology, it's not all about having screens in store – in fact many customers don't want to see this – I believe that tech should be used in the background to support and improve the customer experience, without them even knowing that it's there.

Retailers should also understand that customer expectations have changed. They don't want to simply buy products instore anymore; perhaps they want a glass of champagne or a coffee whilst they shop? Retailers should think about this and work toward offering an experience to satisfy the need.

2 DIFFERENTIATING YOURSELF FROM THE DIGITAL GIANTS

Moderated by Marie Sagarzazu – Head of UK, iAdvize

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

Quote of the day...
"It isn't about B2B or B2C but about H2H (Human to Human)"

Differentiating yourself from the digital giants was an interesting talking point, and we spent time discussing the pros and cons of marketplaces such as Amazon. Although many retailers expressed that they had many in-store initiatives which were adding a unique and personal experience for customers, they revealed that this was not the case online. Overall conclusions were that Marketplaces can certainly be leveraged but it is important to keep the DNA of the brand and go the extra mile to ensure there is an impact on CLTV.

About iAdvize
iAdvize is a conversational marketing platform that allows more than 1,500 brands worldwide such as Vodafone, L'oreal and MatchesFashion to make their customer experience authentic. iAdvize connects customers or prospects in need of advice with experts who are available 24/7 via real-time messaging.

2 DIFFERENTIATING YOURSELF FROM THE DIGITAL GIANTS

Moderated by Marie Sagarzazu – Head of UK, iAdvize

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Leverage Amazon capabilities, don't fight it
Amazon affords dynamic companies the opportunity to service customers and retain loyalty – better! To compete with Amazon you must do MORE than Amazon. Be where your customer is – Amazon is a great place to buy; not to shop! And Amazon doesn't tell a story like the brand can… So emphasise that part of your experience to win, but use Amazon as a brand builder – perhaps put transaction items on Amazon and service items on your own site. Whatever you do, however, don't forget to humanise your brand across other channels!

Next day delivery isn't always the desirability
Customers buy based on emotion and you can create "want" through storytelling and exclusivity. Customer experience is key for brands. Be different and ask yourself "what does your customer want?" Then go the extra mile to deliver it, even if it is more expensive!

Find a niche and cater to it
It isn't always about competing on price. Remember to focus on delivering a "wow" experience. Find a niche area within which to compete when you can't compete on convenience and prices.

Personalisation is key
Differentiate through personalised content – build up brand message which Amazon cannot deliver. Tailor the experience to engage your customer in a meaningful way through leveraging personalised content, experience and packaging etc. but have a long-term view and make sure you can continue to deliver on your promises.

> "
> *The event today was a great way to meet like minded people who have insightful and interesting experiences which could be discussed in a relaxed and open environment. It's a great way to learn and understand common challenges across the retail space.*
>
> **Moonpig**
> "

Humanise your experience
Trust yourself – if people enjoy the experience with you, they'll stay with you! Create authentic content and conversation. Delight the customer by going that extra mile. The key is experience + service + brand. Remember to find that "personal touch".

3 **OMNICHANNEL FULFILMENT**

Moderated by Neil Tomkins - Sales Director, Manhattan Associates

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

Each roundtable provided great insight into the challenges of the businesses as they adopt omnichannel fulfilment. Whilst all the retailers are facing up to what we at Manhattan Associates term as 'omni', that common challenge means many things to many businesses.

There is no single silver bullet; consumers do not consider or understand 'omni' - they expect a great experience regardless of the channel. Takeaways from the discussions include:

- Individual retailers view their omni-challenge through a lens that is specific to their business, which provides unique challenges compared to other retailers.
- Businesses face huge cultural challenges when changing the behaviour and incentives of store associates when Digital encroaches on Bricks & Mortar.
- Attribution of sales and competing P&L within the business often hinders a frictionless customer experience.
- Brand Loyalty is increasingly being confused with Discounting.
- RFID instore to locate and track individual items was a challenge that is on the radar for many retailers.
- The nirvana of confidently identifying inventory which is 'Available To Promise' in a world of ever-shrinking stockrooms and thinner store inventory levels is still being sought.
- "Good Retail" will win whilst the idea of Traditional Retail is rapidly disappearing.

3 OMNICHANNEL FULFILMENT

Moderated by Neil Tomkins - Sales Director, Manhattan Associates

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

There is no single definition of omnichannel
Customers have little clue or interest in the concept of "omnichannel". They just want to browse products, when they want, how they want.

Follow the merchandising rules!
Present merchandise in the way customers want to buy. Experiment to decipher the best merchandise pricing. Offer three categories of merchandise: prestigious "wow" items, bread and butter products, and promotional merchandise. Regenerate merchandise every three months and set thresholds for stock management. Ensure your merchandise fits with your brand values and lifestyle.

Blend of sales channel and fulfilment
Using "dark stores" as local distribution points and to increase speed to market can drive fulfilment efficiency. Instore fulfilment, if implemented properly, offers a range of benefits - the rules you set for this are vital. Take the time to consider your options and invest accordingly.

Understanding that revenue per customer + LTV (not revenue per channel) is the future!
Changing fulfilment requires changing attitudes. Customers aren't just the ones you can see in the shop. Retail space is valuable if leveraged in the right way. The technology is often easier than the behavioural changes required to make it happen.

Values really matter
What is more important to your customer? Cost or brand visibility? Do what your customers want as long as you can afford it.

About Manhattan Associates
Manhattan Associates is a technology leader in supply chain and omnichannel commerce. We unite information across the enterprise, converging front-end sales with back-end supply chain execution. Our software, platform technology and unmatched experience help drive both top-line growth and bottom-line profitability for our customers.

Manhattan Associates designs, builds and delivers leading edge cloud and on-premises solutions so that across the store, through your network or from your fulfilment centre, you are ready to reap the rewards of the omnichannel marketplace. For more information, please visit www.manh.co.uk/retail

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW

with Ryan Walker - Senior Direct Product Owner: E-Fulfilment and Operations, Dyson

How can you ensure seamless omnichannel fulfilment for your customers?

Ryan: There is no single definition of omnichannel fulfilment and, as such, the word 'omnichannel' will go away. Consumers don't know and don't care about these concepts. The omnichannel approach that retailers once took is dead. Customers likely have little clue —or interest in— what it means to be omnichannel or how your business silos function accordingly. All your customers want to know is how they can easily browse for and buy products when they want, how they want. And they'd like to decide if they can pick them up in the store or have them delivered.

4 INNOVATION IN CUSTOMER DELIVERY EXPERIENCE

Moderated by Andrew Hill - Sales Director, Sorted Group

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

The main threads of our discussions focused around the customer journey and how it could be improved. In one session the consensus was that being able to provide a delivery tracking service within the retailer's domain, rather than on a carrier site, was a significant step forward; retaining hard-won customers and removing the break in process continuity.

In another session we discussed the importance of an eco-friendly approach to deliveries, especially within city centres. Members felt any efforts that could lower emissions within urbanised areas needed to be explored in conjunction with carriers and 3PLs such as increasing the utilisation of electric vehicles.

As expected, the issue of returns resurfaced. "Try-before-you-buy" was sighted as one particularly problematic concept and is perceived as being the catalyst for increasing returns - especially in certain European countries (such as Germany) where 60% returns was not uncommon. It was felt by many of the members that exploring ways to help consumers understand sizing before ordering could help however, on the whole, most were resigned to the fact that try-before-you-buy is here to stay and revenues need to be found elsewhere to balance the issue. One solution could be through a reduction in "where is my order?" calls, through technology designed to help customers self-serve via autonomous live chat.

> "
> *The Retail Hive is a great opportunity to discuss challenges and, equally, solutions with other retailers. It was great to get away from my desk, clear my head of every day challenges, and look at the bigger picture allowing me to focus and innovate.*
>
> **The Entertainer** "

4 INNOVATION IN CUSTOMER DELIVERY EXPERIENCE

Moderated by Andrew Hill - Sales Director, Sorted Group

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

"Serial Returners" The #1 issue online
Serial returners are creating a phantom economy for online retailers. Do what you can to take control of the process and remove reasons for customer returns, where possible – i.e. provide a better understanding of sizing. Remember, interesting communication about the product may increase the order rate but doesn't necessarily reduce returns. Tackle the cost of returns in a way that works for both your business and the customer; by reducing costs elsewhere.

Differentiation vs Amazon = packing and service
Delivery isn't easy. Influence what you can in the delivery experience. Focus on parts of delivery chain in your own control; if you own the trucks, use that. If you don't, think about packaging. Last mile forms part of the brand – ensure you're supporting and investing in your customer service teams and providing customer training to delivery couriers. Give customers a choice of courier where possible. Keep the customer informed with end-to-end comms. Label free returns to make it easier! No one seems to have this nailed. The big question is around how you communicate/ own experience after it leaves the warehouse.

Delivery experience is not just about cost – it's about speed of delivery too!
With the expansion of a gig economy, there's lots of choice in delivery experience opening up. Speed and simplicity mean different things to different customers in different brands. Next day delivery isn't always the desirability. You can create want through a story and exclusivity.

About Sorted Group
Sorted is a global SaaS business using future-forward tech that sits in online checkouts, warehouses, retailer supply chains and on your smartphone. The innovative software revolutionises the delivery experience to delight everyone who touches it; from the customer, the carrier, the channel partner or the retailer. By harnessing the power of tech, Sorted is transforming the world of deliveries from a complex battle of logistics into a simple, seamless - and even uplifting - experience.

Headquartered in Manchester UK, with a team of over 120 people, Sorted work with leading retailers, including ASOS, Missguided, Lush, Footasylum, French Connection and Feel Unique with its software live across 19 countries and trading in 12 languages.

5 A.I. IN ONLINE TRADING

Moderated by Andrew Fowler - Country Manager, UK, Apptus

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

However AI is defined or described, it's clear that it offers distinct advantages over manual and rules-based approaches in the discovery and merchandising of retail websites - which was the main focus of the discussion.

The task of selecting and sequencing products and content for millions of visitors, with differing wants and needs, is described by mathematicians as a "complex optimisation problem". This advanced technology is perfectly suited to solving these types of problems. AI type technology is included in many applications today and it should be treated in the same way as any other technology advance; it should be assessed and embraced to solve a specific business problem and not for its own sake.

Good applications of AI will augment human knowledge and provide insight as well as automating previously required manual effort, roles will need to change and develop as we embrace these new technologies and teams need to be flexible about how they are organised.

> "
> *Great presenters as usual, but what is unique about the Retail Hive is that you come away from each day having learnt even more from your peers and fellow attendees.*
>
> **Nourish London**
> "

5 AI IN ONLINE TRADING

Moderated by Andrew Fowler - Country Manager, UK, Apptus

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Be patient and prepared for hurdles!
AI and machine learning may not be good at the start as they need time to learn to really work properly. However, once running, machine learning and AI can support merchandising and personalisation by sifting through volumes of data that we cannot do well as humans.

AI should not replace humans
Whilst there is a lot of potential for AI to iron out human quirks, there is still a need for humans. The secret is working out how to balance AI innovation with human intervention to govern AI involvement and give the best customer experience.

Data: the most recent is most valuable
You only get good results if you put in good data and good guard rails. Utilise clever tech such as Live Chat to gain insightful data.

AI is still hit and miss but with many far and wide reaching benefits!
There is no one-size-fits-all for AI as a solution. But if you start at the problem, not at the solution; experiment, test and learn you will find what works for you. Take the leap of faith and reap the benefits. Smaller problems are easier to ensure efficient solutions to, so simplify the problem first.

AI use cases
• Increase the efficiency of the customer service teams
• Improve customer service processing costs
• Optimise warehouse operations and drive the profit model
• Online real estate optimisation

About Apptus
Apptus has been delivering search and optimisation related solutions from its base in the technology 'hot bed' of Sweden since 2000.

Our latest product, Apptus eSales takes online merchandising to a whole new level. It combines on-site search, list ranking and recommendations for products and content in a single unified solution. Each component learns from and informs the others to deliver a truly relevant and personalised experience and proven to increase revenue and profit.

Apptus eSales leverages AI based technology and onsite behavioural data to automate the manual workload that has previously fallen to search optimisation specialists and visual merchandisers.

Apptus eSales removes much of that manual heavy lifting. Its AI capability automatically optimises the whole site according to a common business objective - optimising for conversion, revenue or profit. Predictive analytics guides strategic decision making, while easy to use 'boosting' tools ensure there's still room for a human touch.

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW

with Emilie Maunoury - Digital, Ecommerce and CRM Director, Clarins UK

Is AI for everyone? What is needed to implement AI successfully?

Emily: AI has become such a buzzword recently that everyone wants to try it. The question is: where and when do you start?

At Clarins UK, we believe that you need to be in a position where you have done the best work you can with the human resources you have and have reached a plateau there before engaging with AI. It is only then that you can see the real uplift from implementation. Otherwise, you will always wonder if you could have done just as well by yourself.

At Clarins UK, as we have not yet reached this position with our online merchandising, we have decided to start with CRM. It is still early stages but AI has helped us target and segment our communications much more efficiently.

6 CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAPPING TO TRULY KNOW YOUR CUSTOMER

Moderated by David McQueen Johnston - Digital Director, Miller Harris

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

Data was a huge theme of discussion across our four tables; from how to capture customer information in real-time – including which data is relevant and how do you mine it, to identifying trigger points for purchase and understanding how to monetise these.

Another key theme was the need to break away from traditional marketing and make greater use of personalised communications, social media, influencers and advocates.

One table discussed the importance of understanding the key demographics, emotional triggers and buying behaviours of different customers from around the world in order to personalise journeys.

Unsurprisingly, AI and predictive analytics also came up; specifically how can brands use predictive analytics to better understand and use data to create campaigns.

6 CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAPPING TO TRULY KNOW YOUR CUSTOMER

Moderated by David McQueen Johnston - Digital Director, Miller Harris

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

The journey is constantly evolving
Review customer satisfaction (CSAT) weekly. Utilise the Boston matrix to review products. Look at the link between conversion and product views. Explain buying motivation and attribute accordingly, rather than over analysing demographic data. Use technology to detect online customers instore via an app.

Own the customer journey!
Give different responsibilities to different people and make sure someone owns them! Have a mechanic so feedback goes to the right person.

Talk to your customers – don't just rely on data
Rich customer insight can be more powerful than just data. Talk to real people and test against friends and those who really know your brand.

Accompany your customers on their journey
Take the time to really understand your customer; don't just assume what you think you know is correct. Remember that some customers will never be part of your journey.

Consumer mapping doesn't end at the sale
Don't forget post purchase engagement and service!

Which parts really need to be personalised?
Keep it simple to start with. Understand the triggers for comms in the customer journey. Who is the relationship with and why do they need one with you?

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW

with Paul Rassmussen - Head of Digital, New Look

Nick Lansley talked about getting the balance between the cost of trialling and the value of learning, and the need to fail fast. Do you think this is something that retailers are doing or is everyone still scared of failure?

Paul: I think there's a way that businesses approach things. Everyone has their own initiatives they're trying to achieve, which look at the business benefits and what said initiatives will give back to the business. Having the element of optimisation and constant testing is something that we need to make sure gets ingrained into all of those initiatives, and outside of that, so that we actually get something that we're all happy with failing. And I think that's quite a tough thing to take to a senior leadership team around failure – but I think, to be honest, more and more senior teams are now understanding that there's a need to be able to do that.

7 CREATING & DELIVERING CUTTING EDGE CONTENT

Moderated by Justin Barrett - Senior Director: EMEA Operations, Brightcove

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

A recurring theme during our roundtables was the increasing importance of video as a tool to go beyond branded content. 'How to', reviews and video blogs are key to driving credibility for retailers and providing a value added service. Making the retailer site a destination in its' own right. However, measuring/attributing commercial value to this activity is more difficult as it's not always a direct part of the sales funnel.

We discussed how content strategies are now increasingly channel specific and often distinct when considering different social channels, onsite, off-site etc. The sheer amount of content is becoming increasingly difficult for retailers to manage and has also led to a perceived shift in consumer expectations.

Another key theme was how consumers are now more prepared to accept content that is 'rough around the edges' and often less premium and curated. Increasingly consumers see this type of content as more authentic. Finding the right balance between centrally and locally created content is difficult. Brands are increasingly using centrally created toolkits/playbooks to allow local teams to give a local flavour whilst delivering on a core proposition.

We discussed how key influencers are more and more ubiquitous which has started to erode some of their value particularly if they work with too many brands. Our final thought of the day was around how live content, and particularly live video, is becoming more useful for brands who want to drive event-based engagement and find new audiences.

About Brightcove

Brightcove Inc. (NASDAQ:BCOV) is the leading global provider of powerful cloud solutions for managing, delivering, and monetising video experiences on every screen. A pioneering force in the world of online video since the company's founding in 2004, Brightcove's award-winning technology, unparalleled services, extensive partner ecosystem, and proven global scale have helped thousands of companies in over 70 countries achieve better business results with video. To learn more, visit www.brightcove.com

7 CREATING & DELIVERING CUTTING EDGE CONTENT

Moderated by Justin Barrett - Senior Director: EMEA Operations, Brightcove

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

User Generated Content (UGC) can add authenticity and value
Openness to innovation and trying new things is key. Using customer generated content adds value by showing authenticity. Use both good and bad user reviews.

Curate content for your end customer, not just for your brand
Only produce content to serve a customer need and/or commercial purpose. Does it fix a pain point? Identify the mission that your customer is on and make relevant content accordingly.

Know what you want to achieve from interaction
"How-to" videos with influencers create interaction and engagement. Live streaming can generate a buzz around that piece of content. But how is this measured and what is the end goal? What is the value of brand awareness? Know it, measure its success.

Get a strategy!
It is important to have a differentiated content strategy whether this is for storytelling, awareness brand engagement, conversion or anything else. Develop a joint content/social strategy.

Think differently about the use of content
Retailer and brand need to create more content than ever before which requires creativity and innovation, often with less resources. Tailor content to the customer journey. Perhaps use more video instore to show reviews / product descriptions. Make it easy for customers to upload UGC.

> " *This was a great eye-opener into how other businesses are taking a more brand collaborative approach, the 1-1 sessions were great.* "
>
> **Charles Tyrwhitt**

8 OMNICHANNEL CUSTOMER-SERVICE & POST-PURCHASE PARTNERSHIPS

Moderated by Suzanne Hart - Account Executive, Zendesk

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

Innovation should either simplify customer experience or simplify the employee workload.

Brands can simplify the employee workload by empowering support agents with knowledge, both through online help and by providing data on the customer. This allows agents a better understanding of what the customer was doing before support contact. Such information might include details of previous contacts and any previous fraud activity etc. The biggest issue still coming through to support is "where is my delivery?" This can and should easily be answered via a chatbot or an AI powered tool, reducing human workload.

To simplify the customer experience, brands can provide 24/7 online help providing the customer with immediate power to self-serve and solve their problem (again, reduces employee workload). The support team should have an omnichannel tool so that relationships with the customer can be nurtured and "wow" experiences can be delivered – wow experiences are especially important for premium brands. Online chat should be used to resolve issues but it can also be used to increase the speed of response and shopping-cart spend by making agents product champions. Review sites are important for brand loyalty and image: collecting customer satisfaction from a number of sources is important to understand the customer and feed back to the business.

> " *As always - great event, great venue and great conversation.*
>
> **Cru Kafe** "

8 OMNICHANNEL CUSTOMER-SERVICE & POST-PURCHASE PARTNERSHIPS

Moderated by Suzanne Hart - Account Executive, Zendesk

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Customer service is not just about systems

Empower customer service agents with knowledge and an outlet to deliver insight. Training is an integral part of delivering exceptional customer experience and can mean the difference between delivering "wow" vs forgettable customer service. Training is also needed for upselling and delivering added value. Invest time into post-purchase communications to create that "ooh-ahh" moment!

Very few have a 360 degree customer view

Whilst a 360 degree view is something that everyone wants, very few have it due to technical complexities. A 360 degree view will enable customer services to provide the best experience. Connect customer offline data with online to create the ultimate customer journey.

Utilise data and AI as a first resolve

Understand your customers and utilise chatbots and AI to provide a first resolve, automated service. Ensure regular contact with customers and input problems to develop it's output.

Share valuable data

Make sure data from customer service is available and used by all staff levels. Use the right channel to communicate with customers.

About Zendesk

The best customer experiences are built with Zendesk. Zendesk's powerful and flexible customer service and engagement platform scales to meet the needs of any business, from startups and small businesses to growth companies and enterprises. Zendesk serves businesses across a multitude of industries, with more than 125,000 paid customer accounts offering service and support in more than 30 languages. Headquartered in San Francisco, Zendesk operates worldwide with 15 offices in North America, Europe, Asia, Australia, and South America. Learn more at www.zendesk.co.uk.

9   INTEGRATION OF DATA, TECHNOLOGY AND PEOPLE

Moderated by Jess Vadino - Global Digital Strategy & Experience Leader, SoftServe

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

The greatest takeaway from our sessions was quite interesting; perhaps the key element for building a foundation for innovation isn't technology, but, blending.

Our discussions talked about how the ideal customer experience and operational optimization often borrows from two sides of the fence. The best internal organizational structures require a blend of IT and business people working together solving the same problems or working towards the same goals.

The best customer experiences may be a blend of physical store experience optimized by robots zooming about the backroom recording and reporting inventory. When thinking about your own innovation strategies, it's key to remember that moving ahead doesn't always mean the latest technology. Remember to consider what your customer wants, and what your organisation needs – and take it from there. After all, without a blend of customer wants and organisational needs, what've you got left?

About Softserve
SoftServe is a global digital authority and consulting company, operating at the cutting edge of technology.

We reveal, transform, accelerate, and optimize the way large enterprises and software companies do business. With expertise across healthcare, retail, financial services, software, and more, we implement end-to-end solutions to deliver the innovation, quality, and speed that our clients' users expect.

SoftServe delivers open innovation – from generating compelling new ideas, to developing and implementing transformational products and services.
Our work and client experience is built on a foundation of empathetic, human-focused experience design that ensures continuity from concept to release.

Ultimately, we empower businesses to re-identify their differentiation, accelerate market position, and vigorously compete in today's digital, global economy.

9 INTEGRATION OF DATA, TECHNOLOGY AND PEOPLE

Moderated by Jess Vadino - Global Digital Strategy & Experience Leader, SoftServe

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Know your KPIs

Important metrics and KPIs will differ from company to company. Know which KPIs matter for your brand and how to leverage them for improved performance. Don't forget to consider why your KPIs matter to your customer. Why do they care about your metrics? What is the customer's perspective? Keep in mind common KPIs across divisions and align these to deliver overall company vision.

Innovation should be targeted towards business strategy

The fight to be novel in getting the attention of customers is escalating. Find a way to collaborate across technical and creative silos – or remove silos completely – for best results. Develop, test and learn in the most expedient way to prove formulas and innovation ideas. Invest in new people and teams whilst managing relationships and crossovers. New-to-the-business Customer Service reps will identify loads of customer pain points for you! Use these as a basis for innovation.

Ensure business and tech are joined up!

Everyone is facing the same challenges of how to win "board" level support for the next investment. Be open and honest about the challenges and opportunities and make sure you have an airtight business case and plan before asking for investment. Ensure ideas for tech investment reflect your brand values. Technology has to adapt fast to customer needs and often it doesn't show you the results you were expecting. Speed is key, as not all innovation is successful.

You can no longer ignore tech

Neither customers nor retail teams (non-techies) can ignore the use of technology. Whilst the actual shift and implementation can be challenging, it is imperative for the retail industry to embrace technology in the background to improve customer journeys – whilst people remain as the face of tech. A blend of people and technology is optimal.

Keep it simple; back to basics first!

Whilst technology is important, it should not always be the first option. Look at people and/or simplify processes first - but enable actions with tech and data. Only then – once the foundations are right and in place – will technology offer the best return on investment.

SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEW

with Louisa Nicholls - Head of Online Trading - Home, John Lewis

What advice would you give to fellow retailers looking to innovate with new technology?

Louisa: I think the issue with innovation is that there is a lot of new shiny technologies out there that will distract retailers. For me, regardless of the end innovation, it's all about getting back to basics and making sure that we have all the attribution, imagery and content that we need in place to adopt some of these innovative approaches that are coming down the line. When considering implementation of IoT (Internet of Things), voice and visual search solutions, none of it is achievable without having the core attributes and core data set in place as building blocks – it's boring but getting the basics right will be fundamental to success in adopting these innovative ideas.

10 MEETING CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS ON UX

Moderated by Luca Collacciani - Senior Director, Web & Security Advocate, Akamai

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

Our roundtable attendees were all in agreement that a poor web experience costs them lost revenue. By not having visibility, businesses are unable to understand the impact of poor performance which then leads to poor online revenues.

One member shared how they had performed a small test to demonstrate that performance is directly related to online revenues by slowing down a product listing page by one second for a month. This resulted in an impact of £30million in lost revenue over 12-month period.

Web application performance is not just one person's responsibility; you can't create a performance culture with just one person. Don't own it yourself - spread the word, evangelise! Create a steering group, put performance budgets in place. Involve other teams; marketing, infrastructure, product teams, and even third-party agencies should all understand that they have a part to play in the success of online performance.

> " *A really great opportunity to talk to others and share experiences without tonnes of sales pitches.* "
>
> **Boden**
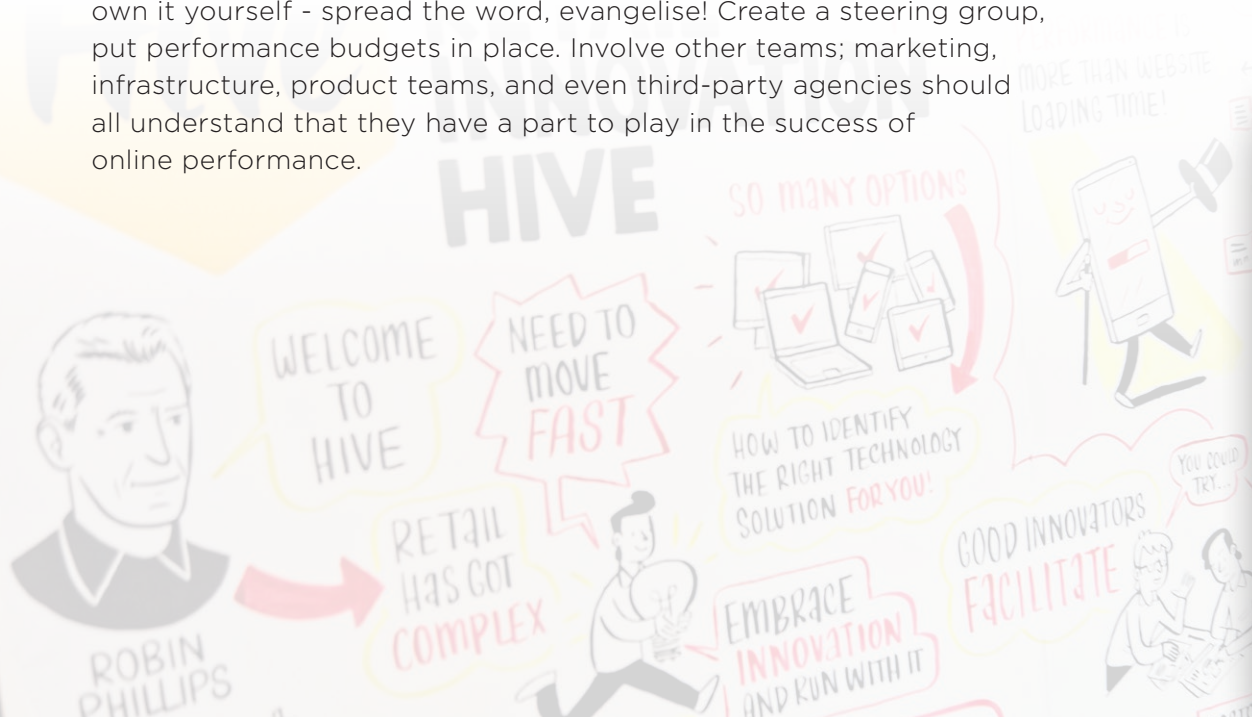
10 MEETING CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS ON UX

Moderated by Luca Collacciani - Senior Director, Web & Security Advocate, Akamai

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Performance is more than just speed

Performance is much more than website loading time. Ensure focus is across all areas rather than one single metric. Page load time is key however, you should also factor in your business model / UX expectations. Think longer term and get people engaged with what matters. Perceived performance is more important than actual page load performance.

Understand that your customers actually expect from your brand / service

Companies are struggling to find solutions to meeting customer expectations because they don't seem to know what their customers really want. Talk to your customers and learn their expectations then work out the key performance metrics to track against these for each team.

> " *One of the only events in the industry with true sharing and not BS. Engaged solution providers enabling interesting discussions vs the usual sales pitch.* "
>
> **Clarins UK**

About Akamai Technologies

Akamai secures and delivers digital experiences for the world's largest companies. Akamai's intelligent edge platform surrounds everything, from the enterprise to the cloud, so customers and their businesses can be fast, smart, and secure. Top brands globally rely on Akamai to help them realize competitive advantage through agile solutions that extend the power of their multi-cloud architectures. To learn more visit www.akamai.com, blogs.akamai.com, or @Akamai on Twitter.

THE DRAGON'S DEN

New this year was the opportunity for our members to hear Dragon's Den-style pitches from three technology start-ups, each promising to offer the latest in bleeding edge tech to solve one of the many challenges retailers are facing today.

Our three Dragons (David Williams, Chief Operating Officer at Seraphine, Louisa Nicholls, Head of Online Trading - Home, John Lewis, and Dave Crellin, Head of Online Operations, Sainsbury's) did a fantastic job of putting our start-ups through their paces; digging deep into the detail of their business models, questioning important factors such as privacy and ensuring that our retailers in the audience really understood whether each solution would add value to their business.

Our start-ups included:

Intelligent Robots

A fleet of smart, autonomous, self-driving robots to optimise the picking processes in the (e)fulfilment market.

Pixoneye

Empowering businesses to gain a deeper understanding of their customers; enabling delivery of hyper-personalisation through accessing and analysing an unparalleled and unique data set; the mobile phone photo gallery!

Capito Systems

A proprietary, high performance platform for creating spoken language understanding capabilities for retail and eCommerce applications. Example use cases include intelligent voice control, voice search, and dialogue-assisted apps that understand the language of retail and a retailer's associated datasets/catalogues.

Future Retail Hive Live Meetings...

Q1

Thursday 7 Feb 2019, London
Post Peak Party

Tuesday 12 - Wednesday 13 March 2019, Luton Hoo Hotel & Golf Spa
The Retail Hive Exchange: Engaging the Connected Customer

Thursday 28 March 2019, Berlin
The Retail Hive Deutschland: Focus on Fulfilment

Q2

Thursday 25 April 2019, London
Digital Luxury: Delivering Amazing Customer Experiences

Wednesday 22 May 2019, London
The Retail Hive: Focus on Fulfilment

Wednesday 12 June 2019, London
The Retail Hive: Customer Experience & Engagement

NEW MEETINGS FOR THE RETAIL HIVE USA IN 2019!

Tuesday 9 April 2019, San Francisco
Data, Analytics & the Connected Customer

Thursday 2 May 2019, Atlanta
Focus on Fulfilment

Q3

Wednesday 10 July 2019, London
The Retail Hive: Cracking International Markets

Wednesday 11 September 2019, London
The Retail Hive: Innovation & Collaboration

Wednesday 18 September 2019, Amsterdam
New Hive: Digital D2C for Brands – Driving Loyalty and Experience

Wednesday 25 September 2019, New York
Retail Hive USA: Omnichannel and the Future Store

Q4

Wednesday 9 October 2019, UK
Retail Fulfilment Leaders Meeting - By invitation only

Tuesday 5 November 2019, Stockholm
Retail Hive Scandinavia: A Regional Response
to the Digital Giants

Luton Hoo Hotel & Golf Spa

Other Retail Hive events to look out for in 2019...

Digital Boardrooms:
Interactive 90-minute discussions hosted on a digital platform. Topics focus is usually narrow and deep. Limited to 6-8 retailers and 1 partner. Topics requested for 2019 include:
- Applications for AI in Retail
- The Future for AR / VR in the Retail Experience
- Customer Journey Mapping

Hive Moments:
Networking and discussion over breakfast or over drinks, limited to 30 retailers and 3 partners. Themes requested by Members for 2019 include:
- The Future Store
- Digital Travel & Hospitality
- Digital Transformation
- Getting the Most out of Marketplaces
- V-Commerce and VUI

Come and join us...
To register your interest for any of these future Retail Hive meetings please email Amy at amy@thehive-network.com

Follow us...
For the latest news and updates from The Retail Hive.

To register your interest or refer a colleague for any of our meetings please contact:
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