

# Ones to watch

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# Tomorrow's world today

What technologies should you be looking at and how can you implement them as quickly as technology-savvy shoppers demand? **Paul Skeldon** finds that mobile holds the key

ECOMMERCE IS A fast-moving, tech-led business, so there's no escaping the twin drivers of having to do things better and meeting growing customer experience demands. So what technology is on the cusp of reshaping internet retailing over the next couple of years?

## The store is far from dead – it's just changed

Contrary to popular belief, shoppers love going into shops. What's different these days is that they're now shameless about showrooming and that many pureplay online retailers are starting to join the dots.

New research from Colliers International shows that by 2021, the rate of ecommerce sales growth is expected to decline from the current level of around 11% to 7%. In anticipation of this, online retailers are increasingly using physical stores to bolster their brands

One example of this migration is the French fashion brand, Sézane, which had its beginnings on eBay before moving to a branded online platform. Having opened stores in Paris and New York, the brand's creator, Morgane Sézalory, is now exploring the London market with a pop-up store in South Molton Street.

## Voice takes control

BMW and Mini drivers will have the ability to shop from their cars from next year, when Amazon's Alexa is integrated into the cars. This move to allow drivers to ask for directions, order a Just Eat takeaway or add to their Amazon shopping list shows how we are now one step away from voice being the main method of interaction with online retailers. More than 11m UK residents have an Amazon Alexa. Alongside Google Home and the launch of Apple HomePod it's possible that a majority could soon be talking to the internet.

This is going to have serious implications for retailers. "Ensuring your website and apps recognise voice-enabled searches is a small but important piece of the puzzle," says Lorna Crowley, Head of Marketing at Engage Hub. "Implementing natural language understanding to deliver a seamless customer experience across multiple devices will be the difficult part."

Tesco has already announced that it will work with Google Home, while Amazon is hoping that Alexa will help drive use of its grocery delivery service. But voice control is likely to impact every part of retail and shoppers seem more than ready. Some 61% of UK consumers told a survey by Omnico that they want to see technology such as voice activation, VR and AR in regular use by 2020.

## VR and AR a new reality

When asked, 56% of shoppers said they believe VR could help them buy anything from cars to clothing and holidays, while 29% believe it will be useful to them when buying clothes and 24% for buying kitchens.

Amazon has already added AR to its iOS app, allowing users to see items placed within their home. IKEA has done something similar, while Trinity Leeds Shopping Centre has added a game to increase VR awareness.

According to research by DigitalBridge, many consumers want this technology now, not in a year. David Levine, CEO of DigitalBridge, says, "Although AR hasn't caught the public's attention as much as VR due to the latter's popularity in gaming and leisure, Apple's focus on this immersive technology and its forthcoming battle with Google (and others) has really turned the focus on its head. AR is finally having its first mainstream moment."

## Payments: all about change

Cards, cash and change are set to become obsolete. As the iPhone X makes mobile payments even easier with Face ID, MoneySuperMarket reveals that 23% of Generation Z think that physical cashcards will become obsolete, compared to just 6% of over 55s. The report also notes that contactless payments have doubled since last year and that 75% of people are withdrawing less cash today than they did 12 months ago, possibly showing we're all less attached to the physical representation of money.

The implementation in January 2018 of the European Payment Services Directive 2 (PSD2) is likely to hasten this move. It will make digital payments easier – even allowing for car parking, travel and tickets to be charged to a mobile phone bills. You must be ready for this.

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## Ten issues to consider

**1** **MOBILE IN STORE:** Mobile is going to play a key role in all areas of retail development in the coming years. Since shoppers still want to go into stores – increasingly to showroom – embrace this. Make in-store easy for mobile use, with good WiFi, clear labelling and great click-and-collect.

**2** **USE MOBILE YOURSELF:** Arm your own store agents with mobile devices. This way, they can be more helpful to shoppers and can even remove the need to queue.

**3** **THINK ABOUT HOW VOICE FITS:** While shoppers are keen to use voice control, it may mean restructuring how your menus, apps and even your business processes work. Give it some real thought and seek expert help.

**4** **USE VOICE CONTROL:** The best way to understand how to make voice control work as a retail tool is to use it. Get some existing devices fitted at home and work to see which interactions work and which ones don't.

**5** **ARE YOU VR OR AR?:** Some shoppers prefer the more immersive virtual reality experience exemplified by Apple but for others – and for some retail types – augmented reality is better. Look at what might work well for you.

**6** **OR ARE YOU MR?:** Mixed reality offers a combination of both AR and VR, depending on the device being used and the type of experience the shopper is after.

**7** **LESS PAINFUL PAYMENTS:** While online payments are better than they were, they are still the biggest hurdle to conversion and a staggering number of retailers still don't get that they need to be smooth. Look at how Apple Pay, PayPal and all the other payment tools out there can help you.

**8** **REMOVE PAYMENTS ALTOGETHER:** Can you get rid of payments altogether? Uber does it. PayPal sort of feels a bit like you have, as does Apple Pay. Look at how to build payments into other aspects of the shopping process online.

**9** **APPLY ONLINE PAYMENTS IN-STORE:** Why queue up and pay in-store? Since shoppers are starting to demand a hybrid of the in-store and online experience, why not look at how to add more pain-free ways to pay?

**10** **USE AI TO MANAGE YOUR DATA WELL:** Personalisation and increased digitisation mean that you are going to be awash with data. Find out how to analyse it to your advantage and also what uses are GDPR compliant. AI and machine learning tools can help do both.

### Personalisation, Data and GDPR are imperative

With 69% of consumers wanting an individualised experience and two-thirds expecting it, only 40% of brands actually offer one today. That's the finding of *Me, Myself & I: The Individualisation Imperative*, a new study by Cloud IQ that identifies customer experience pain-points and attitudes to data sharing along with how brands are currently faring in the UK, US and Australia.

But modern consumers are presenting brand marketers with a conundrum. 64% recognise the value of their personal data as currency in exchange for a more individualised experience. However, not everyone feels the same level of comfort with the idea of this exchange, with 26% being "reluctant" compared to another one-fifth being "enthusiastic" about brands using personal data to create the best possible online experience.

With the introduction of Europe's General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) in May 2018, this

problem is going to get even more knotty for your marketing department. On the one hand, you need data to personalise things. But consumers are wary and if your business or brand gets it wrong, GDPR could invoke company-destroying multi-million pound fines!

This really is one subject that you need to watch!

### In summary

The future of retail is here today – certainly in the minds of consumers anyway. This future is a mixture of new ways of doing things online and in-store. Technology, largely delivered by mobile, holds the key to all of it and this is where your investment and interest should be focused. That's not just on opening up mobile as a channel to market but also as the tool that delivers everything your customers expect.

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# THE NEW POWER COUPLE

## Content and Commerce take centre stage.

Sitecore is the global leader in customer experience software that enables context marketing. The Sitecore® Experience Platform™ manages content, supplies contextual intelligence, automates communications, and enables personalized commerce at scale so marketers can deliver personalized experiences that delight audiences, build loyalty, and drive revenue.



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# Omnichannel is getting personal

**Wanda Cadigan**, Global VP Commerce, Sitecore tells us how customers will demand service tailored to them and how this will change retail

WHEN HENRY FORD built the Model T, he inadvertently set in motion a series of events leading to where we are today in the customer equation. One of those was how businesses approached personalisation, as he famously quipped, “You can have (the Model T) in any colour... as long as it’s black.”

Fast forward a century (and a bit) and you can see how this has come full circle. Despite being in an era where Amazon has furthered the need for retailers to provide accessible, competitively priced products, it’s no longer enough to offer just a product, regardless of whether that’s for the cheapest price with the best features. Indeed, digging into the recent Whole Foods acquisition demonstrates the real value of the deal is in all of the customer data, not just about acquiring hundreds of stores and affluent customers.

We’ve reached a tipping point where customers want helpful information to go alongside what they’re about to purchase, or continue to use. They want this any time, any place and with minimal friction. This is where the opportunity lies for retailers that get personalisation right.

Consumers expect your interaction to acknowledge their current needs and history with your brand, to such an extent that they’re willing to part with personal data in order to increase this experiences. In a recent study Sitecore conducted with Vanson Bourne, 45% of consumers are willing to provide data in order for brands to personalise their experience. In short, they’re giving you permission to extend your offerings into their lifestyle...but only if you get it right. Sloppy, impersonal marketing is a recipe for failure.

Which is why content, and now context plays such a key role in consumers during the brand experience – it’s freely available to the customer throughout the entire retail experience, whether they are engaging online and offline.

Consumers want personalisation but retailers struggle to make the connection – it’s a breakdown in the customer equation. Why can’t they do it? Broadly speaking it falls into three categories: Technology, people and process.

If you start with technology, it often centres around siloed systems and data flow. For all of the talk of digital transformation, and the investment organisations are making towards this, for many, connecting data silos should be one of the key areas to look at. Having a disjointed, siloed database – for example, information captured when a consumer visits a website, that doesn’t talk to the email database, resulting in the customer receiving less relevant, less personalised content – is a recipe for failure.

Supporting this is the overall trepidation around data and the maturity levels of some organisations. Often, retailers know they need to do this but don’t know how to go about it. Recruiting the individuals that can make sense of these data sets using the tools currently available will help the

organisation become a data-driven organisation rather than product-driven one.

Finally, processes within the organisation itself needs to be reviewed. Customer data, personalisation and the customer experience have become so integral to the success of the business that making the most of the window of opportunity you have is key to a successful organisation.

Which is where Sitecore comes in. We help retailers across the world make the most of every opportunity they have by automating engagement plans that link content and commerce together. For example, if a prospective customer has an item in their online basket for 24 hours, an email alert is triggered, notifying the customer and sending them an incentive to complete the purchase of that item.

We’re working with business to align technology, data and processes so they avoid using a disconnected jumble of marketing tools, which can result in a disjointed experience. Companies which focus solely on the transaction are failing while companies that use data to create relevant customer experiences are winning customers for life.

## Transactional vs integral

Even those forward-thinking retailers are fast realising that the shopping cart isn’t the end state, but the middle part of the journey. It’s no longer acceptable to draw customers into a beautifully designed brand website, only to abandon them post-transaction with no real intent to deepen the relationship.

Engagement in the post as well as pre-purchase state has now become an essential part of the sales cycle, that goes beyond product in order to retain customers. Rather, it’s how you communicate with your customers before and after the transaction that drives brand loyalty and customer retention.

Fundamentally, marketers and digital leaders can only effectively manage the customer experience when they’re marketing in the context of how customers have interacted with their brand. How you communicate with your customers before and after the transaction could ultimately decide the level of brand loyalty and customer retention you can achieve.

## About Sitecore

Sitecore is the global leader in experience management software that enables context marketing. The Sitecore® Experience Platform™ manages content, supplies contextual intelligence, automates communications and enables personalised commerce, at scale. It empowers marketers to deliver content in context, across every channel, in real-time, before, during and after a sale.

[uk.linkedin.com/in/wandacadigan](https://uk.linkedin.com/in/wandacadigan)

## ACI WORLDWIDE



55-57 Clarendon Road  
Watford, Herts WD17 1FQ  
Telephone: +44 (0) 1923 816393  
Email: [contact@aciworldwide.com](mailto:contact@aciworldwide.com)  
[www.aciworldwide.com](http://www.aciworldwide.com)

ACI makes fast, simple and secure payments possible around the world by connecting more ways to pay with more payment capabilities than any other provider. The company powers electronic payments for more than 5,100 organisations, who rely on ACI to execute \$14tn each day in payments and securities. Through software solutions delivered on customer premises and through ACI's private cloud, we provide real-time, immediate payments capabilities and enable the industry's most comprehensive omnichannel payments experience.

### Customers:

**Aegean Airlines**  
**Amadeus**  
**Crew Clothing**  
**EE**  
**John Lewis**  
**Tesco Mobile**

## AMPERSAND

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Blackfriars House, Parsonage  
Manchester M3 2JA  
Telephone: +44 (0) 161 236 5504  
Email: [contact@amp.co](mailto:contact@amp.co)  
[www.amp.co](http://www.amp.co)

Ampersand is an award-winning agency that helps retailers create better ecommerce experiences. Ampersand architects lasting multichannel retail systems and builds ecommerce websites that drive sales across channels. Ampersand values customer collaboration and works with high-growth retailers to help increase conversion and drive efficiency through the strategic use of technology. Through agile delivery and accelerated builds, Ampersand can deliver flexible ecommerce systems quickly at a fixed fee. Ampersand's primary ecommerce technology suite includes Magento (ecommerce platform), Fredhopper (merchandising), Akeneo (PIM) and snow.io (IPaaS).

### Customers:

**Bensons for Beds**  
**The Book People**  
**Harveys**  
**Harvey Nichols**  
**Hillarys (Web Blinds)**  
**Interflora**  
**Moda in Pelle**  
**Regatta Outdoor Clothing**

### Partners:

**Akeneo**  
**Fredhopper**  
**Magento**  
**Snow.io**

## BOUNCEX



Liberty House, 222 Regent Street  
London W1B 5TR  
Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7297 2551  
Email: [enterprise@bouncex.com](mailto:enterprise@bouncex.com)  
[www.bounceexchange.co.uk](http://www.bounceexchange.co.uk)

BounceX's People-Based Marketing (PBM) Cloud is the first new channel with scale in 10 years. Our technology powers thousands of digital properties, spanning a variety of industries. For the first time in years, marketers have a meaningful revenue channel outside of Google, Facebook and email. With the combined use of our identification engine and our PBM channels, ecommerce marketers can now activate users in the middle of the funnel and convert unidentified high-intent prospects into buyers generating an incremental 5%-10% of digital revenue. We have offices in NYC, San Francisco, and London. We are trusted by global enterprises such as Uniqlo, Samsonite and Forever 21.

### Customers:

**Clarks**  
**Forever 21**  
**Henri Bendel**  
**Hugo Boss**  
**Kate Spade**  
**Quiksilver**  
**Samsonite**  
**Uniqlo**

### Partners:

**Bronto**  
**Oracle Marketing Cloud**  
**Return Path**  
**Salesforce**  
**Marketing Cloud**

## CML



Vulcan Way  
Magna Park  
Lutterworth LE17 4XR  
Telephone: +44 (0) 1455 200700  
Email: [mail@cmlplc.com](mailto:mail@cmlplc.com)  
[www.cmlplc.com](http://www.cmlplc.com)

CML has more than 25 years of experience with global fashion retailers, providing exceptional fulfilment capabilities for ecommerce, value added services (VAS), store pick, pack and despatch. We offer a genuine end-to-end logistics service that is supported by 500,000 sq ft of flexible retail warehousing and a complete returns process management solution.

### Customers:

**Bjorn Borg**  
**Head**  
**Marcus Lupfer**  
**M&S**  
**Meller Group**  
**Mih Jeans**  
**Office Depot**  
**Theory**

### Partners:

**Highjump WMS**

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**EMARSYS UK LTD**

Focus Point, 1st Floor  
Regent Quarter, 21 Caledonian Road  
London N1 9DX  
United Kingdom  
Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7388 0888  
Email: [uk@emarsys.com](mailto:uk@emarsys.com)  
[www.emarsys.com](http://www.emarsys.com)

Emarsys is the largest independent marketing platform company in the world. As the first marketing cloud for retail and ecommerce, Emarsys has been helping more than 2,000 brands in over 140 countries deliver one-to-one interactions with consumers across all channels, building loyalty, enriching the customer journey and increasing revenues. Fuelled by machine learning and data science, Emarsys' cloud-based platform enables companies to scale marketing decisions and actions far beyond human capabilities.

## Customers:

**We work with more than 30 UK Top 500 brands**

## Partners:

**Astound Commerce  
Kickdynamic  
Magento  
Optilyz  
Return Path  
Salesforce Commerce Cloud  
SAP Hybris  
Shopify Plus**

**THE FILTER**

Guild Hall, High Street  
Bath BA1 5EB  
Telephone: +44 (0) 1225 588001  
Email: [sales@thefilter.com](mailto:sales@thefilter.com)  
[www.thefilter.com](http://www.thefilter.com)

Our mission is to help you retain and delight your customers; increase conversion and drive customer lifetime value. Having established ourselves as a market leader in the media and TV-on-demand sector, powering the personalisation and recommendations for platforms including BTTV and UKTV, we are now bringing that expertise to the retail sector. A cost-effective, customisable, merchandising platform for ecommerce, we help you present the right products, and content, to your customers, at the right time, giving them a truly personalised experience. Working with brands including Liberty of London and Menkind, we are able to deliver return on investment for all retail operations.

## Customers:

**BT  
Liberty of London  
Menkind**

## Partners:

**Greenlight  
Tryzens  
Vaimo**

**IADVIZE**

Floor 6  
2 Kingdom Street  
London W2 6BD  
Telephone: +44 (0) 20 3445 0904  
Email: [contact-uk@iadvize.com](mailto:contact-uk@iadvize.com)  
[www.iadvize.com](http://www.iadvize.com)

iAdvize is a conversational marketing platform which generates a turnover of more than €1bn each year for more than 600 businesses in 60 countries. With iAdvize, businesses can predict and engage contact opportunities in real-time with their customers and prospects. They are connected via messaging, with experts available 24/7.

## Customers:

**Air France  
BMW  
Christian Dior  
Europcar  
House of Fraser  
Lacoste  
Matches Fashion  
TUI**

## Partners:

**Armatis LC  
Atos  
Buw Digital  
Havas Media  
Ignition One  
Lithium  
Prosodie CapGemini  
The Links**

**KLARNA**

**Smooth payments.**

7th Floor, 33 Cavendish Square,  
London W1G 0PW  
Telephone: +44 (0) 808 189 3444  
Email: [sales@klarna.co.uk](mailto:sales@klarna.co.uk)  
[www.klarna.com](http://www.klarna.com)

Klarna was founded in 2005 in Stockholm with the aim of making it easier for people to shop online. In the last 12 years, technology has evolved, transforming the world around us, yet our mission remains as relevant as ever –to make paying as simple, safe and smooth as possible. Klarna is now one of Europe's largest banks and is providing payment solutions for 60m consumers across 70,000 merchants in 18 countries. Klarna offers direct payments, pay after delivery options and instalment plans with a smooth one-click purchase experience that lets consumers pay when and how they prefer to. Klarna is backed by investors such as Sequoia Capital, Bestseller, Permira, Visa and Atomico.

## Customers:

**Arcadia Group  
ASOS  
Finery London  
HYPE  
JD Sports  
Maplin  
Schuh**

## Partners:

**Adyen  
Magento  
Demandware  
Hybris  
Shopify  
Stripe  
Woocommerce  
Worldpay**

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**LOGISTEX**

2700 Kettering Parkway  
Kettering  
Northamptonshire NN15 6XR  
Telephone: +44 (0) 1536 480600  
Email: enquiries@logistex.com  
www.logistex.com

Logistex provide automated materials handling and software (WMS) solutions for warehousing operations. We are specialists in storage and retrieval, order forwarding, picking and sortation systems. As an independent company with no manufacturing ties, we integrate products from across the industry without compromise. Logistex's LWS Reflex Warehouse Management System is a flexible, scalable solution for all warehouse operations from simple manual to complex automation. It is licensed by site with unlimited users, so there's no financial penalty for growth.

## Customers:

Arco  
B&Q  
Dr Martens  
Littlewoods  
Quiz Clothing  
RS Components  
Superdrug  
WHSmith

## Partners:

Automha  
Van Riet

**LOOP54****LOOP54**

Runway East, 10 Finsbury Square  
London EC2A 1AF  
Telephone: +44 (0) 20 8133 9848  
Email: info@loop54.com  
www.loop54.com

Loop54, the leading on-site search software used by nearly 200 retailers across the Nordics to increase revenue from search, is now serving clients in the UK. Powered by advanced machine learning, Loop54 offers unparalleled flexibility, personalisation and automation. Office Depot Sweden reported a 12% increase in online revenue, Nordic fashion retailer, Bubbleroom, increased mobile revenue by 97% and consumer electronics retailer, Teknikmagasinet, increased site-search conversion rates by 30%. Loop54 can be implemented within days via a REST API. Once live, the search engine will eliminate all manual work by automatically sorting search and category listings in real-time.

## Customers:

Ählens  
Coop  
Harmony Store  
Maplin Electronics  
Office Depot  
Svenskt Tenn  
Teknikmagasinet  
XXL

## Partners:

Intershop  
Magento

**PARASPAR**

Equity House  
128-136 High Street  
Edgware HA8 7EL  
Telephone: +44 (0) 20 8238 5860  
Email: info@paraspar.co.uk  
www.paraspar.co.uk

Paraspar is a trusted ecommerce solutions provider. We provide market-leading on-site search, autocomplete, visual and self-learning merchandising automation with content integration.

Our clients have direct access to a team of experts that brings together skills in online retail strategy, project management, UX design, search merchandising, systems integration, online marketing and application management. We help clients attract, engage and convert customers across online, mobile and in-store channels. Contact us to explore your requirements.

## Customers:

7Liverpool  
Crew clothing  
Dune London  
Foot Asylum  
Harvie & Hudson  
Lombok

## Partners:

Amplience  
Attenda  
Nosto  
Postcode Anywhere  
Rackspace  
Sage Pay

**PEOPLEVOX****PEOPLEVOX**

1 Fore Street, Moorgate  
London EC2Y 5EJ  
Telephone: +44 (0) 20 3824 1395  
Email: sales@peoplevox.co.uk  
Website: www.peoplevox.com

Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) provider Peoplevox knows warehousing inside and out. With over 100 clients in 24 countries, its class-leading warehouse management system (WMS) is one of the ecommerce industry's most trusted and reliable tools. Peoplevox gives pureplay and multichannel retailers full control over their warehousing processes, decreasing costs, increasing profitability and improving customer satisfaction. Its software is purpose-designed to meet the unique demands of each business. Working on any Android-enabled device, the solution is flexible, fast and affordable. It's also truly scalable and easily integrated.

## Customers:

Barbour  
Intersport  
JD Sports  
Mothercare  
Oliver Bonas  
The Range  
Surfdome  
TJ Hughes

## Partners:

ChannelAdvisor  
Magento  
MetaPack  
NetSuite  
Shopify Plus  
Volo Commerce

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**PFS****P F S**

4th Floor, 25 Christopher Street  
London EC2A 2BS  
Telephone: +44 (0) 20 3475 4000  
Email: [marketing-europe@pfsweb.com](mailto:marketing-europe@pfsweb.com)  
[www.pfsweb.com](http://www.pfsweb.com)

PFS is a global commerce service provider of solutions including digital strategy consulting, digital agency and marketing services, technology development services, business process outsourcing services and a complete omnichannel technology ecosystem. The company seeks to optimise every customer experience and enhance the traditional and online business channels of clients across numerous industries. PFS is solution agnostic, with strong and longstanding partnerships with the major enterprise commerce platform providers, which results in the best technologies being utilised for each implementation. PFS has offices across three continents in North America, Europe and Asia.

## Customers:

**ASICS**  
**Anastasia Beverly Hills**  
**Barbour**  
**Gore**  
**The Entertainer**  
**L'Oréal**  
**Pandora**

## Partners:

**SalesForce Commerce Cloud**  
**SAP Hybris**  
**IBM**  
**Magento**  
**Oracle Commerce**

**POQ**

21 Garden Walk  
London EC2A 3EQ  
Telephone: +44 (0) 20 3794 4120  
Email: [hello@poqcommerce.com](mailto:hello@poqcommerce.com)  
[www.poqcommerce.com](http://www.poqcommerce.com)

Poq, the app commerce company, is a Software-as-a-Service that empowers retailers to create highly effective and customised native apps. These allow retailers to build stringer brands, sell more products, deepen customer loyalty and deliver relevant content, communications and rewards.

Our platform is the result of years of focus on retail apps and is proven to increase conversion rates and revenue. New code is rolled out every week and new releases delivered every quarter. Clients include the UK's largest brands and department store retailers.

## Customers:

**Beauty Bay**  
**Holland & Barrett**  
**Hotel Chocolat**  
**JD Williams**  
**MADE.com**  
**Missguided**  
**Pretty Little Thing**  
**Quiz**

## Partners:

**Attraqt**  
**Braintree**  
**Hybris**  
**Magento**  
**Stripe**  
**Urban Airship**  
**Salesforce Commerce Cloud**

**SITECORE****sitecore®**

International House  
1 St Katherine's Way, Wapping  
London E1W 1UN  
Telephone: +44 (0) 20 3327 0630  
Email: [info-emea@sitecore.net](mailto:info-emea@sitecore.net)  
[www.sitecore.net](http://www.sitecore.net)

Sitecore is the global leader in experience management software that enables context marketing. The Sitecore® Experience Platform™ manages content, supplies contextual intelligence, automates communications and enables personalised commerce, at scale. It empowers marketers to deliver content in context of how customers have engaged with their brand, across every channel, in real-time, before, during and after a sale. More than 5,300 brands have trusted Sitecore for context marketing to manage and deliver the type of meaningful personalised interactions that delight audiences, build loyalty and drive revenue.

## Customers:

**American Express**  
**Carnival Cruise Lines**  
**easyJet**  
**L'Oréal**

**SNAPFULFIL****SNAPFULFIL**  
Warehouse Management Systems

Unit 10b, Sills Road  
Willow Farm Business Park  
Castle Donington, Derbyshire DE74 2US  
Telephone: 0333 241 2082 or +44 (0) 1332 943282  
Email: [info@snapfulfil.com](mailto:info@snapfulfil.com)  
[www.snapfulfil.com](http://www.snapfulfil.com)

Snapfulfil is a best-of-breed, real-time warehouse management system which drives highly efficient warehouse operations, allowing customers to do more with the same or less resources. Thanks to its unique blend of Tier 1 functionality, proven delivery methodology and enterprise-class IT infrastructure, more and more retailers are turning to Snapfulfil to optimise inventory, space and labour within their warehouses – from ecommerce start-ups to multinational corporations. Offering a range of deployment methods and payment options, including its unique, No Capex model, whatever your warehousing challenge, Snapfulfil offers a solution.

## Customers:

**Bensons for Beds**  
**Edinburgh Bicycle Co-op**  
**Freestyle Xtreme**  
**Harveys**  
**Oak Furniture Land**  
**Shop Direct Group**  
**simplehuman**  
**Vision Direct**

## Partners:

**Cisco**  
**Honeywell**  
**iland**  
**Metapack**  
**NetDespatch**  
**NetSuite**  
**VMware**  
**Zebra Technologies**

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## WE ARE PENTAGON

11 The Green  
 Richmond TW9 1PX  
 Telephone: +44 (0) 20 8940 5392  
 Email: [hello@wearepentagon.com](mailto:hello@wearepentagon.com)  
[wearepentagon.com](http://wearepentagon.com)



Pentagon is a market-leading service and technology provider that enables retailers to accelerate their online growth through international marketplaces worldwide. Using a team of more than 150 ecommerce experts, we optimise and localise data, integrate to new ecommerce platforms, connect stock management and order managements systems to marketplaces, launch and manage online stores, drive ecommerce sales, handle international logistics and returns, and provide multilingual customer service. Our tiered service offering provides retailers with a tailored solution to meet their unique requirements, from a robust technical integration to fully managed online stores across multiple international platforms.

## Customers:

**Ann Summers**  
**BMW**  
**Canon**  
**Dyson**  
**Next**  
**Halfords**  
**Nissan**  
**Renault**

## Partners:

**Amazon**  
**eBay**  
**Lazada**  
**Myntra**  
**Newegg**  
**Privalia**  
**Rakuten Ichiba**  
**Cdiscount**

## YIELDIFY



5th floor, Aldgate Tower  
 2 Leman Street, London E1 8FA  
 Telephone: +44 (0) 20 8123 9918  
 Email: [info@yieldify.com](mailto:info@yieldify.com)  
[www.yieldify.com](http://www.yieldify.com)

Yieldify makes it easy for ecommerce businesses to deliver customer journeys that convert, through a combination of smart-yet-simple multichannel technology and expert strategy. The Yieldify Conversion Platform makes launching campaigns on your website fast, easy and effective, while our expert team of consultants, designers and technical services deliver and execute benchmarked strategies that drive success. We've delivered over 50,000 campaigns for over 500 brands on more than 1,000 websites globally, from growing businesses to the world's most recognisable brands, including Marks and Spencer, Domino's Pizza, Omni Hotels and Anthropologie.

## Customers:

**Anthropologie**  
**Domino's Pizza**  
**Estée Lauder**  
**HMV**  
**Marks and Spencer**  
**Scribbler**  
**Morphy Richards**

## Partners:

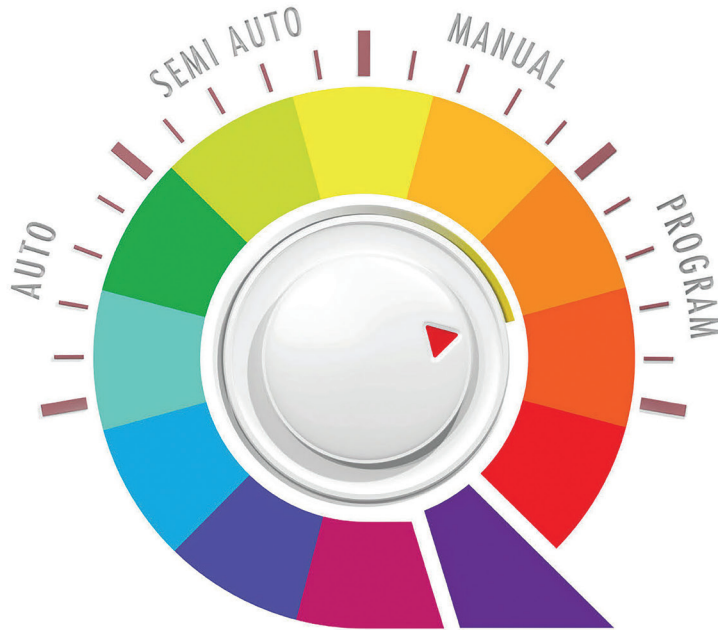
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online visual merchandising™



## Wanda Cadigan

Vice President, Commerce at Sitecore



### Please introduce your company and tell us its USP.

Sitecore is the global leader in experience management software that enables context marketing. The Sitecore Experience Platform manages content, supplies contextual intelligence, automates communications and enables personalised commerce, at scale. It empowers marketers to deliver content in context of how customers have engaged with their brand, across every channel and in real-time, before, during and after a sale.

// The experience a brand provides transcends the products it sells and becomes the cornerstone of building customers for life

Wanda Cadigan

VP Commerce, Sitecore

### What is its strategic vision?

To revolutionise the relationship between businesses and customers through great digital experiences. We have the most extensible content management, digital marketing and commerce tools available through a connected platform that can scale.

### What are doing in the ecommerce and multichannel market?

Unlike other vendors in this space, Sitecore helps create customers for life by enabling outstanding experiences, not just enabling transactions. Creating differentiation in today's Amazon world means the ability to deliver contextualised, personalised experiences on any channel. However, brands are often challenged with separate systems that fragment the

## SITECORE IN BRIEF

**Company name:** Sitecore

**Global reach:** Active in more than 50 countries

**UK Launch date:** The company was founded in 2001

**Customers:** 5,200

**Number of employees:** More than 1,000

**Partners:** More than 1,400 solution partners globally

**Contact details:** info-emea@sitecore.net

customer journey. Sitecore Experience Commerce is the only end-to-end cloud-enabled solution that creates seamless customer experiences by unifying content, commerce and contextual intelligence to incorporate shopping as a native part of the customer journey.

### Tell us about the latest service that you have launched for your retail clients.

Sitecore Experience Commerce is our new integrated content, commerce and contextual marketing platform featuring state-of-the-art commerce architecture built on ASP.NET Core, which is the very latest Microsoft framework. Built to leverage all the benefits of Sitecore's content management and digital marketing platform tools and workflows, it is unmatched in the industry, with the ability to deliver end-to-end, personalised omnichannel shopping experiences to consumers. This release ships with a Sitecore Experience Accelerator (SXA) Storefront, a production-ready site that comes with 40+ out-of-the-box commerce components. This templated UX approach speeds up time to market as it allows content teams to design, assemble and deploy web content, relieving IT teams of page-build responsibilities and so

allowing them to focus on higher impact development initiatives.

Sitecore Experience Commerce is available on-premise and in the cloud. We've partnered with Microsoft to provide a simple wizard-like experience in the Azure Marketplace so that you can deploy Sitecore Experience Commerce 9 on your own Microsoft Azure instance with just a few clicks, allowing customers to scale up or out to meet changing traffic demands easily.

### How does this compare to what your competitors are doing?

Great content drives great experiences which, in turn, drives revenue. Unlike other vendors in the space, Sitecore began its journey as a content management platform. The future of commerce is not just about driving transactions but also about building customers for life through personalised, contextualised experiences. While our competitors are trying to catch up by bolting on content management capabilities, we have 15 years of experience as the recognised industry-leading content management solution. The integration of truly robust content management capabilities is the game changer for going beyond the transaction to build customers for life. In addition, unlike other ageing technology

stacks, Sitecore Experience Commerce has been written on the latest ASP.NET Core technology from Microsoft, meaning that it's a modern commerce infrastructure featuring pluggable extensibility and microservices based approach with opt-in complexity.

#### Who are your customers?

Sitecore's commerce customers range from upper mid-market to enterprise retailers, CPGs and branded manufacturers. The long list includes such names as DOW, Toro, QNET, Ansys and Pet Supplies Plus.

#### What do you see as challenges in the coming year and what are you doing to meet those challenges?

I call it the Amazon effect. The greatest myth is that the battle for online retail is already over when it's only just begun. Yes, there's a major digital transformation under way, spurred on by innovation that's happening in online marketplaces like Amazon and also from outside the retail industry via players such as Uber and Airbnb. As many savvy retailers realise, there's a tremendous growth opportunity ahead for brands who can build value-added experiences above and beyond just a product assortment.

We help customers digitally transform their business to become more relevant. As a concrete example, instead of presenting thousands upon thousands of product choices, we help

## CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

Homefashion Group is one of the largest suppliers of flooring, wallpaper, window treatments, lighting and furniture products in the Netherlands. The Dutch holding company recently embarked on a rebrand of Kwantum, its flagship company. With more than 100 stores and growing, Kwantum serves customers in the Netherlands and Belgium.

"We wanted to shift the perception of Kwantum from a seller of discount furniture to a leader in modern and inspiring home furnishings," says Jeroen de Punder, Chief Marketing Officer, Homefashion Group. Part of the rebrand strategy involved redesigning and expanding Kwantum's digital presence.

Prior to the rebrand, Kwantum had a basic website – essentially just an online product catalogue. It lacked original content, integration with social media and the ability to capture information about the customer journey. When it came to the user experience, it was one size fits all.

Homefashion Group wanted to create a personalised and authentic experience for visitors that would make shoppers feel understood and well served by the brand. But to do so, the company needed to understand the context of every consumer interaction with the brand, including knowing which web pages a consumer had visited, which emails they had opened, what products they had purchased and what devices they have used to view the website.

By integrating content and commerce, Homefashion Group now delivers a standout customer experience across all channels. It's a strategy that has already paid off. Since deploying it, Kwantum has seen a 25% increase in online and offline visitors, as well as significant revenue growth and lower IT costs from using an integrated platform.

present the most relevant choices based on an in-depth data-driven understanding of each customer. Brands can then remain engaged post-sale by proactively providing value-added content to deepen relationships beyond the singular transaction.

#### How do you see the ecommerce/multichannel industry developing in the longer-term future?

Brands will become increasingly challenged to make sense of the avalanche of data generated by their own systems, as well as third-party data made available to them. Sitecore has recently launched Sitecore Cortex – a dedicated engine for processing

machine learning algorithms at scale. This takes advantage of the opportunity to provide even more personalised experiences.

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