

READY, (RE)SET, GO!

Tips about rearranging the shop after the lockdown

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The last months deeply changed our life and our habits, as well as our priorities, our routines, our attitudes towards the physical contact and much more. The comeback to normal that we're approaching to live it's only a partial one and it will be inevitably affected by both the current health situation - that is still delicate - and what we have experienced in the past months while staying closed in our homes.

Now that all the shops are open again, it's necessary to make some thoughts about how to *review several aspects of the whole shopping experience*: the shops will have to be not only safe places - as the current regulations impose - but also even more comfortable (and comforting), usable and appealing than in the past.

Probably customers will be quite reluctant in coming in and exploring stores as they used to do before, when they spent a lot of time inside even without a real need. The limited access, the attention in keeping the distances, the perception of risk in touching objects exposed to anyone else's touch will reduce both the time spent in store and the physical interaction with the store itself.

Then will be essential for the retailer to mediate between this trend and the necessity to *reassure* and *cuddle the customer* and to *catch his eyes* with more shopping ideas.

So let's see some aspects we believe it would be advantageous to think about:

→ EXTEND THE SHOPPING PROCESS OUTSIDE THE STORE

Omnichannel is the keyword for a successful restart: e-commerce, social media shopping, video-chat shopping, delivery... are a new discovery for a lot of retailers (especially for the smallest one) and it's a *great chance*.

In the next weeks, still continue improving your services taking inspirations from the new shopping habits. Keep them consistent with your shop image and tone of voice to be always recognizable for your customers.

Choose the right strategies to offer the same experience of the traditional shopping while staying at home (shopping online + delivery, i.e.) or at least for remaining inside the shop for the bare minimum (shopping by appointment, or booking by phone + pick up, i.e.).

Don't forget that your sales support, your experience and your know-how are what make the difference between the pure online shopping and an omnichannel strategy.

→ THE WINDOW AS A CALLING CARD

It's the first touch point between the shop and the customer: use it even more to *intrigue, emotion and encourage* to enter the shop.

Less time inside the shop maybe will means more time in front of its window: use this space also to *entertain* the customer while waiting his turn and to *give him more informations* about the products, in order to ease the choice in advance.

→ A CLEAR AND AGILE LAYOUT

In a moment when the proximity is seen as a risk, give the customer the *perception of a wide, fresh, clean and - therefore - safe place*.

Open spaces and aisles as much as possible to *absure* the distances between people and between people and products.

Create clear paths and use visual signage to guide the customer in a calm and efficient navigation, but *don't overload him with excessive informations*.

→ A LIGHT AND CLEAN DISPLAY

People will be hesitant in touching a lot of products for themselves and going over the shop with a fine-tooth comb, as they used to do.

Try to *reduce the quantity* of displayed products, think at the shop almost as a show-room: one sku for each product will be enough to display on the

shelves. The customer will ask the shop assistant for the desired product and will be happier to receive a "new" and cleaner one, coming straight from the warehouse.

→ LESS IS MORE: QUALITY VS QUANTITY

It's easier to perceive quality in a light display; and the customers will search in the physical store even more for quality than for quantity.

More widely, they will *demand for a perceivable increase in quality about the whole shopping experience*, not only in the products themselves: if the store won't satisfy this requirement, he will prefer to continue shopping elsewhere (probably on a cold but convenient marketplace, as he experimented during the lockdown).

→ MAKE CROSS MERCHANDISING

Every good retailer perfectly knows that creating *thematic displays* mixing up several kind of goods in some dedicated areas or in a window can *encourage spur-of-the-moment purchases*, but this will be even more important and profitable in the next weeks, when people will probably enter the shop only for necessities and it's up to you to push also some goods that are less essentials.