

Questions Brand Leaders Must Ask Themselves

CUSTOMER

Are you viewing retailers as customers or as partners in delivering your intentional customer experience?

A sale is not a sale until the gear is in the customer hands, until then its marketplace impact and destination are under the control of your retailers and distributors. Place the customer, the end consumer, at the center of operations. **The customer is always right, a partner isn't.**

STANDARDS

What contracts, policies, and processes do have you in place to ensure internal and external accountability?

In this era of elevated reputation risk, random acts of sales not 'doing what you say you are going to do' will undermine credibility and integrity with partners and consumers. **Robust, executable standards are required guidance for effectively implementing your intentional Customer Experience.**

DIGITAL

Is revenue, gut feel and relationships driving decision-making or is a system of data, information and intelligence reporting?

With consumers living online and retailers striving to keep pace with expectations, proper technology selection and systems integration are crucial to survival. Pressure, hype and 'shiny objects' are the false drivers of more money and time lost. **As data is the new oil, coming of age digitally is merely table stakes.**

AMAZON

How senior is decision-making in applying uniform objective measures for sales authorization of Amazon marketplace sites and retailer URLs?

An intentional 'team' of Internet Authorized retailers will optimize online revenue, minimize pricing instability, support unauthorized seller suppression and deliver a consistent brand narrative. **YOU are accountable for where your gear ends up.**

DISTRIBUTION

Can retailers and distributors purchase any product and sell it in any channel?

It's no longer 'we need to be wherever the customer wants to buy' it's now 'we need to be where WE want the customer to buy'. **Execution is the new distribution; more revenue, more control, more engagement and reduced operational costs from less retailers.**

RELATIONSHIPS

Is becoming an 'authorized dealer' general admission with 'best buddies' shipping status untouchable? Is the juice worth the squeeze?

Direct to Consumer (DTC) brands are reshaping retail with business models built on demand creation and sell-through by executing an intentional, meaningful customer experience at every touch point. **There's a new method of valuing retailers and deploying resources based on their customer experience intentions and capabilities.**

COMMUNICATION

Is your consumer brand narrative and emotional connection consistent online and offline across retailers including your DTC efforts?

With retailers juggling hundreds of brands, handing information off through intermediaries believing it is being uniformly distributed, appropriately received, and organizationally digested is really no communication at all. **Communication must be unfiltered, targeted, frequent, consistent and direct from the 'mother ship' if it is to even begin delivering the intended impact and utilization.**

CULTURE

Are you ready to transition from an outdated culture formed by PO-based compensation, polarized organizational silos, analog business systems and fear of retailers?

Commoditization from loss of founder's passion, emotion of brand heritage and brand narrative by a culture riding on brand equity can be transformed. **Evangelizing an intentional, meaningful customer brand experience will cultivate a sustainable, long-term brand equity culture across the organization and partners.**