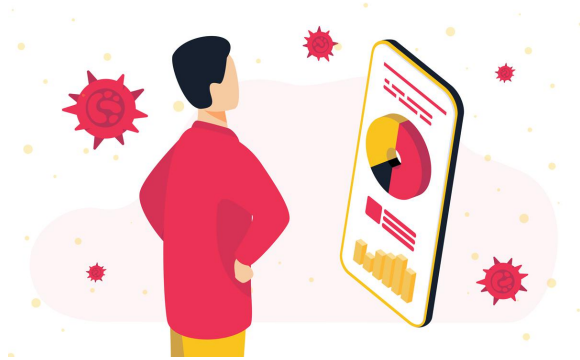




We don't just build websites or campaigns we build
successful businesses.



A Perspective on Conversion Rate Optimisation Strategy and Changing Buying Behaviours in the second half of 2020



A crisis can either cripple you or surge you to new heights. As financial pressure mounts on consumers and businesses alike, it presents them with an opportunity to introduce new products and discover new strategies.

Today, more than ever, it is vital for brands to increase their digital trust and improve the customer experience for potential customers; If brands are to compete and dominate the online market, they will need to provide a user experience that is streamlined and more convenient than an in-store purchase.

The print media industry is an exceptional benchmark for potential transformation in times of a crisis. Specifically, for newspapers, publishing houses and hardcover magazines - some of which had been in print for hundreds of years. With a sudden halt in operations in the printing press, the industry had to make a tough decision of 'survival or perish'. So, they innovated - exponentially.

They took to their social media handles, and created stellar campaigns that resonated with their brand standards, messaging, and purpose while mindfully conveying a message that struck a chord with their readers. Travel magazines have touched their readers, with warm storytelling and a promise to travel sustainably in the future.



Media houses embraced platforms such as Twitter to distribute content while keeping their audience and users engaged online. The print media embraced social media platforms as another outlet channel while driving the conversation forward.

Sectors across the UK are taking similar strides to modernise their business. With the healthcare and economic effects of the pandemic slowly subduing, UK businesses and industries are evaluating strategies that can assist them to get back on their feet.

While they do so, what are their strengths and weaknesses that will help the business weather the storm? With digitisation changing traditional shopping activities, which habits will last and which will have to evolve?

We surveyed key consumer behaviours to conclude

A substantially large section of UK consumers relies on digital tools. The landscape of online buying is rapidly shifting towards; the need for more interactive services that can quickly adapt to changing buyer requirements.

The new norm will witness a transformed customer, with sustainable behaviours and renewed expectations. UK businesses must align with these changing behaviours to sustain and thrive. The past few months of global quarantine have allowed organisations to take a step back and reevaluate with their strategies and predict buying behaviours that will prevail in the following months to come. Without a cohesive strategy focused on ongoing consumer perceptions, businesses will find it challenging to succeed online.

1. Save, sustain and stick to basics

The negative economic impact of the pandemic has had an innumerable effect on the countries finances and the shut down of industries. As businesses begin to reopen, they will adopt a trend of 'back to basics' by shoring up cash reserves and reducing overheads. Likewise, consumers are more likely to tighten purse strings and make cuts to non-essential expenses or make changes to their lifestyles to reduce outgoings. Consumers will also cut costs on luxury goods and high-ticket items and save money to cover expenses that may occur if they or their family member, falls ill or passes away.



Premium purchases will become pre-planned rather than being impulsive. Consumers are exercising caution and taking more responsibility with the goods they purchase and often bulk buying non-perishable items to get a better price. Shoppers are looking for higher discounts, offers, and free delivery to make spending justifiable while feeling that they are making better financial decisions.

Businesses can reduce their costs by moving operations into the cloud and using digital transformation to meet consumer needs of lower prices. A robust Conversion Rate Optimisation (CRO) strategy can help a business to onboard the digital curve smoothly, and manage costs better.

2. Dynamic change in retail buying habits

Excluding food and non-store retailing, all retail sectors witnessed a three-month aggregate decline in retail sales by 8.6%. The textile, footwear and non-food retail stores reported decreased turnover. However, only 3.5% of online retailers declared zero turnover. During the lockdown, digital was the only medium for consumers to make purchases without having

to leave home. The change to the way consumers now make purchases online has changed forever.

Online buying will continue to outpace traditional retail sales for a long time post-lockdown, as consumers express a reduced interest in flocking to the shops in the months to come. UK consumers have swiftly adapted to online grocery shopping, and this trend will only grow in the future, with supermarket retailer Morrisons partnering with Amazon to offer AmazonFresh and other online retailers increasing their delivery capacity.



Internet businesses have been gaining the trust of their users with increased online security, more users trusting IoT; e-commerce sales have been rising substantially. Social distancing has made UK shoppers question the need for going to the shops making consumers more open to buying products online. As the government continues to loosen the restrictions on businesses and travel, there will be stiff competition amongst industry players when companies start competing for customers.

3. Normalise living, with healthier living and working patterns

A significant portion of the business community aims to get back to business-as-usual or normality as quickly as possible. UK workers may face substantial employment risks and job losses; the focus is on acquiring new skills to excel in the modern workplace. Businesses should provide their employees' with lifestyle benefits such as gym membership, child care schemes, days off on birthdays to retain employees and keep them engaged. As business sectors adjust to operating within the regulations of the new norms, consumers will embrace a more holistic approach to the brands they use.

Consumers will be more involved in conscious choices and purchase decisions, taking into consideration long-term consequences for themselves and the environment. Health and wellbeing take the front-seat with a focus on healthier lifestyles. Daily routines are mixed with exercise to provide mental health benefits while being in a restricted space as well as home-based wellness solutions.

Businesses with large floor space that depend on customers footfall may struggle to operate cost-effectively. A reduction in footfall will make it further challenging to operate physical sites. Although certain areas will witness an initial low in online buying, eventually several sections will shift to digital platforms and explore CRO techniques to raise sales.

4. Value-based spending

As consumers navigate through these unprecedented times, they are seeking convenience, transparency, and value. Although long-term unavailability of desired products creates a temporary want, over time, there will be a more cautious approach to spending. Adjusting pricing to value-based expenditure will make it challenging for businesses to acquire new customers and retain existing ones.



Customers look for a sense of fulfilment in their purchases while being mindful of others in the community. They also expect brands to deliver high standards and quality without increasing costs. In such times, there is a need for a robust CRO tool that can simultaneously analyse various parameters and provide a quick overview of customer behaviour for businesses.

As businesses plan for the future, they must consider these changed behaviours, and analyse new methods to improve conversion rates and net revenues.

5. Provide relevant services

Businesses will have to adapt to the change in customer behaviours by offering relevant products and services that their customers want, and at the right time.

Throughout the lockdown, there has been an increase in specific sectors such as online pharmaceuticals, home fitness equipment, conference communications, and online groceries; the leaders in these industries will continue to see online sales rise throughout the coming months.

Consumers will become accustomed to new buying methods and efficient solutions that can enhance their lives and increase productivity while working from home. Post resuming activity, service providers must lean towards the production of essential products and services that consumers can buy or access digitally.

In addition to necessities, there is a growing demand for applications and services that can continue to demand consumers' attention by keeping them busy and entertained. Creative and innovative solutions in the space of gaming, online streaming, and mobile apps come to the fore for ventures to invest in, as more and more enterprises are exploring means to hold on to their existing customer base while acquiring new ones.

6. Seamless UX for an enhanced customer experience

Technology should be used to improve efficiency in terms of search and server optimisation. A potential customer could be reasonably annoyed by minor technical glitches. Factors such as convenience, prioritisation of services, site speed, user-friendliness, attention to detail, mobile site portability, well-equipped and straightforward navigation, are critical throughout the site. These factors are essential to connect with the consumer and create a long-lasting impression.



Don't wait for dissatisfied customers to knock on your doors. Instead, undertake regular testing schedules to identify and eliminate page errors; conduct device suitability and beta-testing for every aspect of your service from start-to-end. Build long-term solutions that can be relied upon and evolved for years to come, rather than short-term, ineffective fixes.

Assurance of data protection

Data protection and data security is a concern to most UK shoppers over 25 years old. Consumers are inherently more decisive and disregard advertisements that fail to add value. To keep in your customers' good books eliminate unnecessary or spam communication. There have been many failures by large organisations that have been unable to comply with GDPR and the data protection act, amounting in enormous fines for data breaches. Invest in exceptional data security tools and safeguards.

An engaging interface

As the need for physical stores reduces, digital services will have to be more engaging, and fill in the gaps for loss of human interaction. Although keyword stringing is essential for websites, interface, and the content will need to be more natural and verbal, driving conversational information.

Service providers that can deliver seamless Voice Search capabilities will dominate, as people are looking for better ways to interact with brands. AI and algorithms can be beneficial for back-end operations, UK buyers expect an element of the personal resolution, and hence, a standard chatbot will not suit the brief. The overall look and feel of a website should be up to date, reflecting a promising service.

There is a need for automation that does not seem robotic, yet understands the consumers' needs, and allows a higher outcome of human interaction. Service providers that can offer these kinds of facilities will quickly succeed.

Another critical element in driving conversion rates is 'action-driven content'. Verbose pages are not only heavy on the eyes; they are unable to convey the required information within the reader's attention span. Your 'Call to Action' tag should not merely be a statement but should trigger buying decisions by the consumer. Additionally, sellers of today have access to social media, another exceptional platform to create and interact.

“ There was a reason that your customers decided to work with you, to buy from you. The purpose of an outstanding onboarding experience is to ensure that they keep thinking that. ”

Conveying facts, empathetically and collaborating thoughtfully

The modern consumer demands an authentic and transparent messaging strategy, supported by the brand's purpose and vision. Similarly, digital efforts also need to chalk out a successful growth plan without compromising on consumers' expectations and sentiments.

Valuable cross-collaborations can lead to improved services and an increase in consumer loyalty. Traditional players must open avenues for digital innovators to break barriers, and reach a larger scale of customers. Digital innovation should re-engineer specific service areas to increase efficiency and open up new sales streams with existing customers.



‘End to End Customer Service’

This term comes to life with online selling taking reigns of customers’ decisions. From offering an abundant range of options, placing an order, to cart checkout and payment process; each step should make the process as convenient as possible with attention to detail for the end-user.

With reduced trips down to the ATM, limited bank operations, and safety reasons, customers have moved towards cashless transactions. Hence, businesses must ensure an array of payment options to ensure they can cater to customers that have different payment methods. These facilities together ensure that a customer never goes back disappointed.

Pre-planned supply chains

Back-end supply chain management is indispensable to ensuring smooth business transactions. Providers must analyse how they can optimise stock updates and refill on a real-time basis. Shoppers will quickly jump to another website where items are readily available should your store be out of stock. The supply-chain is primarily concerned with operations. Any inefficiencies within the supply chain will eventually reflect on the site, affecting the customer experience.

Ensuring compliance with safety standards is an added cost overhead. As demand and volumes go up, operational costs will expand. Factoring in logistics, production, labour and capacity costs should be included; else, profit margins will dramatically reduce even as sales increase.

Another strategic way to mobilise supply chain efficiencies is to localise production. Localised supply chains, results in cost optimisation, personalised retail options and elevates cash flow liquidity. It also enhances the overall customer experience by offering localised services.

Find ways to incorporate sustainability

The first two quarters of 2020 have enforced significant challenges for businesses globally. These uncertain times have triggered consumers to live sustainably and within their means.

With more and more buyers moving towards a digital lifestyle, enterprises should find ways to demonstrate sustainability in their operations, by reducing waste going to landfill and using recyclable packaging, promoting best practices that are environmentally friendly and having strong CSR values.

Sustainability instantly augments customer perception and creates a brand recall amongst the customer's friends and family. Therefore, it leads to improved customer acquisition and a successful 'word of mouth' chain.

Understand, and enhance the current buying landscape to maximising conversion rate

When a crisis strikes, it does not affect selectively. Many global industries are suffering from the pandemic; from travel, hospitality, advertising, marketing, insurance, education, entertainment, agriculture, real estate and more. History is a testament that a crisis demands scalable, resilient and future proof solutions.

Digital marketing allows you to personalise and modify your online store to suit the buyer's needs, which is often a challenge in physical stores. eCommerce businesses have to be prepared to deliver a suite of solutions that are fast and reliable in nature. Online companies have a short window, and a thin margin to make an impact on their consumers, before things are normalised, in a full-fledged manner.



On the other hand, by effectively engaging one's customers online, brick and mortar companies have the opportunity of keeping customers updated with exclusive products and future campaigns.

The months ahead will be, nothing short of redemption for economies to strengthen operations and make up for lost time while stabilising potential inflation. Timely availability of necessary, and quality products; hassle-free search process and flawless checkout service, create an effortless experience in the minds of consumers that they want to keep returning.



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