

FROM
S I L O S
TO
SEAMLESS



THE JOURNEY TO DIGITALLY CONNECT

Digital evolution requires strategic, solutions-based execution that reduces customer & associate friction and produces measurable improvements to your physical and digital experiences.



Digital integration
into retail, restaurants
and most branded
environments **massively**
accelerated over the
previous two years.

That started with safety and convenience, but it morphed into a rapidly evolving part of customer expectations.

A willingness to nimbly experiment and innovate — something many businesses talked about before but didn't follow through on — will be rewarded as customer thinking about trying new things has been reconfigured.

Purposeful and seamless omnichannel digital experiences are therefore now necessary and will continue to evolve. The [global digital transformation market size](#) was evaluated at \$608.72 billion in 2021 and is expected to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 23.1 % from 2022 to 2030, according to Grand View Research, Inc. Meanwhile, per [Forbes](#), 87% of companies think digital will disrupt their industry, but less than 44% feel they are adequately prepared.

A few years ago, Miller Zell published an ebook called [Digital Myth Busting](#). It focused on breaking down digital myths disguised as solutions and provided guidelines for sound, strategic digital transformation.

This ebook will advance that strategic thinking with a holistic digital plan that addresses customer and associate friction and pain points on the path to purchase. It also will focus on creating positive brand experiences and how to generate return on investment as quickly as possible.

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Source: *Forbes*

BEGIN WITH A CLEAR, THOUGHTFUL STRATEGY

There are no shortages of goals with digital initiatives, including driving loyalty, improving operational efficiency, storytelling along the path to purchase, generating ad revenue, creating more engaging and informative experiences and upgrading customer data insights.

Before you begin your planning answer questions that will help direct and focus your resources:

- > What pain points are you trying to solve?
- > What value would a digital solution provide to your business, employees and customer?
- > Which metrics and business goals will you track and how are you going to measure and interpret that data?
- > How will you create a seamless, omnichannel experience that harmonizes your physical and digital touchpoints?
- > What will you do to ensure customer trust with data privacy?
- > How will these digital tools improve your associate experience and help them interact with customers?
- > What's your content strategy for brands with product showcases?
- > What part of your store environment are you comfortable sending into retirement?

The digital marketplace is crowded with products and services. Further, many vendors won't share that replacing existing store elements with the latest tech also can create new customer friction. There's a lot to consider.

Answering these questions might not provide an entirely clear roadmap, but they will help lead you to step No. 2.

FOCUS ON THE HOLISTIC PICTURE

The “holistic picture” won’t be a perfect


circle. It will involve crafting together many individual pieces — hardware, software, platforms, SaaS providers, etc. — toward the goal of creating a single, seamless vision. That task is made more challenging by tight timelines and even tighter budgets.

The holistic picture begins with clear boundaries. Defining a project’s scope helps to establish guidelines for scale, cost and level of complexity before any detailed work gets started.

The next step is using data, customer research and other insights to identify patterns that delineate areas for informed focus. This makes it easier to filter down to logical solutions.

Once overriding goals, boundaries and a shared vision of the holistic picture is established, you can then begin evaluating specific solutions and areas of expertise that will be needed to move forward, such as:

- > Digital signage, advertising and in-store messaging networks (strategy, management and content)
- > Interactive video kiosks (non-touch and gestural)
- > Interactive digital experiences and kiosks
- > Digitally enhanced merchandising
- > Environmental sensors, behavior tracking & analytics
- > Business intelligence
- > Digital wayfinding
- > Product personalization solutions
- > Experience/environmental gamification
- > Employee and customer mobile in-store apps and tools
- > Customer loyalty programs



Digital is the new standard, and it will follow similar refresh and execution models. That's why **the savviest retailers need to view it strategically and dynamically**, knowing that the omnichannel convergence within brick-and-mortar spaces is always about **keeping up with the customers' wants and needs**, whichever path to purchase they choose.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IS PROBABLY NOT IN YOUR IT TEAM'S SWEET SPOT

It's always tempting to take the shortest distance between two points, such as attempting to use an in-house team to develop and execute a digital program inside your branded environment. But a complicated digital transformation is often not the ideal task for an internal IT team to implement.

Your IT department might be fantastic at maintaining in-house systems, but do they know your customers' wants and needs? You can internally discuss your insights-driven digital strategy, but the

leaders of your digital transformation also need the knowledge and skills to deliver that strategy. They must procure the best hardware, software, systems and content and then execute the installation and guide company-wide adoption.

Internal teams have competing priorities and are measured against distinct objectives. Oftentimes, they are pressured to select the cheapest option instead of the best solution. There is a big gap between idea and execution, and most missteps occur with the latter.



CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT IS MORE THAN SELLING

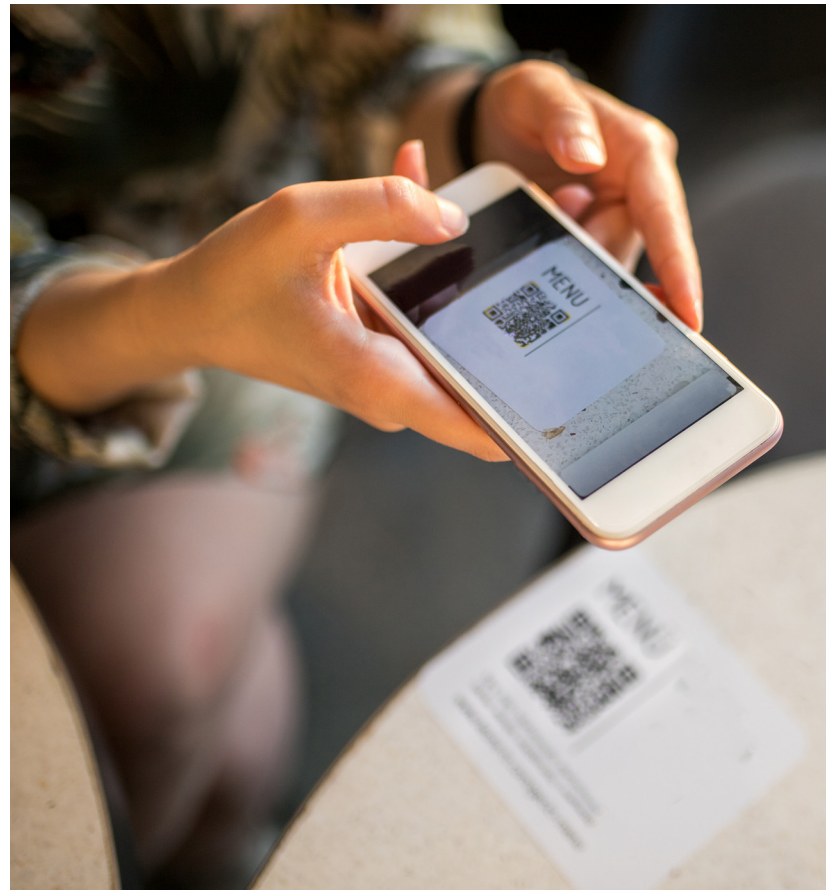
Your store is there to sell your products, but the customer journey is more complicated and multi-layered now. Customer demands and expectations continue to rise, and that's not just about convenience. If your digital displays create a positive experience for shoppers — guiding, entertaining and informing — then they enhance your customer experience.

True digital solutions foster experiences that build brand loyalty with your customers, thereby increasing the likelihood for an additional purchase as well as a return trip. They reduce in-store stress and friction, provide information, increase convenience, personalize shopping and entertain.

For example, strategically conceived QR codes throughout your stores could provide product information, wayfinding help, inventory information, delivery options, help desk support and boost associate and operational performance.

And then, after all that diverse engagement, the QR codes provide you purposeful, actionable data.

Further, digital screens can create new ad revenue generation as marketers try to engage shoppers at points of sale.

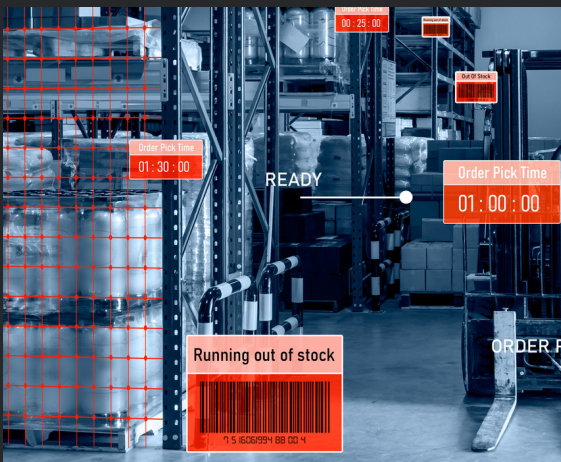


DIGITAL EXPERIENCES

YOUR CUSTOMERS NOW EXPECT

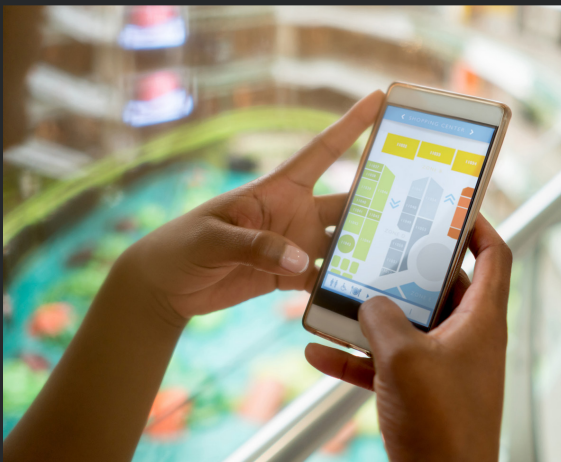
BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

Real-time visibility into product inventory, both in-store and online. Mobile tools for both customers & associates to quickly check if a product is in stock and where to find it.



DIGITAL MESSAGING AND ADVERTISING

Customers can seamlessly find, discover and explore within your branded environment, thereby putting customers in control of their shopping experience.



PERSONALIZATION

Tracking customer traffic and engagement to measure marketing campaigns and high-performance locations.

MOBILE TOOLS

Capture shoppers' attention at the point of sale. Dynamic ad platforms that are easy to operate at scale and strategically deliver the right message to the right shopper at the right time.

DIGITAL IS NOT ONLY CUSTOMER FACING

The so-called “Great Resignation” was a big story in 2021 and continues to affect 2022, with retail, hotel and restaurant workers leading a long line of those leaving jobs they find unfulfilling.

The larger meaning? While a great “customer experience” is the prime directive for businesses, “associate experience” isn’t far behind. And they are intertwined and influence each other, positively or negatively.

Digital initiatives therefore should include specific attention for making the associate experience more enjoyable. That speaks to operational ease and efficiency, augmented customer interaction and inventory and informational support.

Associates who are confident that the tablet they carry around will improve any customer interaction, even a challenging one, will be happier, more engaged and, yes, loyal to your brand.

When refreshing your branded environment and improving your digital integration, don’t ignore the intersection between customer and associate experience. Make them both better.

Just as data gathering and analysis is a continuous process,

so is digital content development and execution. It’s a recurring and evolving cost and will be a critical part of a purposeful digital strategy. It needs to be managed, maintained and refreshed. It’s about serving the customer with the best experience possible, so it’s an investment toward securing their loyalty.

Great content strategies — developed by top-level 2D and 3D animators — educate, entertain and attract customers, while also generating optimized ambiance within your branded environment. Thoughtful UX/UI strategies and well-executed motion graphics ensure the right messages are played at the right time, engaging the right customers.

Targeted digital advertisements pay for themselves. Dynamic digital signage investment costs can frequently be recouped in 12 months or less when they are optimized for content that captures shopper attention. Further, exposure to digital signage can increase the average purchase amount dramatically — by as much as 29.5 percent, and with repeat customers by as much as 32 percent, according to Digital Signage Today.

FINAL THOUGHTS

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Source: Grand View Research

Retail innovation never stops. There is no finish line. Digital transformation is not something a retailer can avoid. Nor is it a one-and-done update. Or even an update that will remain static for several years.

How often do you update your signage and décor? Annually? By season?

Digital is the new standard, and it will follow similar refresh and execution models. That's why the savviest retailers need to view it strategically and dynamically, knowing that the omnichannel convergence within brick-and-mortar spaces is always about keeping up with the customers' wants and needs, whichever path to purchase they choose.

Ultimately, great digital solutions emerge from a holistic approach that is precisely integrated within your branded environment, meeting your customers where they are and where they want to go.

Did we spark any ideas? Seeking a solution to a current challenge or pain point? Looking to explore what's possible? [Let's chat.](#) We have a wide range of effective solutions to help brands seamlessly connect with their customers.



Believes Passionately in Innovation

Miller Zell designs, develops and executes branded environments for retailers, banks, colleges and quick-serve restaurants. With true end-to-end services, we deliver strategy and design, design development and production and rollout across hundreds or thousands of locations. Our “no handoffs” approach increases efficiency and reduces complexity to create the ideal customer experience in your space.

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