



A Look Down the Aisle

December 2016 – Volume 2

A Look Down the Aisle with Sue Sentell

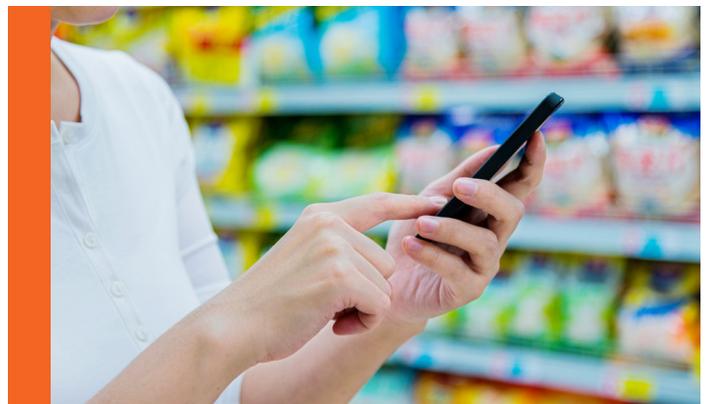
We are pleased to continue our new blog series called “A Look Down the Aisle with Susan Sentell.” In this monthly post, our CEO will share her point of view on some of the latest headlines and trends garnering attention and impacting the retail industry.

As we head into 2017, how is technology influencing the customer’s path to purchase and how will it continue to evolve over the next 12 months?

The role of technology continues to impact and influence how, when and where the customer makes a purchase. Heading into 2017, we’ll continue hearing more and more about the expansion of the Internet of Things (IoT), and how that technology is helping today’s connected consumer have a more streamlined, more effective shopping experience.

Now, the IoT affords retailers the ability to connect consumers directly to the supply chain. With products like the Amazon Dash button and Samsung’s Smart Refrigerator, we’re starting to see more and more companies making the path to purchase much easier and more convenient for consumers, who can send purchase signals straight through the supply chain at the touch of a button.

Technology continues to evolve and impact everyday shopping, including the way consumers obtain information. Thanks to the significant adoption of smartphones and other mobile devices, mobile purchasing and promotions will continue to grow in importance for retailers in 2017. In addition to the growth of mobile buying, it is no surprise that there is an opportunity to accelerate mobile offers.



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As mentioned in the Progressive Grocer article below, new research suggests that 2017 could be the year for grocers and CPG marketers to launch or ramp up their mobile couponing programs.

Finally, technology is also enabling shopping convenience, which I see only growing next year. Now, consumers are using their smartphone more than ever to prepare for their in-store shopping trip. In 2017, I believe consumers will be relying much more heavily on apps for tasks like meal planning, shopping lists and organization.

What retail trends are you watching for in 2017?

I think two of the biggest trends to watch for in 2017 will be the continued focus on shopper convenience and a bigger push for health and wellness within the stores. First, retailers are continuing to implement technology and create ways to make consumers' shopping and purchasing experience easier and more accommodating for their busy schedules. For example, many retailers are now offering or testing out a variety of options for product pick-up including order online and pick-up in store or at the curbside, while others are employing personal shoppers to do the actual shopping for customers.

The other big trend I see is the push around health and wellness. In the coming months, retailers are planning to extend the health and wellness focus beyond delivering product information transparency. The Supermarket News article below mentions how more and more retailers are looking to integrate health and wellness into their in-store experience, including educating shoppers in-store and online to foster smarter food choices. Retailers are integrating specific product attributes (such as allergen-free or gluten-free attributes) to create tailored product assortments or shelf sets. This is also translating online as retailers share expanded product information on their websites to provide additional information about a product.



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Based on our role in the industry, we know how important product content is to our customers and to our customer's customer. We also see how important product content will be 2017 and beyond across the entire enterprise. To excel in the coming year, retailers that invest in technology that will enhance the shopper experience, enhance convenience and offer personalization will be the clear winners.

For additional insight on the topics I mentioned above, see a few of the top news articles we curated focused on 2017 trends moving the industry ahead.

Does Gillette know your name?

<https://techcrunch.com/2016/10/27/does-gillette-know-your-name/>

Retail Role Call: A Look at Retail Trends Past and Present

<http://multichannelmerchant.com/marketing/retail-role-call-a-look-at-retail-trends-past-and-present-26102016/>

Start 2017 off right with the top 10 priorities for the grocery store

<http://supermarketnews.com/blog/start-2017-right-top-10-priorities-grocery-store>

Will 2017 Be the Year of the Mobile Coupon? Mobile wallet coupons, marketing poised for strong growth

<http://www.progressivegrocer.com/departments/technology/will-2017-be-year-mobile-coupon>

Want to learn more about other retail innovations shaping the retail industry?

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