

How to Turn Your Closed Brick & Mortar Into a **Fulfillment Hub**



It starts with the right technology stack.



Congratulations! Welcome to the big beautiful world of ecommerce. Whether you've been hoping to move your store online for years, or are using this as an alternative selling channel during your brick & mortar's temporary closure, it's our goal to get you set up to confidently operate an online boutique or other specialty store. First step to doing so? Choosing integrated ecommerce and point of sale platforms. **Here's how and why.**

Turn your store into a warehouse

Your store may be closed to the public but that doesn't mean you're locked out: flip the switch and turn it into your online store's fulfillment hub. To do so effectively, you need technology that provides a bi-lateral sync of your entire catalogue. When orders are placed online, they'll sync to your POS, at which point you have the option to process orders from a central point of fulfillment (*presumably your physical store in this case*), or split fulfillment across multiple store locations, depending on where the inventory lies.

Even if you currently have just one store location, you're likely to continue selling online once the

brick & mortar reopens, and the necessity for this integration will be even more obvious once that happens. Systems that do not boast a real-time sync of inventory levels can lead to overselling and other fulfillment errors, and no one wants to have to break that news to a customer who has already received an order confirmation.

Customers also want the convenience of being able to return online orders to a physical store; an integrated system makes looking up the customer's order history and putting the item(s) back into inventory a breeze. The same applies for cases in which customers buy at one physical location, but return in another. Unintegrated systems will force you to make those inventory adjustments manually, creating extra work for your staff and increasing the margin of error.

A frictionless customer experience

Today's consumer demands a seamless shopping experience. They want to be able to start and end the sale anywhere, and they expect the same level of personalized service no matter where they shop.

Natively integrated POS and ecommerce platforms not only provide a two-way sync between inventory, products, and orders, but also customer profiles and shopping history. Such offers you a holistic view of your customers and their journeys, and them a frictionless shopping experience. Imagine: Every piece of customer data you collected online, every order they placed or returned, every clicked promotion that resulted in a sale—all of this information will be accessible to your sales associates the next time the customer visits your brick & mortar.

...and a personalized one

Integrated POS and ecommerce platforms also offer retailers the ability to look at customer shopping history and habits as a whole: most shopped categories, styles, price points, average margin, UPT, and more, so you can effectively target them with personalized marketing. [91% of consumers](#) are more likely to shop with brands who recognize, remember, and provide relevant offers and recommendations, so it's critical for customer retention to put this data to use. A customer may have completely different online shopping habits compared to what you've seen in person, and not having that complete picture of the individual could lead to missed marketing opportunities.

Not only do unintegrated systems create hours of extra manual work for your staff, but they allow for a high margin of error and fail to offer a complete view of the customer journey and your business performance. To achieve omnichannel commerce, retailers must employ synced POS and ecommerce platforms.

Questions to ask when evaluating ecommerce platforms:

- ▶ Which ecommerce platforms does my current POS integrate with?
- ▶ Does my current POS have an open API for third-party or custom ecommerce integrations?
- ▶ Do sales, product, and customer data sync between systems?
- ▶ Will product descriptions and images carry over?
- ▶ Does data sync in real time?
- ▶ Can customers buy online, pick up in store? Return in store? Is this important to my business?
- ▶ Can I choose which store or warehouse online orders are fulfilled from?
- ▶ What are my payment processing options?
- ▶ What shipping integrations are available?
- ▶ Will my loyalty program integrate with both systems?
- ▶ What are my business growth plans? Is the integration flexible enough to support them?

Our retail consultants are standing by to help you choose the best ecommerce solution for your business. We're here for you and will weather this storm together.

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