

A photograph of two women in a clothing store. The woman on the left has long dark hair and is wearing a light pink blazer over a matching top and light blue jeans. She is smiling and looking towards the other woman. The woman on the right has blonde hair, wears glasses, a light grey blazer over a white shirt, and dark blue jeans. She is holding a dark blue denim jacket and looking at the first woman. In the background, there is a wooden shelving unit with various items, a pair of white high-heeled shoes on the floor, and a brown paper shopping bag.

MOOD:MEDIA

# 7 ELEMENTS OF A WINNING IN-STORE RETAIL EXPERIENCE

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Numerous research studies, including [Mood's own studies](#), show that consumers are excited to return to stores in a post-covid-crisis world. However, after almost two years of romanticizing what they most loved about physical retail, expectations of the shopping experience are higher than ever. This actually serves as a great opportunity to dial up what shoppers most love. At the same time, because of the recent crisis consumers across all ages and all demographics have become much more comfortable with technology and its role in shopping. This also provides an opportunity for retailers to marry the best of digital shopping with the best of physical shopping to create a truly elevated Customer Experience.

But what about when they get into the store? What do customers see, hear and smell that helps them feel at ease about shopping in-store again? Furthermore, how are those sensory elements engaging customers in ways that matter to them? It's no use having a solid marketing strategy to drive footfall if then your in-store Customer Experience doesn't reflect the same efforts. Now more than ever it's important to emotionally connect with your customers and create greater loyalty, in turn attracting more customers in store (and to return again and again) as well as boosting sales.

So what constitutes a winning in-store Retail Experience? In this article, you'll learn the seven elements that brands should look to implement or develop within their stores to ensure a greater emotional connection and therefore a successful Retail Experience in the eyes of the customer.

## #1 IMMERSIVE TECHNOLOGY

Blurring the lines between online and offline is becoming increasingly important for brands. Artfully blending in-store and digital experiences allows retailers to present a truly cohesive and instantly recognizable brand experience for consumers. By focusing on immersive retail experiences that utilise technology, brands are able to provide customers with fun, unique and in-person experiences that elevate shopping to new heights.

Integrating a visionary digital strategy aimed at delivering incredible experiences is a fundamental way to create a winning in-store Retail Experience. From touchscreens that can pull up sign-in screens for customers to search their purchase history and wish list or enable them to browse product ranges and engage with your content with a simple touch, to virtual sampling stations that allow customers to virtually try before they buy, there are many solutions suited to your store and budget.

Other solutions such as Lift & Learn help take customer engagement to the next level, quite literally putting the shopping experience into their own hands. Want to showcase your new footwear range in the most immersive way possible? Featuring in-store digital screens that display specific promotional content whenever the associated product is lifted from a shelf, Lift & Learn technology is a great way to create a unique and memorable Customer Experience within your store.

## #2 EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE

It may seem obvious, but it's surprising how easy it is to let this one slip for that very reason. As online sales soared during the world's many lockdowns, so did customers' frustrations of struggling to reach an actual human being regarding issues with products and services. Now more than ever, shoppers are craving the simplicity of human interaction and having their queries solved and questions answered face-to-face. Don't underestimate the power of meaningful human connections and shared experiences. Your store should be providing exceptional customer service that can't be replicated online, with staff who are ready to listen, interact and provide helpful information.

## #3 A SAFE YET WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

As customers find their way back to your store this year, it's important that you are providing a safe environment for them, but one that isn't overly sterile. Demonstrate your commitment to their safety with the appropriate solutions. And it doesn't have to be complicated. Our recent [2021 Shopper Sentiments Study](#) revealed that 38% of consumers globally would like stores to continue offering hand sanitizers at entrances. This simple action provides an immediate signal to shoppers that you value their health and safety. Similarly, overhead messaging can be a great way of communicating safety instructions and in-store regulations directly to your customers in a friendly and calming manner.

## #4 BRANDED MUSIC

Connecting with your customers on an emotional level can be the difference between a good in-store Retail Experience and a great one. Music is one of the simplest ways to do this, helping you to easily create a memorable experience for your customers that will keep them coming back to your store time and time again. A **Mood study** showed that music is a top factor in lifting one's mood in-store, with 85% of consumers saying music has a positive impact on their experience. Perhaps you're a fashion retailer looking for an upbeat, on-trend playlist that reflects your clothes offering. A **qualified retail music designer** can work with you to define and make your ideal audio branding strategy a reality. Branded music with a positive, yet empathetic energy that meets customers where they are today is a key driving force in not only forging an unforgettable experience, but also in authenticating your store as a welcoming place during these uncertain times.

Consider bringing life to your store and encourage customer engagement on a more personal level by turning your music into a social listening experience. Find a professional **music platform** which allows you to invite your customers to influence your music and let them select the songs they most want to hear whilst they shop.

## #5 GREAT WORK CULTURE

It's a fact: engaged staff are much more productive and in turn, provide a better service. A **Smarp** study demonstrated that engaged employees outperform their peers that are not engaged. It found that overall, companies with high employee engagement are 21% more profitable. Why not incorporate digital screens into your staffroom areas to inspire employee engagement? Back of House content can also include things like tips & tricks, details about active store promotions, celebrations of your brand's community involvements, reminders about upcoming events, etc. It's a much easier, more manageable and more sophisticated way of communicating with team members vs. an old-school bulletin board of outdated papers.

## #6 BUILD A COMMUNITY

These days, customers are expecting an experience beyond the transactional. So aside from stellar customer service, engaging touchpoints and a killer soundtrack, what else could you offer them? Figure out how you can use your shop to build communities. Could you hold workshops or events? Are there spaces or elements in your store that would encourage people to meet and get together, where they can not only shop but spontaneously socialize? Furthermore, do you have somewhere fit for content creation? Aesthetically pleasing areas within stores, particularly in the fashion and beauty sector, are on the rise as more and more brands tap into millennial culture, encouraging as much social media activity and engagement as possible.

## #7 MAKE SAYING "YES" TO YOUR PRODUCT EASY

Today's consumer is plagued by choices and in turn, seeks shortcuts to decision making. They're looking to make more informed decisions and seek more guidance. This essentially translates into anything in-store that can provide specific staff recommendations or can highlight top-rated options, suggest the best pairings, etc. Whatever your product or in-store offering looks like, digital signage, digital shelving and even overhead messaging can help shoppers get to "yes" faster and much more efficiently.

Memories of what we feel, hear, see, smell, and touch, have the potential to last a lifetime, and the unique experiences and exceptional services you provide are critical to ensure your store is up there with being remembered fondly. By exceeding customer expectations you drive emotional reactions and a winning in-store Retail Experience that will leave customers feeling connected, captivated and keen for more.

## CONNECT WITH US

Contact us today to begin your journey towards enhanced visual solutions in your store.

