

APPLAUSE^o

EBOOK

THE KEYS TO QUALITY CURBSIDE



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Product quality is a must, pricing is important, but there's something even more vital to courting today's digital-savvy consumers. Customer experience, specifically an end-to-end buyer's journey that flows across all channels, is increasingly important to consumers who expect seamless interactions with a brand across multiple touchpoints, whether that means in-store shopping, Web and mobile transactions, or, more recently, curbside pickup.

A **Walker study** found that by 2020, customer experience will be the key brand differentiator, with 86% of customers willing to pay more for a better, personalized experience. Moreover, \$0.56 of every dollar spent in a retail shop is influenced by digital, illustrating the need for consistency and quality across all channels and touchpoints.

Curbside, or as some call it, pick-up-and-go, is the latest touchpoint in the omnichannel adventure. Big-name brands such as CVS, McDonald's, Shake Shack, Walmart, Target, Nordstrom, and many grocery store chains are starting to focus on curbside delivery, although the channel is still relatively new. A survey by market research firm **Toluna** found nearly 50% of respondents have picked up online orders in a physical store at least once. However, only a fraction of respondents (9.7%) have used curbside pickup.

+30%
higher lifetime value

Why is omnichannel important?
IDC found that shoppers who purchase from retailers through both online and in-store channels have a 30% higher lifetime value than those engaging on only one channel.

Integrating curbside pickup into a holistic omnichannel experience is no easy task. There are three dimensions to ensuring success:

1. Digital Readiness – The ability to create, roll out, and support a mobile app and website that enable curbside ordering as part of a holistic experience
2. Operational and Store Readiness – Ensuring that staff, management, and operational processes can adequately handle the new mode of business
3. User experience – The brand's look and feel needs to remain consistent throughout the customer journey, regardless of where interactions take place

SHOPPING CART ABANDONMENT

e-commerce

25%

food
& drink

19%

The average checkout abandonment rate in e-commerce is 25%, but stores operating in the food and drink category perform better, with a 19% shopping cart abandonment rate, on average.



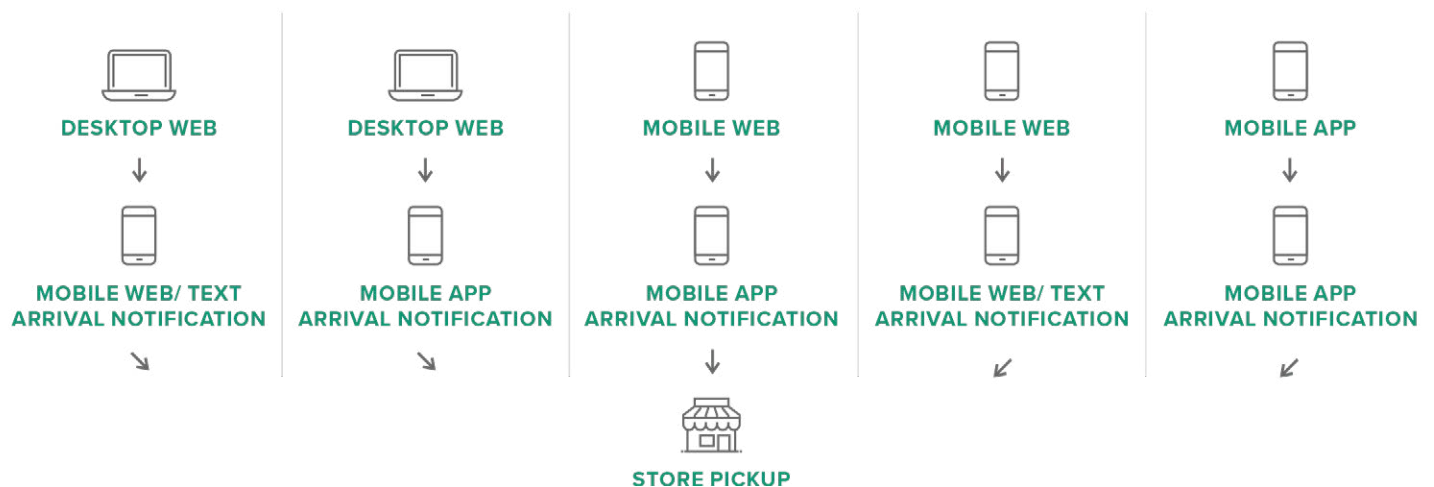
IS YOUR DIGITAL EXPERIENCE READY?

The first priority to advance curbside is to understand digital requirements. Organizations need to be digital ready, meaning their mobile apps, website, and other software components need to run at top performance to support the new channel. If they're not, the entire omnichannel experience suffers, leading to lower conversion rates, inefficient processes, and lost customers.

After rounds of crowd-based functional testing, a large health and beauty retailer found bugs in its mobile app that caused shopping cart items to be deleted when they were meant to be added. It also found a disconnect in how it alerted customers it was time to pick up items. Both problems were addressed, allowing the retailer to bolster the overall shopping experience.

Functional testing of app and website performance on real devices using real people can ensure problems are caught well before a formal launch. Crowd testing should cover all of the bases, including rooting out software bugs and glitches, ensuring orders are logged and processed correctly, and payments are transacted without disruption.

5 DISTINCT OMNICHANNEL JOURNEYS



DIGITAL READINESS TEST CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to ensure your digital features work and can support curbside experiences.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check out and buying experience, especially removing and adding cart items | <input type="checkbox"/> Enrollment functionality, especially linking payment and profile information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Payment processes and support of relevant payment options | <input type="checkbox"/> Match online and in-store pricing, including by geo-location |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping cart, especially taxes, total cost, and payment confirmation | <input type="checkbox"/> Log-in functionality across digital properties |





ARE YOUR OPERATIONS READY?

It takes more than a streamlined app and online experience to ensure curbside services run seamlessly. Store operations and processes – everything from properly training employees to providing ample and highly visible parking – need to be scripted and tested so there is adequate support for the new customer touchpoint.

Prior to launch, the test program needs to vet 3 key questions:

1. Are in-store employees sufficiently trained in how to process and fulfill curbside orders?
2. Is there enough personnel to physically oversee curbside pickup?
3. Is order processing consistently accurate?

If a customer opts for curbside delivery, but ends up in the store (and irritated) to complete an order due to some miscue, you are pushing them to competitors with better customer experiences.

Major retail chains testing curbside delivery are able to avoid that scenario by crowd testing their operations. As a result of its test program, one restaurant chain found customers entering received error messages on their phones, which forced them to go into the store to complete their order as opposed to in-car delivery. Another popular restaurant chain ran into wait challenges on its call-ahead mobile orders. Both restaurants were able to course correct, including opening up a dedicated mobile pickup window to make the process smoother.

A health and beauty chain struggled with order pick-up for different reasons. Store associates weren't fully versed in the new service so they didn't know what to do or how to answer questions, and there were problems finding the designated curbside parking zones. The insights from crowd testing allowed the chain to regroup and improve its omnichannel experience by ramping up training, and specifying more designated parking spots along with improved signage.

OPERATIONS READINESS TEST CHECKLIST

Before you can successfully roll out curbside experiences, you must ensure your operations meet customer demands.

- ☐ Order completed in accordance with pre-defined SLAs
- ☐ Parking and other signage is clear, accessible, and easily understood
- ☐ Order is accurate and all purchased items are included
- ☐ Store associates are trained and well-versed in the curbside service
- ☐ Clearly communicate expectations and predicted wait times



DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE OMNICHANNEL AND USER EXPERIENCE?

There isn't one singular, recommended omnichannel approach. Because of this, companies need to experiment with what works best for their customers. Whatever the channels, it is critical to understand customers' unique requirements, maintain a consistent level of quality, and ensure everything comes together to deliver a streamlined and consistent experience for the consumer.

From a user experience standpoint, continuity means ensuring a uniform layout and workflow across channels, and that processes for ordering and fulfillment work are the same whether initiated through a mobile app, from a desktop browser, or at the store. Brand messaging should be consistent across channels, and store operations need to have a consistent flow back and forth between online transactions.

Crowd testing every permutation of the customer journey will help ensure continuity and quality of experience while identifying any possible points of failure during the handoff—for example, from an order placed via mobile phone to a pickup via curbside. Failure of one customer touch point is a ding on the entire curbside experience and must be avoided at all costs.

In the case of the health and beauty aid company, crowd testing delivered positive feedback on the mobile web shopping experience, including the check out cart and the text message notification. Yet while the software was a hit, order pick-up was another story with complaints that associates were unfamiliar with curbside pick-up and even worse, not around to orchestrate the process. The retailer was able to address both issues before customers opted out of the new service or took their shopping elsewhere.

5 MOST COMMON ERRORS IN OMNICHANNEL AND DIGITAL



Items are "available" online, but are "out of stock" in-store or during online checkout



Promising more online than can actually be bought at the store



Registration and sign-in is required before the product price is revealed



The app is a mirror of the website and not worth downloading



Web/mobile prices don't match in-store prices

USER EXPERIENCE READINESS TEST CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to validate that every part of the user experience is ready for the eyes of your customers.

- ☐ Ensure app and website navigation and layout is clear and easy
- ☐ Employ test automation, in-field feedback, and crowd testing to get optimal insight on the physical-to-digital experience and process flow
- ☐ Validate the experience across every channel and test every step of the journey
- ☐ Practice the digital-to-physical workflows



There is more to come.

Given the wealth of new technologies, from voice assistants like Alexa and Siri to machine learning and artificial intelligence, there are new and exciting omnichannel touchpoints coming down the pike.

In addition to buy online, pick-up-in-store models, many retailers are now offering ship-from-store to reduce shipping times and balance inventory. Models like ship-to-store give customers more choice, reduce costs, and help businesses avoid disruptions. Endless aisle is another popular channel, giving customers the option of getting their hands on a product they want even if it's unavailable in the store. Voice assistants are the future of curbside and other channels, enhancing the customer experience with the ability to use natural voice commands to place orders, ask questions, and to navigate the browse and purchase process.

Each new omnichannel touchpoint requires rigorous test and validation practices, especially since much of the technology is still evolving. Voice assistants, for example, can run into problems because conversations are highly variable and it's difficult to get consistent responses given different languages and dialects. It's important for organizations to recognize these challenges and ensure their testing and validation practices and partners are up to the task.

Read Hobson & Company's complete report to understand the full ROI of Applause crowdttesting.

DOWNLOAD REPORT



About Applause

Applause is the worldwide leader in crowd-sourced digital quality testing. Software is at the heart of how all brands engage users, and digital experiences must work flawlessly everywhere. With 400,000+ testers available on-demand around the globe, Applause provides brands with a full suite of testing and feedback capabilities. This approach drastically improves testing coverage, eliminates the limitations of offshoring and traditional QA labs, and speeds time-to-market for websites, mobile apps, IoT, and in-store experiences.

Thousands of leading companies — including Ford, Fox, Google, and Dow Jones — rely on Applause as a best practice to deliver high-quality digital experiences that customers love.

Learn more at www.applause.com

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