

## Battle Lines Drawn for the Retail mCommerce War

Retailers look to three top trends — data analytics, Bluetooth beacons and personalized customer engagement — to gain a competitive edge in 2015.

By Dan Wagner

The past year has seen a double-digit decline in sales for traditional brick-and-mortar stores, a shift that has been attributed to the changes taking place in the retail landscape in relation to digital commerce and the personalization of retail services.

Analysts have predicted that the gap between digital innovators and digital stragglers will widen in 2015, with the use of data analytics, local marketing and overall use of mobile services becoming even more widespread for retailers.

Those retailers that gain a competitive edge in 2015 will do so by focusing on these three technology trends: better analysis of and use of

of consumers when it comes to how and where they choose to shop. This has resulted in some retailers failing to react at the cost of their own survival, while other retailers that foresaw this shift and embraced the digital revolution were able to evolve and create a successful digital sales strategy.

### It's Not Just About Price

The use of Big Data analytics to analyze large banks of customer information to identify key trends will continue to be at the top of the agenda in 2015. Global spending on Big Data is predicted to grow at a compound annual rate of 46 percent until 2020, but only around 15 percent of Fortune 500 companies are expected to exploit Big Data effectively in 2015.

Retailers are also beginning to see the benefits of personalized in-store service with the use of Bluetooth-enabled beacons, which guide consumers and send them local offers while also gathering important data to continuously improve customer experience.

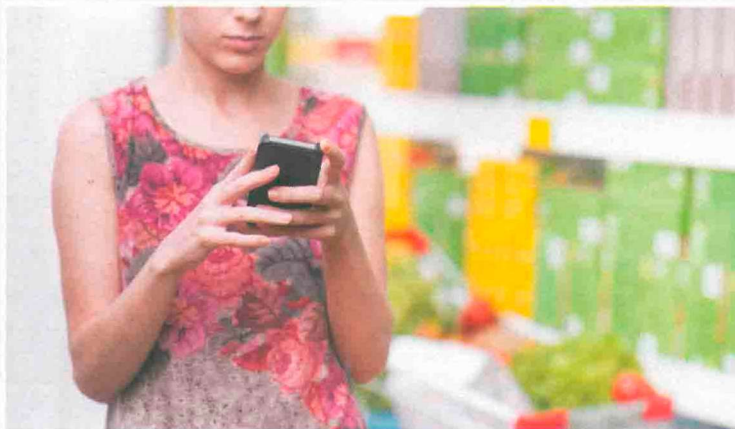
Consumers are no longer relying on price to be the determining factor in how or where they purchase an item; other factors such as a bespoke service, loyalty promotions and ever-shrinking delivery times have arrived at the forefront of a shopper's mind. Consumers are savvier than ever when it comes to shopping, and they're always looking for greater engagement and interaction with their favorite brands, regardless of whether it's online or offline.

With global mobile transactions predicted to equal \$325 billion in 2015, according to New York-based Statista, retailers will be looking more to customer engagement tools that will not only attract consumers, but also provide the vital data to retain those consumers. The number of proximity mobile transactions in the United States is predicted to reach \$22.6 million in 2015, again per Statista, highlighting the growing presence of local in-store technology in retailers' sales strategies.

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These changes will take place in earnest in 2015, the year when mobile commerce will come of age. 🛒

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Big Data, integration of Bluetooth beacons, and increased use of personalized customer engagement tools through mobile devices.

We've seen a snippet of the change to come in 2015 — always connected consumers knowing what they want and believing they can get it immediately when they need it. It's now the retailers that are doing the catching up to make that a reality. Physical stores were caught unawares by the changing habits



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