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# Top 10 Tips to Optimise Mobile Commerce



If you've been involved with ecommerce over the last 15 years or so, you'll be acutely aware that things change very quickly. The pace of this change is ever more rapid. At the beginning of this century, retailers recognised a need to be involved in ecommerce, without knowing how significant it would become.

Very quickly, something that started out as a stand-alone channel for most retailers began outselling multiple brick-and-mortar stores. Ecommerce soon mushroomed to the point where we are today: it's at the heart of many retailers' multichannel strategy.

The ability to deploy ecommerce capability rapidly is becoming a key differentiator for many organisations. The way we deploy technology solutions merits serious thought and practice, and it's here that Salmon is changing the rules of engagement to help its clients stay ahead.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



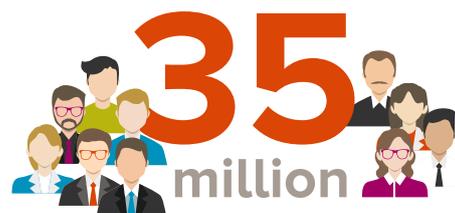
Sam Ambrose is a Senior Ecommerce Consultant for Salmon with over 17 years' experience in web technology. Sam has worked for iconic brands such as Halfords, British Airways, Best Buy and WHSmiths. She advises and assists in shaping B2C multichannel strategy and tactical initiatives for retailers, in order to help maximise the potential of their online and offline business. Sam has a healthy (ish) relationship with both her mobile phone and online shopping.



## IT'S OFFICIAL – WE'RE ADDICTED TO OUR MOBILE PHONES.

The average smartphone user checks their device a staggering 221 times a day<sup>1</sup>, and according to Ofcom<sup>2</sup>, we are a smartphone society now spending more time online via our phones than our laptops.

Today, we treat our phones as an extension of ourselves. The smartphone is our portable, all-seeing, all-doing device. It keeps us in touch with the world, our friends, and it allows us to carry out any task, anytime, anywhere. From an online retailing perspective, mobile commerce is as every day as popping to the corner shop once was.



Mobile commerce made up nearly 29%<sup>3</sup> of online sales last year in the UK, and 35 million people own a mobile phone. With these huge volumes, and such high demand, it seems surprising that retailers find it a challenge to get mobile shopping right for consumers.

As a comparison, there are 35 million<sup>4</sup> car owners in the UK. Can you imagine if your car suddenly only worked in certain parts of town, or each petrol station you used was different, and it took you valuable time to figure it out each time you used one?

<sup>1</sup>Tecmark survey of UK smartphone users 2014

<sup>2</sup>media.ofcom.org.uk/news/2015/cmr-uk-2015/

<sup>3</sup>internetretailing.net/2015/02/uk-m-commerce-spend-to-grow-by-77-8-to-14-95-billion-in-2015/

<sup>4</sup>gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/421337/vls-2014.pdf

It's a fact that conversion is lower on mobile than desktop.

According to Smart Insights<sup>5</sup>, in Q1-2015 traditional channels converted at 3.69%, versus mobile at 1.31%. This lower conversion rate is mainly down to usage, as mobile's role is different from desktop, with the former more heavily used for research and showrooming.

Developing the optimum mobile solution, particularly one that customers feel is as comfortable and safe as transacting on a desktop site, is most retailers' Holy Grail. But delivering this solution takes time and money, particularly for large retailers who are dealing with legacy systems built for stores and traditional distribution models.

At Salmon, we look at our clients' mobile commerce offerings on a daily basis, whether on a mobile phone, tablet or in a car. From this experience, we've compiled our best practice for ensuring a mobile site works for retailers and customers alike.

Getting mobile right is now critical. Drawing on proven strategies deployed for its leading brands, Salmon presents its top ten tips list to help retailers optimise for mobile.



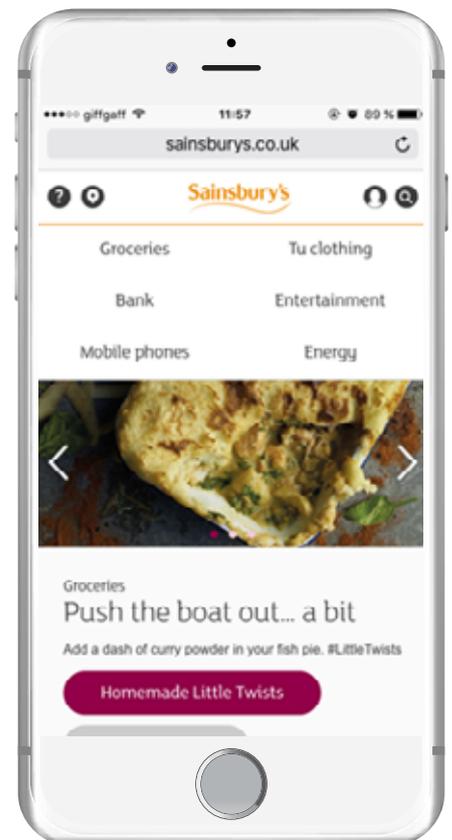
## HOW ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS INTERACTING WITH YOUR BRAND ON THEIR MOBILE DEVICES?

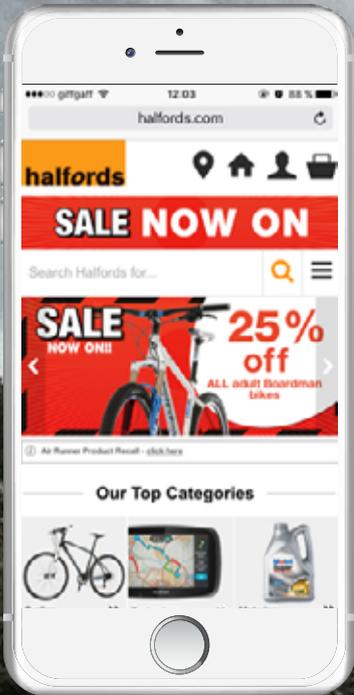
Discover how your customers are actually using your website

This is the most important question to address. Engage with your insight team to understand customer behaviour on mobile devices. It may not always be as straightforward as you think. Customers might be researching and browsing product information, using location-based services, or - most importantly - seeking quick access to repeated journeys.

Regardless, your data should highlight key journeys and any struggle points within them, so that you can respond accordingly.

Sainsbury's gets it right. It is clear about what customers want to do on its website, and it presents this information on the mobile homepage. The homepage on the desktop is full of content, but the mobile version of the same page is stripped back. Customers want to see offers and promotions, but they also want quick easy access to favourites, and that means reducing clutter and bandwidth strangle.





## RESPONSIVE OR ADAPTIVE?

### Decide whether to opt for responsive or adaptive

At Salmon, we often get asked whether to go with responsive or adaptive design. Really, it depends on the individual retailer and their current infrastructure.

If a retailer has a large, high investment enterprise platform, adaptive is probably going to be the right direction. The desktop website can be adapted to fit, and it allows more control over what customers see on each page.

If there is nothing in place already, and a retailer is starting from scratch, responsive is a good choice. Although there is less control over each page display, a responsive site is easier to design from the ground up, and easier to maintain in the long term.

Clients also ask which of the two is more commercially beneficial. In our view, it's not necessarily about what you have, but how you use it.

For example, Halfords started its mobile journey with a 'mobi' site, and has since moved onto an adaptive mobile website. During the weekend that the original mobile website went live, conversion doubled. Today, more than half of the traffic to its website is via a mobile device.

### RESPONSIVE?

It fluidly changes and responds to fit any screen or device size

### ADAPTIVE?

It changes to fit a predetermined set of screen and device sizes

Source: Techrepublic.com



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## MAKE IT LOOK GOOD

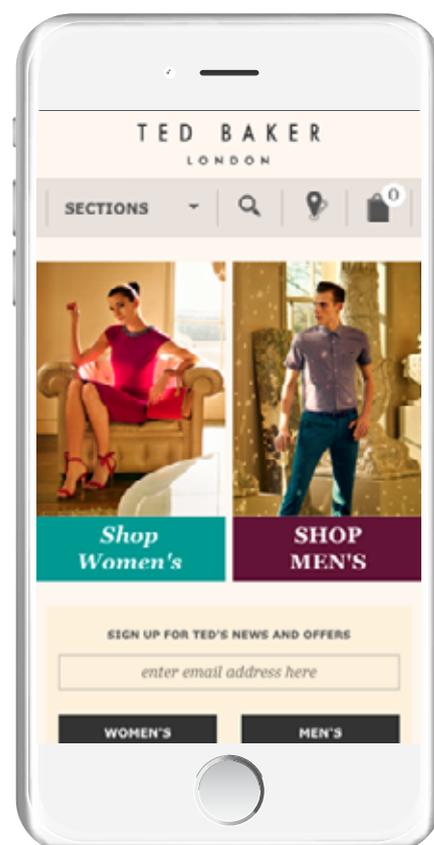
**But don't compromise the customer journey and experience**

Whether a mobile website is responsive or adaptive, according to Salmon's user experience experts, the main challenges when designing for small screens is keeping the design on-brand, unique and memorable while providing an extra layer of experience to the interface.

Front-end design needs to be simple, clean, intuitive and true to your brand. Most importantly, don't throw the kitchen sink at it. Keep the design as flat as possible and make those calls to action (CTAs) stand out, encapsulating key elements where you can.

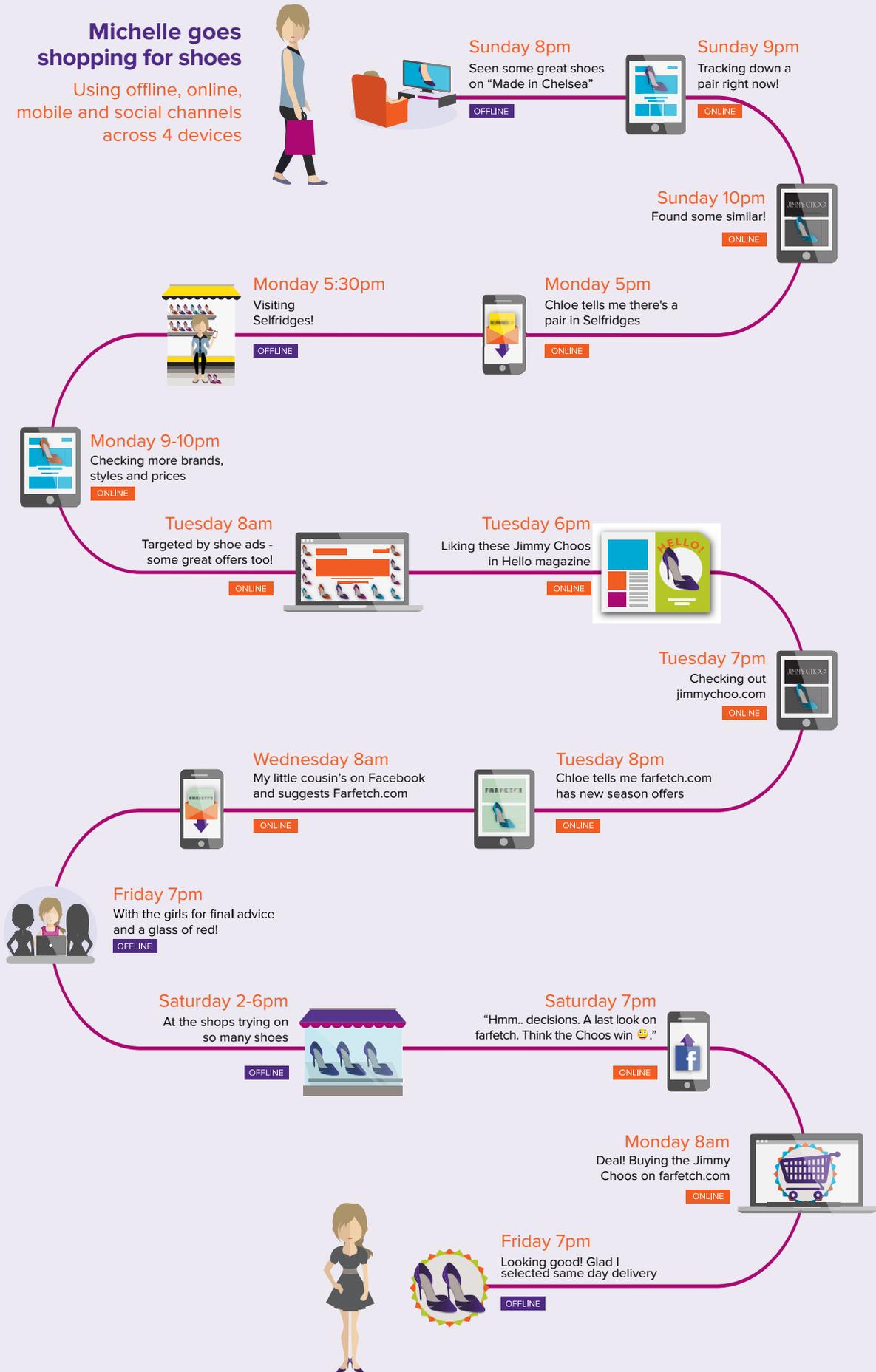
When looking at content, take a consistent approach to component designs, inspired and/or descriptive imagery, and video.

There are always going to be trends in design. Right now it's the use of subtle palettes and blurred backgrounds, both of which appeal to customers. But don't be overly distracted by following trends; your main aim is to ensure customers can access what they want, when they want to, through recognisable journeys.



# As a retailer could you support Michelle's journey across channels and devices?

**Michelle goes shopping for shoes**  
Using offline, online, mobile and social channels across 4 devices





## JOIN UP THE JOURNEYS

### Make your basket persistent - consistent and current across devices

This is basic stuff, but when it comes to customer journeys, it's a must.

According to eMarketer, 56% of people<sup>6</sup> use their basket to save products to buy later which translates into a missed opportunity for retailers without this capability. And there are few things more frustrating than spending many hours researching and adding products to your basket on your desktop, only to access the same account on your mobile device and seeing a 'basket empty' message. As customers and retailers looking at the market, we see it time and time again.

Furthermore, most retail websites are unable to save shopping cart contents beyond a few hours<sup>7</sup>.

Amazon has this issue nailed: customers can mark products one day with the aim of returning for them days later. The contents of a basket are identical on the desktop, mobile website and app. Every time one channel is updated, it's mirrored in real time on the other. This is not just about customer convenience; it's also a key factor in your retention strategy. Persistent baskets drive repeat visits and, in turn, brand loyalty. It's one of the secrets of Amazon's success.

## MAKE IT RELEVANT TO YOUR CUSTOMERS

### Use personalisation to build relationships

Offering an [online experience](#) personal to your customer is key. It not only encourages interaction and transaction, but it also builds a relationship which can also feed into your customer retention strategy.

That's not to say that all personalisation is right. Sometimes it can be unnecessarily irrelevant or invasive. It's all down to the execution; it must be used to meet your customers' needs, not fit your own agenda.

Getting the right balance can be tough because, in general, retailers rely purely on data to determine the products and offers that a customer wants to see. [Adding a human and personal touch](#) is challenging.

For example, in a physical store, a store colleague can ask a customer, "How can I help you today?" but imagine a scenario where the store greeted a customer as below:

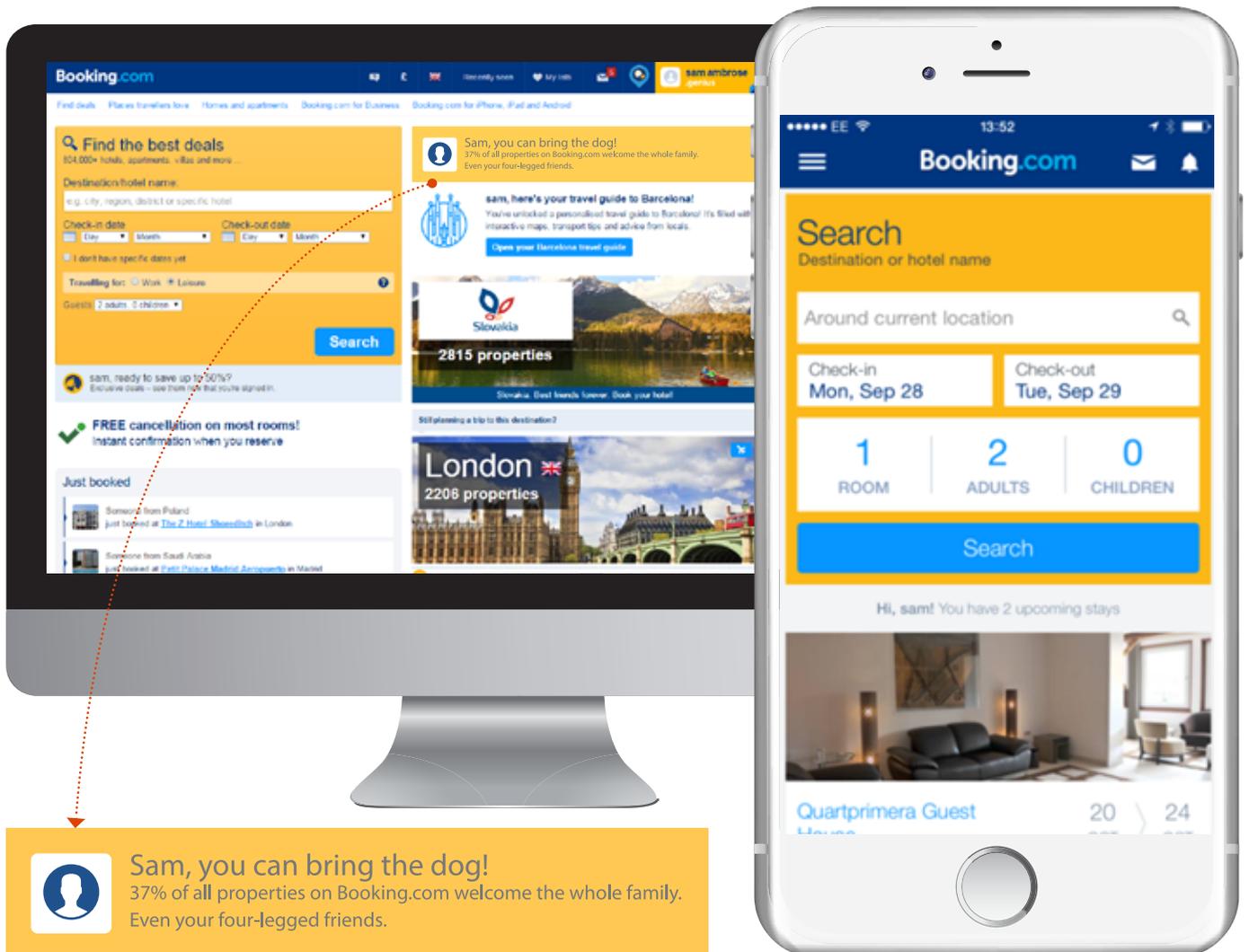


## So how do retailers know they're getting it right?

Take Booking.com as an example. It offers a consistent and personal experience across the desktop, mobile website and app.

The mobile website and the app are easy to use. They offer all the personalised and relevant information a customer needs, but in a stripped back way, whether the customer is carrying out a new search, reviewing upcoming trips, or looking at city guides.

On the desktop homepage, there's more real estate to play with, so Booking.com remembers specific searches carried out in the past. The example shown here is a dog-friendly accommodation search. It's not difficult to achieve from a technical point of view, and it's a nice touch. In turn, this meets that customer's needs. If they don't place a booking that day, then perhaps it will be enough to encourage them return to the website another time.



## EMBRACE WEARABLES, OR KEEP THEM AT ARM'S LENGTH?

### Take your strategic position on wearables

The strategic relevance of wearables applies to the device your customers are using, whether this is the content you show, or the service you offer.

You could argue that wearables are now where the mobile market was four years ago, with many early adopters in the health and fitness market. However, shipments of wearables are expected to grow from 9.7 million in 2013 to 200 million in 2019, according to IDC<sup>8</sup> - a figure that includes hearables ie. ear-worn devices that are set for mass adoption.

So the big question is this: how do you harness this technology for commercial gain?

For most large retailers, it's a strategic slow burner, and many are still watching and waiting. But if there's one thing every brick-and-mortar retailer should certainly do, it's to offer contactless payment services for customers using wearable devices.

This way, rather than trying to create in-house specialist apps for the devices, you are enabling the customer and their technology instead.

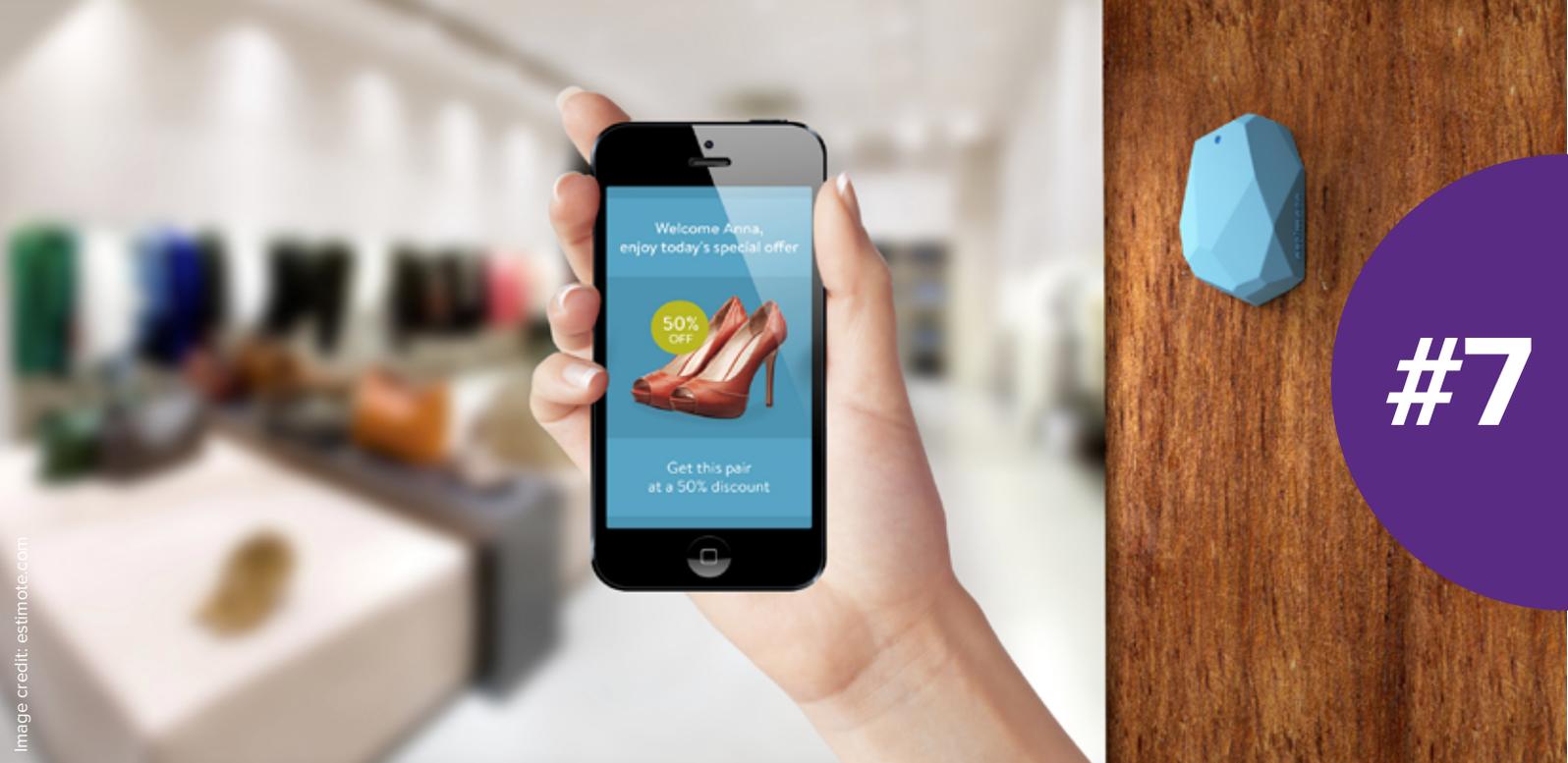
In 2015 a survey<sup>9</sup> carried out by Vista Retail Support showed the vast majority of shoppers (82%) view speed at the checkout as the main advantage of using wearable technology. Only half (49%) say it will improve their experience by allowing them to receive personalised offers when they are shopping.

A hefty 80% of 1,000 Apple Watch owners surveyed in the US and UK by research firm Wristly in 2015<sup>10</sup> have already used Apple Pay at least once.

<sup>8</sup>idc.com/getdoc.jsp?containerId=prUS40846515

<sup>9</sup>vistasupport.com/news/wearables\_the\_future\_of\_instore\_shopping

<sup>10</sup>macrumors.com/2015/08/18/apple-watch-users-embracing-apple-pay-wristly/



## LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

### Get it right when encroaching your users' space

It's critical to provide customers with content and offers relevant to where they are, while at the same time considering past shopping habits. It's important to achieve this without being intrusive or missing the appropriate opportunity. For example, retailers should avoid delivering an offer when the customer is walking out of the store, or providing content that verges on spam.

A key strategy for many multichannel retailers is to drive footfall to store (predominantly via Click & Collect), with a goal to increase attachment rate, i.e. the number of complementary items sold in conjunction with the primary item. This works well: between 60% to 75% of multichannel customers spend more instore when they are collecting their order<sup>11</sup>.

The use of Beacons takes this one step further. The retailer knows who a customer is, even before they have walked through the door. When they arrive, the retailer can send a welcome message to their phone or wrist, telling them where their collection point is and offering discounts on products that are relevant to the main purchase.

According to Internet Retailing (2015), shoppers like to receive smartphone alerts. It states that:

- Of the **67%** of respondents who'd received shopping related alerts on their smartphones in the last six months, **81%** said they read/opened them most of the time
- **4 out of 5** have consequently made a purchase at least once

## LISTEN AND IMPROVE

### Listen to your customers

Your customers will tell you what they think, either via their behaviour on your website, or their comments in the social stratosphere. Ignore the voice of the customer at your peril. You wouldn't ignore someone who calls head office or approaches a store colleague, so don't do it online either.

At Salmon, we take insight seriously, and we run a programme called Continuous Optimisation. This programme identifies the 'Why' as well as the 'What'.

Within the programme, we constantly evaluate website performance and customer experience, particularly in the mobile space. Using an integrated toolset, we analyse points of struggle, replay, monitor, develop and deploy. This programme has helped clients to successfully identify and improve areas that traditional analytics sometimes miss.

For example the DFS mobile site did not offer the facility to buy via interest free credit (IFC) as it was perceived that customers would not want to complete a credit agreement on their phone. However when the Salmon team analysed customer struggle on the payment page via Tealeaf we could see that customers would get to the payment section in the checkout and hesitate, then go to the search box and enter IFC to try and find it. This resulted in DFS introducing IFC into the mobile checkout - and a massive sales increase of 400% via this channel.

## Search is the most common starting point for mobile research



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## TARGET SEARCH

People are more likely to purchase via search than standard navigation

Aside from behavioural data, consider the nitty-gritty data from your website.

Make sure your search feature is accurate; don't make customers look for a needle in a haystack. This goes for both search engines and on-site search.

The infographic above from comScore shows that, although lower than desktop, nearly half of mobile retail research starts on a search engine. It's essential that your pages are mobile-friendly, ideally responsive, on the same domain, and that Google sees them that way.

At Salmon, when we look at heat-mapping tools with clients, the hottest spot on the page is often the search box. So it's critical to get the search results right.

According to eConsultancy, people are more likely to purchase via search as opposed to using standard navigation. Conversion rates through search are 50% higher than other routes, probably because customers are in late stage buying mode and trying to find something specific.

And even though it's not the sexiest part of the job, search results are all about the data. This often results in a mass housekeeping exercise. One or more members of the team understand the way customers are searching, and can manage product descriptions and facet information. They can apply weighting tools to facilitate search results, which is particularly important on a small device where time and space are limited.



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## REASSURE CUSTOMERS

### Share value and act transparently to build trust

As much as retailers want to harness valuable customer data to understand customer behaviour, recent research has revealed that consumers believe retail is the least trusted sector when it comes to using personal data. Research shows 30% believe that retail is guilty of using data without consent<sup>12</sup>.

However, there is some good news. Over half of consumers are willing to share their information with brands, as long as it benefits them personally, according to Aimia<sup>13</sup> in 2015.

Privacy is a key challenge in marketing, and increased personalisation and cross-device targeting means brands must be transparent about data collection. In the next few years, we will also see new EU data protection laws that will introduce a legal 'right to be forgotten'. It's important that your customers know they can trust you to respect their privacy and comply with the law, while also delivering the personalised experience that they enjoy.

Your business must clearly tell customers what data it collects, how that data is being used, and how it will be stored and secured. Make sure customers know that they can opt in or out at any time, and be sure to invest in information security and data quality to give consumers complete confidence that their data is valued.

Get this right, and your customers will trust and engage.

## ABOUT SALMON

Salmon is a global digital commerce consultancy – the largest in WPP’s network of companies. We define and deliver market-changing solutions and customer journeys for the world’s leading brands.

Established in 1989, with operations in London, New York, Melbourne and Beijing, Salmon clients include Argos, Audi UK, DFS, Halfords, Lloyds Pharmacy, Premier Farnell, Sainsbury’s and Selfridges.

## HOW CAN SALMON HELP?

Salmon helps businesses to do mobile right. We create device-optimised solutions that enable brands to be present whenever, wherever, and with direct access to customers.

Our mobile strategies and solutions support today’s shopper journeys, delivering outstanding seamless experiences across devices and channels, improving average order values, conversion rates, user experiences, loyalty and revenues.

Contact Salmon today to discuss how we can support you.

**For more information,  
email: [info@salmon.com](mailto:info@salmon.com)  
or visit: [www.salmon.com](http://www.salmon.com)**



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