

# 5 THINGS PREMIUM BRANDS CAN TEACH YOU ABOUT CUSTOMER SERVICE



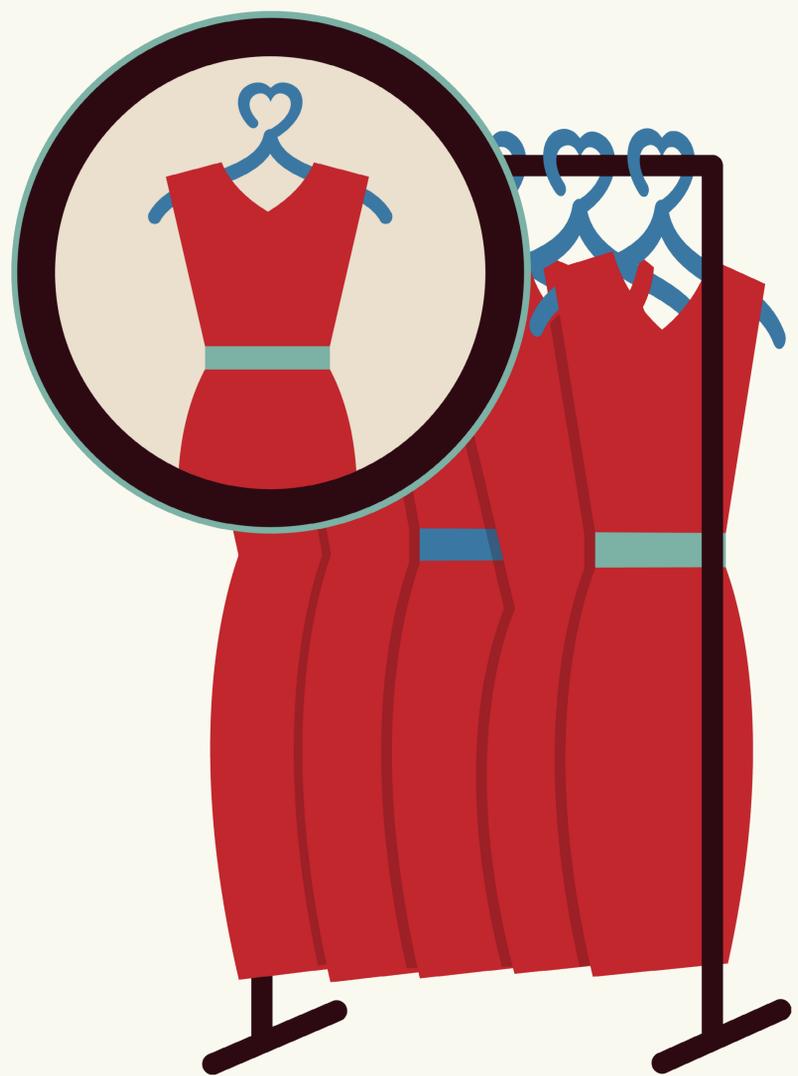
*Use the power of “yes” to create a better omnichannel experience that boosts sales and customer loyalty*

# THE POWER OF YES

## *If there's one thing*

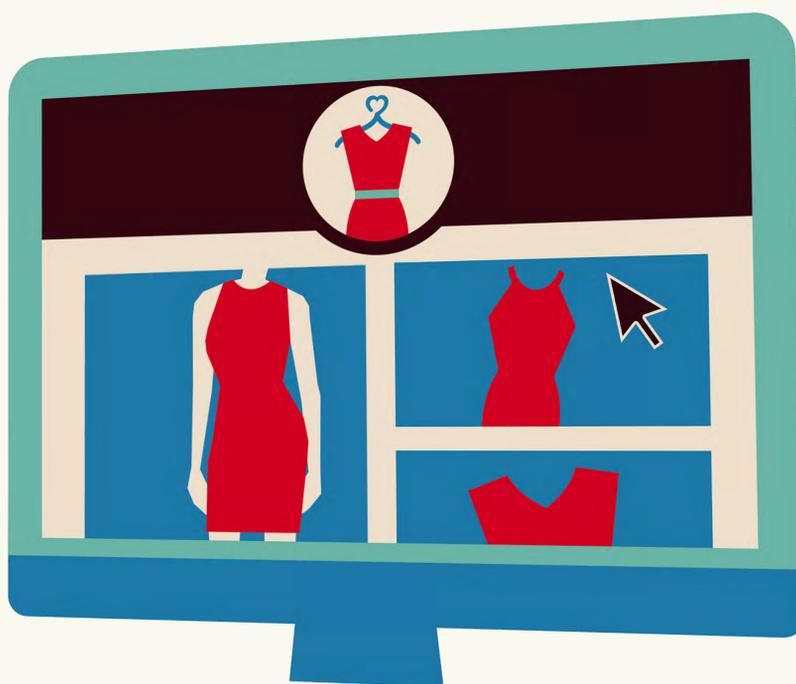
all “premium brands” share, it’s a premium retail experience that caters to the customer. The brand’s mantra is to always say “yes” – and as a result their customers are clear on what styles and options are available, understand the value of the merchandise, appreciate a convenient shopping experience, and more.

Boutique brands often emphasize a set of related “hand crafted” attributes: a unique and genuine look and feel both online and off; an appeal to a niche audience passionate about avoiding the latest “mainstream” trend; unusual and rare products that feel authentic; plus, ideally, individual attention and high-touch engagement; key differentiators in a world of “big box” brands.



But large or small, a brand's premium essence quickly evaporates if the customer experience falls short. In fact, customer experience is what premium brands are all about – and a smaller brand's authentic feel will not shield it from rapidly losing customers who are turned off by their experience.

Establishing and maintaining that exceptional customer experience is complicated by the fact that most retailers today use a variety of channels to reach their customers; in-store, online, social.



88%

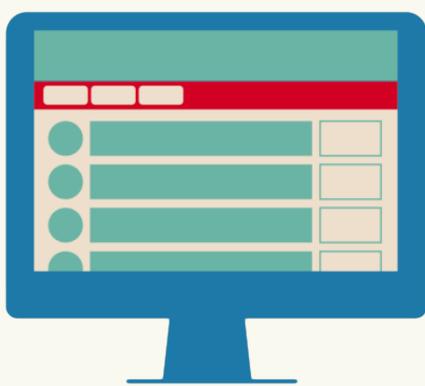
Shoppers who look up information on products and locations (i.e. "webroom") before visiting the physical store – so your online presence can't merely be an afterthought

78%

Local searches on mobile that result in offline purchases – meaning customers want to visit your physical location, and expect a seamless experience doing so

Each channel challenges your retail team to deliver a great experience that shows shoppers what your brand is all about. Customers have high expectations, and a single bad experience online or off can irreparably taint the entire brand. Customer experience is what premium brands are all about – and a smaller brand’s authentic feel will not shield it from rapidly losing customers who are turned off by their experience.

Larger retailers create a premium essence by spending massive budgets to deliver on this promise. Single-store retailers conversely can – often through sheer will power from a passionate founder – physically control the entire customer engagement. It’s the brands in the middle that are caught between the proverbial rock and hard place: aspirational enough to have grown beyond the boundaries of a single store, but lacking the resources to throw hundreds of thousands, or even millions of dollars at custom retail or ecommerce systems. For them, the premium experience is in jeopardy.



There are many commercial point of sale or ecommerce systems designed for this market, solutions like Lightspeed, Shopify, Magento and more. And they certainly excel at a set of core features designed around selling in-store or online.

What they lack, however, is the full suite of tools necessary to sell across multiple stores, both in-store and online in a way that's easy for both retail staff and your customers.

This impacts the retail experience in two ways: first, it results in a lot of manual labor to, essentially, run two different companies (one online and the other physical). And that can also mean a lot of errors and inconsistencies between the two.

Secondly, many of the elements that customers expect – and that help deliver a premium experience – are missing. In either instance, your brand can quickly devolve to “that store that really doesn't have its act together.”

Fortunately, it's now possible to create a premium brand shopping experience without breaking the bank. Accumula makes in-store and online systems work together so growing brands can focus on building their business. The result? Less overhead, improved order flow and happier customers. And best of all, starting at less than \$100 per month it's surprisingly affordable. So what impact does this have?



After working with a broad range of retailers, we've identified five key areas to focus on for ensuring that premium experience. Fall down in two or more of them, and you could be losing customers and driving up your costs – and helping the competition.



# ACCURATE INVENTORY & PRICING



## ***Premium brands are consistent***

across all aspects of the customer journey. It's what being "on brand" is all about. The quickest way to destroy that consistency is to have errors or discrepancies between the in-store and online experience: differences in pricing, out-of-stock inventory, poor merchandising, or worse. And this can lead to more than just customer frustration, it can also directly impact sales.

Accumula handles these details and frees your Retail Staff to focus on your customers.

Accumula continuously checks pricing, inventory, and product info, and synchronizes any changes across your systems without interrupting your operations. Everything is handled automatically in the background 24 hours a day, so your systems are always accurate, customers know exactly what they're getting, and your staff spend less time dealing with disappointed customers.

***A 10,000x improvement. Accumula proved an immediate, unmatched knowledge of not only how my system was supposed to work, but how to make it work for me.***

*- Kati LeClair, owner of BlameBetty.com*

And the impact can be huge.

Just ask Kati LeClair, owner of BlameBetty.com:

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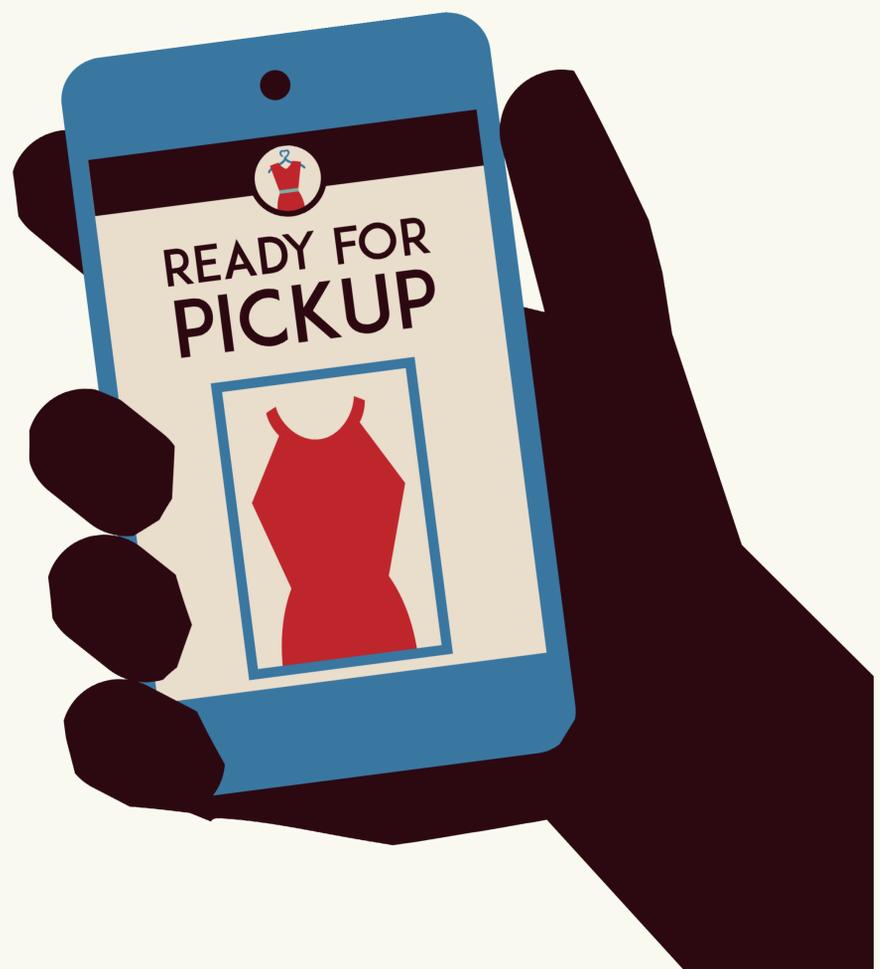


# 2

# IN-STORE PICKUP

## *Today's shoppers*

demand choices. They expect to shop through any channel and choose where and how to get their order. The option to pickup in store delivers on that expectation, and is also good for you as the retailer.



It saves you (and the customer) time and money on shipping, while also creating an opportunity for a more high-touch customer engagement and check-out experience. Best of all, when they show up for pick-up it gives the customer the opportunity to do more of what you both want: shop.



But when you have multiple locations and separate point of sale and ecommerce systems, ensuring that both the product and the order are available for pick-up at the right location becomes a serious challenge.

Accumula solves this problem by allowing customers to choose any of your locations for pickup, and automatically routing the order to the correct location for fulfillment. Your staff simply greets the customer when they come in and hopefully, helps them find more of what they're looking for.

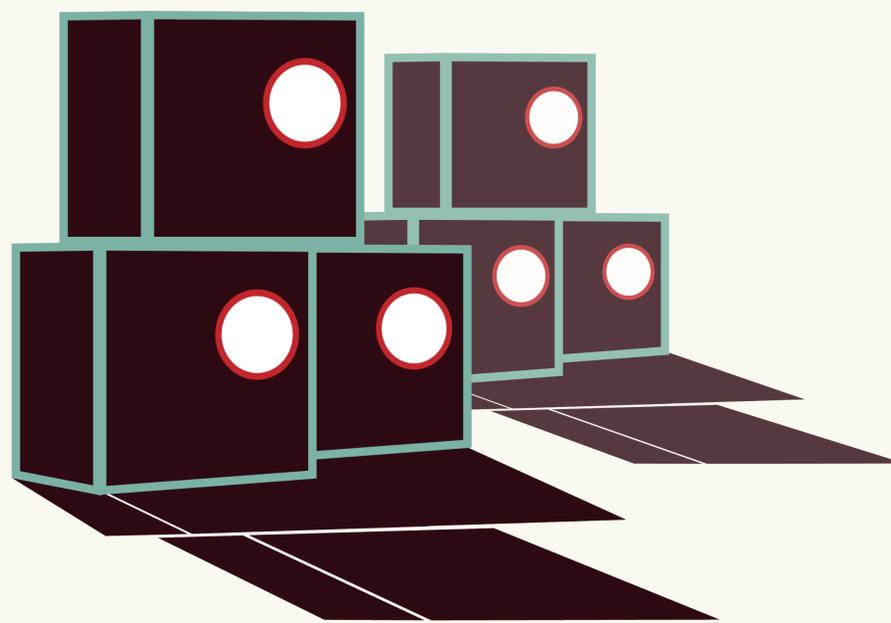
That focus on automation comes through in everything Accumula does.

***“In-store pickup isn't just a convenience, it results in higher sales as shoppers inevitably find something else they need when they come into the store to pickup their order.”***

*- Chris Bone, Livestock*

# 3

# MAXIMIZED INVENTORY



***Buying for retail*** is tricky. You have to stay ahead of the next big thing but also not overspend. One wrong bet on a product line can ruin your quarter. But shoppers are coming to your store to buy, and if they can't find what they're looking for they'll quickly stop trying. Add in the complexity of multiple brick and mortar stores or a warehouse, each with their own stock, and juggling your inventory can really be a challenge.

One way to ensure you have adequate inventory is to, literally, stock up. Carry a large inventory of products "just in case" across all locations, and you're likely to have whatever the customer wants on hand.

You're also likely to have huge overhead, lower profits and potentially drive yourself out of business.

The smart way to handle this is to maximize your inventory across all locations. Carry enough to handle immediate demand in each location, use the inventory across all

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*- Christoph Frehsee, Amour Vert*

locations to feed your online system, and rely on your POS/ecommerce system to notify you when to order more. Just-in-time delivery is critical to running an efficient operation, and efficiency is a hallmark of a premium shopping experience.

With Accumula, retailers can maximize their inventory by listing the inventory of all their locations online. Customers can see what is available in each location and your brand can always take the order. Orders are routed automatically to where the inventory is and you can confidently say, "Yes, we've got that and we're going to sell it", just like the premium brands.

According to Christoph Frehsee, co-founder of sustainable fashion company Amour Vert, "Accumula's order routing feature has driven a 100% increase in online sell-through and increased for our retail locations. We now fulfill 60% of our online orders from more than one brick and mortar location."

# 4

# MULTIPLE ONLINE STORES

***Have you noticed*** that many of the best retailers have online stores that are separate from the main domain and highly targeted at a particular customer segment? Stores like Nordstrom, REI, Tiffany & Co., and Harry's? The reason is simple: they've identified a loyal, active and profitable fan base that is drawn to a particular niche, and by offering a customized and targeted experience the retailer is actively courting this enthusiasm.



This is truly a win/win for both customer and retailer. The customer gets an even better premium experience that can feel like it was built “just for them”, while the retailer can micro-target a very profitable segment of its best customers.

But let's go back to where we started this conversation: without the right systems in place, managing multiple stores can feel like running multiple companies. Now we're talking about adding a second (or third or fourth...) online store?

That's a potential nightmare that can compound all the other issues we've been talking about in this ebook.

Accumula solves that problem by allowing you to:

- ✓ ***Set up multiple online stores***
- ✓ ***Centrally control the pricing & inventory in each store***
- ✓ ***Sync online stores with your POS***

You choose what products are available on each store so you can now target shoppers with more customized offerings and bring in more orders.

A lot more.



# 5

# GIFT CARDS

**Gift cards** have become an ubiquitous part of the online and offline shopping experience. They are the preferred method for your biggest fans to share the love with others.



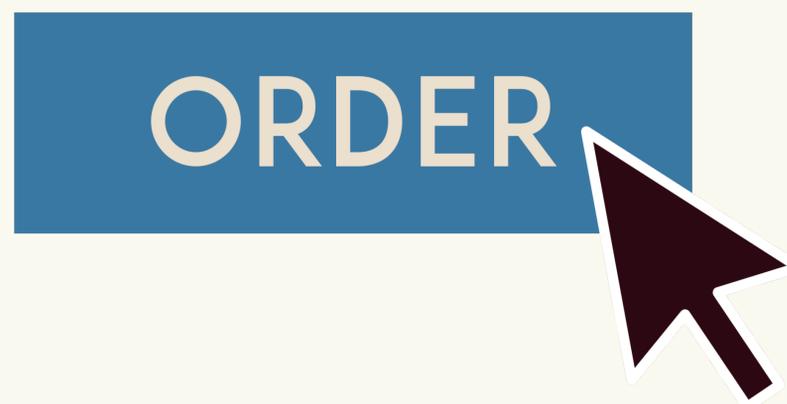
93%

American consumers purchase or receive a gift card annually, and spend an average of \$213 per year on gift cards

>3%

Smb retailers that sell gift cards online

Your store is missing out on a huge opportunity if you aren't offering gift cards. Did you know that 72% of customers will spend 20% more than the stated value of their gift card, or that 90% of gift cards are used within the first 60 days of purchase?



A well-managed gift card program helps your brand gain more customers and

***As a growing Omnichannel retailer, being able to offer a seamless gift card experience both in store and online is a game changer.***

*- Renee Halvorsen  
Ecommerce Manager, Marine Layer*

increases spend. With Accumula, online card sales and redemptions are immediately reflected in your point of sale system, so again, everything stays synchronized and your customers can now use

your gift cards just like those from any other brand. And as Renee Halvorsen, Ecommerce Manager of Marine Layer, notes, that can have a huge impact in leveling the playing field for a smaller retailer:

"As a growing Omnichannel retailer, being able to offer a seamless gift card experience both in store and online is a game changer."

# *So now the big question...*

How are you doing in these five areas? Are you ready to unite your brick and mortar and online stores, without having to learn any new skills or hire any new resources?

Why not sign up for Accumula's [Free 30-day trial](#) and find out what more you could be doing to ensure your customers have the best shopping experience possible.

# ACCUMULA

