

LYONSCG ARTICLE

3 Tips to Keep Your eCommerce Resolutions On Track



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There's a lot of buzz around advanced ecommerce tools, such as personalization, voice search and mobile apps. But if you don't execute well on such fundamentals as data management, customer experience and operational structure all the trendy tech in the world won't allow you to meet your goals.

It's that time of year again—when all the experts share their big predictions for what to expect going into 2019. In the ecommerce world, there's a lot of buzz around advanced tools such as personalization, voice search and mobile apps, amongst many other tech trends.

And yet, while these new tools and trends are exciting, it's important to not let them become a distraction.

The fundamentals of ecommerce—such basic issues as data management, customer experience, and operational structure—still matter, maybe now more than ever before. If a company is not executing flawlessly on these fundamentals, it doesn't matter how much they invest in

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trendy tech initiatives. The initiatives will end up falling far short of expectations and could even do real damage to the brand.

This year make a resolution to get the basics of ecommerce right first, and then build on those basics with future looking enhancements.

Resolution #1: Implement Proper Data Management

Most of the emerging technologies in ecommerce, such as voice search and personalization, depend on smart data architecture and data management policies.

Sadly, one-fifth of companies believe [more than half of their customer data is incorrect](#). The main cause seems to be simple human error, such as when a customer enters the wrong zip code by mistake, or a call center representative accidentally misses a keystroke when inputting a ticket.

The next biggest culprit is the improper syncing of data between internal systems. Most larger ecommerce companies rely on multiple platforms to manage their content, inventory, order fulfillment, point of sale, and more. Obstacles can arise when these platforms need to exchange data.

Even simple data discrepancies—for example, the difference between recording a customer’s country as “U.S.” in one platform and “United States” in another—can prevent the smooth transfer of that data record from one system to the next. When data cannot flow properly between systems, important information gets locked in silos and the entire ecommerce process breaks down.

Resolution #2: Focus on the Customer Experience

The exciting new ecommerce technologies that will shape 2019 only succeed when they’re implemented in a way that’s intuitive for the customer. This is a particularly common challenge when brands and retailers redesign their websites.

During a website overhaul, it’s tempting to focus on high-visibility pages like the home page, or on fancy bells and whistles like video and custom content. But the success of the website and the entire ecommerce strategy ultimately depends on just one factor: whether customers can easily find and purchase what they want.

Take product filtering, for example. If a user wants to find women’s long-sleeved shirts that are on sale, can the user

quickly filter to that specific set of products? Or will the user have to scroll through a catalog of 600 sale items to find it?

The mobile experience is another area prone to gaps in the user experience. The data here tells a stark story: In 2018, conversion rates on mobile devices were still [61% lower](#) than conversion rates on desktops although we continue to see higher mobile adaption.

It’s disappointing for brands and retailers to spend so much time and resources creating big, flashy designs for their core pages, only to end up losing revenue due to a poorly thought-out customer experience across the rest of the site.

The goal for 2019 should be to absolutely ensure your features are backed up with function. Dedicate the time to analyzing on page behavior through data, video and customer feedback. Don’t make assumptions around your users and what they want—rooting your decisions in a foundation of data and testing will always pay you back long term when you do want to move toward innovation.

Resolution #3: Improve Operational Infrastructure

Ecommerce consumers today are savvier than ever—and they have bigger-than-ever expectations to match. When brands and retailers lack the operational infrastructure to deliver on those expectations, problems emerge.

Take, for example, consumer expectations around shipping. Although 55% of consumers say that a two-hour delivery option would increase their loyalty, according to Capgemini data, only 19% of companies offer two-hour or faster delivery. This is concerning, given that more than half of these consumers say they’d switch to a competing brand or retailer if it offers a faster delivery service.

Order fulfillment is emerging as an increasingly strategic yet largely untapped source of market differentiation for brands and retailers. And yet, although improving delivery times and offering such newer delivery options as Buy Online Pickup In Stores (BOPIS) may hold tremendous promise, to act on these trends, companies must first focus on and invest in their operational efficiencies. Without the right logistical infrastructure in place, the entire ecommerce experience falls apart.

Ultimately, ecommerce success goes to the brands and retailers willing to roll up their sleeves and focus on these fundamentals. The companies that ensure their data is pristine, that think through their customer experience, and that build an efficient, cost-effective organizational structure will be the ones positioned to take full advantage of all the new and exciting trends bursting into the ecommerce landscape.

There's simply no way around it: Everything works better when companies take care of the fundamentals first. The good news is that once this foundation is firm, there will be no holding back these hard-working brands and retailers in 2019 and beyond!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sarah Fung has over seven years of eCommerce experience leading unified marketing programs across multiple verticals including retail, non-profit and global consumer brands. Sarah manages complex, high profile projects across a number of industries, and has worked with many top brands and retailers to help improve site KPIs and meet aggressive digital marketing goals.

About LYONSCG

Lyons Consulting Group (LYONSCG), part of Capgemini, is a leading global commerce service provider, with capabilities that include consulting, digital agency, systems integration, technology services, and managed services. LYONSCG combines proven methodologies, deep technical expertise, and award-winning design to create digital commerce experiences that engage and convert consumers and buyers. Hundreds of leading B2C and B2B brands trust LYONSCG to realize their commerce vision and continually optimize it to drive profitable growth. For more information, go to www.lyonscg.com.



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