Abstract

The internet retail revolution has taken a surprising turn in which store owners can play a happy and prosperous role.

Shopping online is first and foremost about convenience. Facing chaos at pickup is not what you expect as today’s consumer. After all, queuing and waiting is what you tried to avoid when shopping online in the first place.

When standing in line for goods, customers often don’t know when they will be served or by whom. Businesses risk customers walking out, never to return. Overall, it is a bad prospect.

Retailers can instead offer an organized and calm environment where customers browse the store while waiting for item pickup and collection. These businesses not only create a positive customer experience but also drive sales. Staff can prepare the order once the customer arrives and checks in at the store; employees can also suggest add-on sales based on the products ordered online. When goods are ready, an alert is sent to the customer to make them aware that their order is ready for collection.

Connecting the online and physical world creates a unique and consistent experience through the complete customer journey, from online ordering through to in-store collection.

“In-store pickup accounted for 31 percent of total sales for Argos, one of the UK’s biggest retailers, in 2013.”
Introduction

Click and Collect is a great opportunity for online retailers to improve their customers’ shopping experience. By mixing channels and having an online-to-offline strategy, Click and Collect offers a more flexible approach with customers able to collect their orders in store. The topic is increasingly salient given the increase in the number of brands offering Click and Collect, extending the potential for brands to increase collection points beyond their own brick and mortar stores. However, is Click and Collect really a solution to overcome issues found in online/offline shopping? Or is it just a temporary patch that helps bring together the two previously divorced offline and online worlds?

Until recently, there has been a fairly clear distinction between shopping online and brick and mortar retail. The Click and Collect concept blurs this division and enables consumers to purchase online and collect at a local store or collection point. It allows customers to search and buy products on the internet and collect them from a selected location.

As customers increasingly want to shop in a way that is convenient for them, strategies such as the Click and Collect concepts are emerging as a popular means for retailers to increase sales and improve Customer Experience.

Previously, Click and Collect was perceived as the domain of large retailers who could afford to invest in the necessary technology to make it work. This is now changing.

Qmatic supports the full customer experience from initial contact through to service delivery and service support.

“Shoppers who use the store and websites spend more than twice as much as those who shop only in store or only online.”
Challenges

Click and Collect is a growing trend that undoubtedly generates sales. Before establishing such a service, however, we need to assess the end-to-end process. Specifically, our goals for Click and Collect are to provide excellent cross-channel interaction, offering an exciting online as well as offline customer experience.

The logistical and technical requirements of establishing a Click and Collect service also present a serious challenge. We need to consider all the interactions that make this concept possible, from the online and offline world.

Customers expect a quick turnaround from the time they order to the time specific products are available for delivery upon arrival.

Of course, the Click and Collect phenomenon is far from perfect and there are areas where Qmatic can add value to help smooth out the process. Poor in-store navigation and long queues are some areas that create a bad customer experience.

According to a survey conducted by Qmatic, customers often see problems in the following Click and Collect phases:

- Once the order is placed online, customers often have problems locating the collection point upon arrival in store. What’s worse is that the notification process via text and email is not consistent and sometimes fails. The customer experience can be inconsistent between the online and physical channels, leading to confusion.
- In some stores, the collection point is at the entrance and shared with the customer service desk. In other cases, it is located at the back of the store and in extreme cases in another building.
- Poor in-store signage prevents quick and easy navigation.
Unclear and confusing check-in processes often fail to notify staff of arriving customers, creating a gap in order preparation and processing.

A lack of a seamless integration often exists between the experiences offered online and in the physical store.

Customers are not actively encouraged or given the opportunity to browse and shop in the store.

Orders are sometimes not ready for collection. Customers expect staff to prepare orders in advance of their arrival at the Collection area.

Queues in the store may become a problem when many customers arrive to collect their order at the same time.

The collection service is often shared with customer service, leading to long waiting times. A virtual queue can reduce this problem significantly. Separating the delivery service from customer service can also be a good solution to this problem.

The opportunity to sell additional goods is not fully exploited when customers are not given the chance to browse the store while they wait.

Many retailers do not actively seek customer feedback on the Click and Collect service, leaving them with the decreased likelihood of improving the customer experience.

Fig 2. Understanding and managing the customer journey is key in delivering improved customer experience in retail. Neglecting the important arrival phase in the Click and Collect customer journey can have very negative consequences on the customer’s perception of the visit and the retailer’s brand.
Meeting the challenges

Internet shopping revolutionizes the shopping experience and how we buy things. Our living rooms have become the new shopping mall; our kitchen the new checkout till. In the future, cars would be abandoned; the world would become an easier, happier place. But it didn’t work out like that, mostly because delivery services were subpar. Customers were left frustrated by the dreaded “Sorry, you were out” cards, with missed deliveries and crashed websites.

Another issue is that many consumers with full time jobs are usually not around at a time when deliveries are normally made. If you are able to collect your goods from the retailer at your convenience, these issues don’t exist.

Despite these drawbacks, shopping online has many advantages. Shoppers can research products by browsing a large number of stores from the comfort of their own home and at a time that is convenient for them. It’s also argued that online retail delivers better value for consumers because there is less overhead connected with distribution and it’s easier for them to compare products. The Click and Collect concept enables shoppers to take advantage of the benefits of shopping online, while gaining immediate access to goods at no additional cost.

Illogical as it sounds, most shoppers would actually prefer to incur the cost and hassle of going and picking up a pair of shoes or a blender than to wait at home or visit the shop, unsure that it will be in stock. Among Click and Collect’s many attractions is the certainty that items will actually be there, waiting.

The concept is very simple and yet very counter-intuitive. You, the customer, buy something online. Then, rather than wait for the delivery three days later, you go to the shop and collect it yourself. Delivery charges are generally cheaper than by mail, or even waived.

The introduction of the smart phone now makes it possible to do all this on the move, which means that the demand for Click and Collect is likely to grow substantially. According to a recent survey by online research company OnePoll, one in five smart phone owners now shop through mobile apps and spend an average of £30 a month. In total, it’s estimated that £581 million per year is now spent through apps by UK consumers.

Realizing the benefits of a true multi-channel strategy no longer has to be limited to the Tier One retailers who can afford to invest millions of dollars in different systems that then need to be integrated in order to get the necessary functionality. Now, there are solutions that offer all that functionality and more in just one system. This development in multi-channel software will enable Tier Two retailers to meet customers’ needs by offering a consistent service across all sales channels, ultimately competing more effectively in today’s challenging market.

Qmatic offers retail stores with a face-to-face and online business solution to handle customers coming into stores to collect an order. We offer a solution that creates a positive and consistent customer experience across the online and

“One in five UK smart phone owners now shop through mobile apps and spend an average of £30 a month.”
physical store. Our solution encourages customers to browse the store, driving incremental sales.

Our solutions also provide the means for customers to check in by scanning their order confirmation, or manually keying in the order number. An individual ID number ensures customers get served fairly, without having to wait in line. They can be informed on the progress of their order. And, alerts can be sent to customers when their order is available for collection while they are browsing the store. We also offer the ability for staff to use the information captured at check-in to inform customers about other suitable products.

The Qmatic Click and Collect solution is flexible, scalable and can be adapted effectively to meet the needs of any client. The system can expand from a standalone check-in solution to a customer journey application that includes multi-departments, disciplines, stores, mobile applications, and analytics – all with centralized administration.
Results / Conclusion

There are many benefits to Click and Collect. First, it drives in-store traffic. Not only are customers "locked in" to their earlier online purchase, but they might make an unplanned, additional purchase when they go to pick up their item as well. Second, having a retail presence offline and online gives retailers an advantage over competitors who do not offer Click and Collect. As proof of this concept’s power, many online-only retailers are now turning to third parties to set up, for a fee, collection points in local convenience.

From a customer’s point of view:

- Pay online or reserve online without payment and pay and collect in store.
- Items are ready for collection from the customer’s chosen store within a short timeframe.
- Consumers are contacted when their product is ready for collection.
- Customers can beat the queue by picking up items from a service desk in a calm and controlled manner.

"An effective Click and Collect service can drive incremental sales by 15 percent."
Our solutions

**Click and Collect Standalone Solution**

A local, standalone solution, quickly and easily deployed. It includes a kiosk with scanner/reader, signage and queue management logic to serve as basic self-check in and queuing solution.

Qmatic Solo allows for customers to check in and be placed in a queue for the appropriate service. When called to get served, an SMS notification can be sent. Solo is upgradable and can use the core HW components in an Orchestra solution.

**Click and Collect Enterprise Solution**

A modularized enterprise platform with a seamless integration to the CRM system. It includes a kiosk with scanner/reader, signage and customer journey logic to serve as an advanced self-check in solution.

Qmatic Orchestra allows for customers to check in and be placed in a queue for the appropriate service. When called to get served, an SMS notification can be sent. Orchestra can be deployed on a server or in the Cloud and can expand far beyond the check-in process. The solution spans the entire customer journey, allowing for significant resource optimization and greater customer experiences throughout all departments and stores.
Best Practice – 7 Tips

Realize the full benefit of Click and Collect with the following critical points.

1. Make the Process Easy
If Click and Collect is easier than ordering a home delivery, people will be more likely to adopt it over regular delivery and will feel more at peace with the process in general. In turn, customers are more likely to return and refer other people to the service.

2. Go Mobile
People increasingly use their phones for everything. Providing access to powerful information such as in-stock information, customers will begin to make orders over the phone on the go. They will collect their goods later at their convenience.

3. Bring the online in-store
Offer a truly integrated digital and physical consumer experience and let the customer choose which channel they want to use. Reaching the brand is key. Equip employees with iPads, introduce interactive kiosks to help ease customer buying experiences and educate them about products. In addition, exploit new technologies in order to improve existent mobile, tablet and in-store technologies. The result is a true omnichannel experience for customers.

5. Manage expectations
The online experience should be aligned with what customers expect to find in the store and vice versa. For example, customers should have the possibility to check the stock available in-store while online and when in-store, to have the ability to check the stock in other stores and also online.

6. In-store experience
Brands should bring the online experience into the store and move some of the in-store experience to the virtual world (e.g. encourage products reviews, send emails with in-store offers or articles about in-store events).

7. Eliminate waiting times
Prevent long queues by implementing a customer flow management system that allows seamless integration with your online presence. Qmatic offers market leading solutions within the Customer Experience Management (CEM) category designed to support great face-to-face experiences in your store.
About Qmatic

Qmatic’s vision is to realize the full potential of every meeting. We help our clients engage and interact with their customers from the very first touch point. We gather information around the customer journey and help create brand value from improved customer experiences. By creating a seamless customer journey from online channels through to face-to-face meetings, we increase customer experiences and strengthen our clients’ brands.

Qmatic holds market leading positions in the public sector, financial services, retail, and healthcare applications. It is estimated that more than a quarter of the world’s population pass through a Qmatic system every year.

Qmatic has a truly global footprint and operates in over 120 countries through subsidiaries and partner network. The Qmatic Group has a turnover of EUR 60 million and employs some 300 people. The company’s main owners are Altior Fund II GP Limited and ICG.

"There is only one boss - the customer. And he can fire everyone from the chairman down, simply by spending his money somewhere else.”

Sam Walton, 1977