Serving customers around the clock

Consumers never switch off, which means retailers are expected to remain alert and ready to serve at all times. Here Richard Marshall explains how to meet consumer needs 24/7.

Ecommerce businesses have already tackled many of the challenges associated with round-the-clock service, but it's not a requirement exclusive to online shopping; many convenience stores open for long hours, as do retail and hospitality venues at transport points such as airports and motorway service stations.

These stores will find that although consumer demand fluctuates during opening times, they must deliver a consistent point of sale service for every encounter, and technical troubles can prove extremely costly – to sales and reputation.

Reliability is the bedrock of great customer experience - shoppers expect to make purchases on their own terms, and won't tolerate slow or unreliable POS technology.

Traditionally, many retailers have implemented a heavyweight IT infrastructure to keep them running 24/7, but these solutions aren't optimised for the growing number of POS devices being added to today's retail networks.

Rather than letting heavyweight systems restrict capacity for innovation, many retailers are turning to a cloud-based EPOS solution to keep their operations running smoothly at all times.

Moving over to the cloud removes many of the constraints of an on-site system, providing new levels of agility and response for retailers. For instance, new devices can be quickly connected to operational networks and draw down data from across the business – ideal for retailers wanting to revamp their EPOS solution or introduce mobile hardware.

Cloud-based solutions also significantly reduce technical downtime, as most problems can be diagnosed and fixed remotely. More importantly, updates can be applied automatically too, to improve the efficiency of customer-facing devices. This is particularly useful for remote locations such as motorway services, which can lose valuable trading time waiting for a field engineer.

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