Retail CIO Outlook

OCTOBER 27, 2016

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CLOUD POS LEADER FOR OMNICHANNEL RETAILERS

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CEGID

CLOUD POS LEADER FOR OMNICHANNEL RETAILERS

By Bryan Jackson

Dan Friedman,
COO, North America

"R etailers are saying goodbye to the point-of-sale as we know it," begins Dan Friedman, COO, Cegid North America. "Point-of-service is the new mandate. It's all about the customer, what they want and when they want it. This means supporting a coherent experience between channels, and integrating modern ordering and fulfillment options." This statement is an apt assessment of the ever-changing retail vertical. With increasingly mobile and digital lives, consumers are researching online and purchasing offline, accessing online reviews, and turning to social networks to shop on their terms. The dynamics of customer interaction and the role of the brick-and-mortar store are evolving.

However, retailers are having a hard time adapting to this new standard because their traditional point-of-sale systems were not built to support today's shopping habits. To stay relevant, brands are re-imagining every aspect of their operations to ensure the customer is the focal point. In doing so, they are turning stores into fulfillment hubs, mobile-enabling store associates, as well as providing customers with personalized experiences. They are allowing shoppers to buy online and pickup in-store, buy online and ship from store, reserve online and pay in-store, ship-to-home and so on. "Single-channel retailing is a thing of the past," remarks Friedman. "You're not going to make it in retail unless you're omnichannel - look at traditional e-tailers opening physical stores."

This is where Cegid comes into play. With the goal of helping fashion and specialty retailers adapt to the digital age, it offers a full suite of retail

enterprise software and cloud services for both head office and stores. Much of its focus lies in omnichannel retailing, including POS and store management, inventory and replenishment, mobile POS, clienteling, CRM and loyalty, ecommerce, as well as business intelligence – all within a single, centralized database that works in real-time. The platform, Yourcegid Retail Y2,

connects all customer touchpoints and centralizes retailers' operations, so they can deliver a personalized experience and gain a holistic view of their shoppers, products and retail chain. Similarly, consumers get a consistent brand experience no matter how they shop with the retailer.

In addition, the software integrates with Europay, MasterCard and Visa (EMV) compliant partners for Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT), which makes it especially enticing to retailers in North America. If Internet connectivity is lost in the store, the software switches automatically to the built-in offline mode, allowing retailers to continue serving clients and maximizing sales.

Removing Friction from the Customer Experience

"To get a 360-degree view of the customer, retailers must converge their ecommerce, brick and mortar, catalogue, and social media channels – these are critical touchpoints for customer interaction," explains Friedman. This is the best approach if retailers want access to enterprise-wide inventory, business intelligence and clienteling data to leverage insights about customers' buying behavior. "A single, centralized

and real-time platform is key to facilitating the free-flow of information," Friedman states.

To create meaningful interactions, store associates require tools to access valuable customer data, such as buying habits, wish lists, and purchase histories, and translate this information into cross- and up-selling. With Yourcegid Retail Y2, retailers can provide made-to-order and repair services. Additional functionalities include pick, pack and ship of online orders, all of which foster better customer service, reduce labor costs and elevate each customer's experience.

"Uber, for example, removed the friction from its clients' buying journey. The hardest thing about cabs was finding one and paying at the end of the ride–Uber simplified that. The context of omnichannel in retail is similar: how can you remove the friction from the customer experience," states Friedman. Cegid follows this line of thinking by providing retailers with modern connected commerce capabilities. It does so by delivering a single view of the customer, real-time inventory visibility, analytics with the shopper front and center, and a mobile-oriented architecture with mobile POS, clienteling and cataloging.
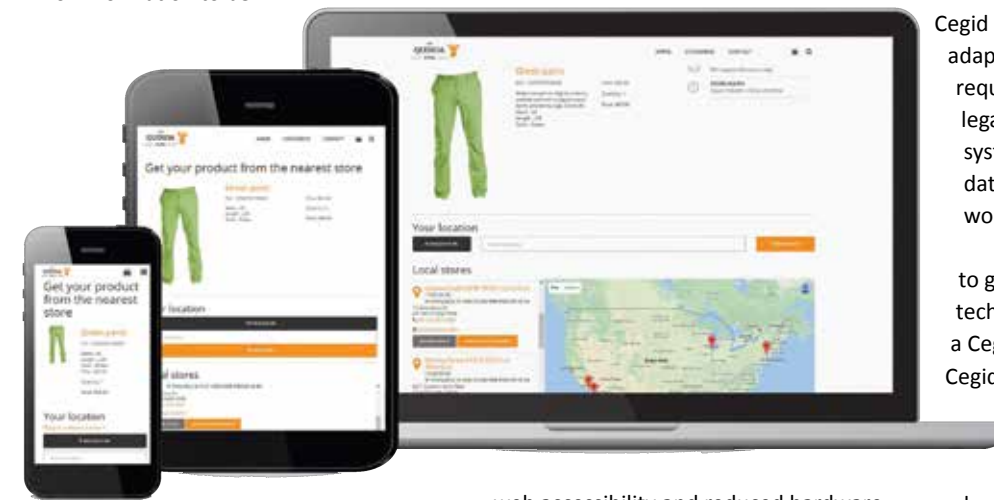
Mobility, Business Intelligence and Cloud

Cegid is experiencing strong demand for its mobile POS and clienteling modules. "Many retail projects include a mobile component," says Friedman. With familiar mobile devices like tablets and smartphones at the heart of the omnichannel shift, mobility is appealing to consumers and sales associates alike. It provides the always-connected shopper with product information and inventory availability at the touch of a button. As for sales associates, it allows them to capture information, such as their customers' preferences and buying

histories, enabling relevant, one-to-one personalized service.

Business intelligence and use of the right tools to improve operational efficiency and get a deeper understanding of the shopper has become a focal point for retailers. Data is a commodity, but most struggle to get the insights they need to improve business performance. Cegid had this in mind when creating its retail intelligence module, which allows multiple sources of information to be

presented and analyzed within one solution with pre-defined KPIs. Retailers can see real-time data on mobile devices or desktops, enabling them to make informed and up-to-the-minute decisions about their business with confidence.

Companies are investing in cloud POS applications that are agile enough

to support new business models, remove unwanted IT expenditures, as well as eliminate data duplication. This is why they are choosing cloud-based platforms in which they do not incur any direct infrastructure or ongoing management costs for the software, since these are included in the monthly subscription fee. As a result, retailers are able to concentrate on their core activity, free up cash flow, and increase ROI. Other benefits include scalable infrastructure,

web accessibility and reduced hardware requirements. Ultimately, the best foundation for an omnichannel transformation is cloud computing.

A Global Vendor to be Reckoned With

With solid software and cloud offerings, Cegid has made a crucial difference for many of its clients. A case in point is

Crunch, one of America's leading health club chains, that turned to Cegid to shift its retail operations to the cloud, further simplifying overall IT infrastructure and supporting its expansion strategy. Using the cloud, Cegid was able to train staff, convert data from the legacy system to Yourcegid Retail Y2, and successfully roll out all its locations in less than three weeks. Crunch is now able to improve inventory management, provide a better in-store experience, access information in real-time and gain a better understanding of member demand and product preferences.

As a global vendor, Cegid plans to continue its expansion, particularly in North America. With more than 30 years of industry expertise and a significant footprint in the market, Cegid's biggest appeal to retailers with international aspirations is its POS, which comes with 59 country packages and is currently run in 75 countries. "What's unique about Cegid is its localization capabilities, which adapt the software to unique industry requirements, processes, taxes and legal regulations. You'll find very few systems that are built on a single database in real-time around the world," says Friedman.

Cegid makes a serious effort to give its customers a voice in its technology roadmap. In fact, there is a Cegid Retail Club that is open to all Cegid clients worldwide. Today, the club is comprised of more than 100 retail organizations. Members discuss topics such as stores and ecommerce, supply chain, unified commerce, international operations, and Cegid roadmaps. "Our clients are our focus. We spend a significant amount of time listening to them in order to provide the best possible solutions. So far, it's paid off because the company has been recognized by major industry analysts for our technology solutions, customer care and culture." concludes Friedman. RC

TOP 10 Retail POS Solution Providers 2016

E-commerce and online retail have long become the norms of shopping, and it is not too surprising to see retailers seeking a much-needed dose of technology to capture the millennial crowd. With the millennial generation expected to become the nation's largest consumer buying group by the next decade, generating an estimated $1.4 trillion in spending by 2020, technology providers are gearing up with software platforms and systems aiming to retrofit the retail Point of Sale (POS) terminals.

With the power of big data, advanced analytics, and face detection, POS personnel can get a customer's complete shopping history, customized preferences, and other intricate details so as to enhance the overall consumer experience. Reliable cloud-based retail platforms have replaced the legacy counter machines to monitor and control the end-to-end value chain, from inventory management to customer checkout. Technologies such as smart price tagging that can change prices dynamically, augmented reality aided trial rooms, and packaging techniques that track and alert shop owners about the end-of-life of perishable goods have also begun to surface the retail arena.

In an effort to facilitate the shift towards automated retail paradigms, a panel of prominent CEOs, CIOs, VCs, analysts, along with the Retail CIO Outlook editorial board has assessed scores of retail POS solution providers and picked out a list of prime choices.

We have considered the vendor's ability in designing and building advanced POS solutions that cater to the retail needs, at the same time adding to its functional and productive flair. We present to you Retail CIO Outlook's Top 10 Retail POS Solution Providers 2016.

Cegid

recognized by **Retail CIO Outlook** *magazine as*

TOP 10
Retail POS
Solution Providers-2016

An annual listing of 10 companies that are at the forefront of providing POS solutions for the retail sector and impacting the marketplace

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Company:
Cegid [EPA: CGD]

Description:
Provides an easy-to-use, feature-rich POS solution that enables retailers to optimize business processes and increase profitability worldwide

Key Person:
Dan Friedman,
COO, North America

Website:
cegid.com/us