Everything your business needs to revive your retail stores
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Retail revival

Percentage decrease in stock prices for apparel retailers since COVID-19

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Change in stock price between February 18 and March 25
(Percentage decrease)

As the world eases out of lockdown, consumers around the globe are looking for ways to adapt to the new normal, meaning retailers are having to pivot their operations - fast.

The situation is changing on a daily basis. And many know there isn't enough time to respond.

On a global scale, we are approaching one of the worst financial crises since the Great Depression, with the International Monetary Foundation expecting a 3% contraction of the global economy in 2020. JP Morgan Chase and Wells Fargo warn of a huge economic contraction and Goldman Sachs estimate a 35% reduction in advanced economies this quarter alone.

Retail has been hit hard by COVID-19 and retail as we know it, is over.

It’s time to start thinking about your retail revival strategy.
During lockdown, Appointedd has been working tirelessly with some of the biggest names in retail to help them pivot, from helping SpaceNK offer a suite of online consultations and events, to preparing for the revival of the retail sector as lockdown begins to ease across the globe.

Through these partnerships and conversations, we’ve been able to pinpoint the four key areas retail executives should be focusing on in their COVID-19 battle plan.

Retail revival battle plan

1. Keep cash flowing
2. Explore alternatives to footfall
   a. Reduce cart abandonment
   b. Increase basket value
3. Ensure your customers are safe
   a. “Appointments” is the buzzword
   b. Offer contactless payments
4. Personalize the customer journey

These key areas will be discussed in more detail within this eBook, starting with keep cash flowing.
BATTLE PLAN ACTION 1

Keep cash flowing
Keep cash flowing

Bridging the online and offline worlds presents a huge opportunity for retailers to recoup lost revenue.
At first, many retailers thought they could simply weather the storm. Send non-essential staff home, close locations temporarily, and wait for customers to return.

But as the timeline for dealing with this global pandemic continues to stretch further into the future, waiting for it all to blow over isn’t going to cut it.

**The first step in your retail revival battle plan is to keep the cash flowing however you can.**

You might switch to offering delivery or mail order. You might offer virtual events and customer experiences. Yes, you can charge for some of these - especially where you can offer your customers one-to-one focus and attention.

The best part? It doesn’t have to be complex or time consuming to set up.

"**Appointedd was very responsive in its approach to us and together we worked collaboratively to ensure that what we developed actually suited what we needed. It then became transferable to other people in the industry.**"

*Chris Greenwood, CIO, Mamas & Papas*
Plug & play

Appointedd offers your business everything you need to engage with customers virtually and keep cash flowing during COVID-19.

- **Enable bookable appointments** for both virtual and in-store services (in multiple languages and timezones)
- **Onboard your team quickly and minimize disruption** with simple integrations to a range of in-house business tools
- Offer a **personalized customer experience** by gathering data from custom booking questions
- Easily **handle a range of flexible working schedules** to enable some staff to work from home, and others to offer in-store activities as lockdown eases
- **Get paid upfront, and in multiple currencies**, with online payment processing
- **Engage customers before, during, and after bookings** (even if they cancel) with automated customer communications

Next, you need to explore alternatives to footfall.
BATTLE PLAN ACTION 2

Explore alternatives to footfall
Explore alternatives to footfall

Lockdown has seen a tremendous reduction in footfall numbers globally, putting retailers everywhere at risk.

Moody’s predicts department stores and apparel retailers will be hit harder than most other retail sectors, forecasting an income drop of 40% this year. Morgan Stanley estimates that retail footfall traffic fell by 80% between March 16 and March 22, while Gap Inc. saw shares drop by half over the past month. Capri, owner of Versace and Michael Kors, have dropped by 54%.

As countries around the world continue lockdown and social distancing measures, footfall shows no signs of bouncing back any time soon.

In the meantime, it’s vital that you maximize alternative revenue streams.

“We have felt the impact of high postponements and low bookings – which makes sense given government advice – but Appointedd has helped us foresee this, digest it in an easy way, and react quickly to minimize the impact.”

Monica Marriott-Mills, Marketing Manager, The Wedding Gallery
Reduce cart abandonment

Even before COVID-19 transformed the entire global landscape, a Go Inspire study found that retailers were already missing out on around £18bn in annual revenue from abandoned baskets.

Missing out on that amount of potential revenue was a problem then.

Now, it could be catastrophic.
1. **Personalize your communications with your customers.** Using Appointedd’s custom booking questions, you can personalize the entire customer journey to ensure customers are more likely to convert.

2. **Simplify your checkout process.** Appointedd integrates with Square, Stripe, and Epos Now, making the online booking process so much simpler for the client.

3. **Keep the booking flow to a minimum, and highlight calls to action.**

4. **Allow guest checkout** - if the user is short on time, it can be annoying to create an account. Research shows that the added barrier of having to create an account causes high volumes of traffic to abandon their carts.

5. **Add a sense of urgency.** By reminding customers you have a limited stock - ‘only X left’ - you encourage them to take action now.

“Appointedd has been really fantastic! I have never had such an accommodating level of service from an account manager – they really have been instrumental in aiding us to get this solution off the ground and live within a matter of weeks. I couldn’t recommend Appointedd more!”

*Guest Experience Manager, Westfield London*

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By taking care of your scheduling for you, Appointedd leaves you and your retail team free to focus on what’s important - personalized customer experiences, on and offline.
Increase basket value

Appointedd clients have seen up to a **300%** increase in average basket value just by adding online scheduling and appointments to their site.
Appointment booking leads to more engaged shoppers because they are already committed to shopping with you. And if you create the right booking flow, personalizing the journey, the customer will be ready to spend more by the time you engage with them.

Be prepared to upsell with accessories; have different size options ready if they don’t fit. Focus on recommendations that are suited to the customer’s unique situation - their size, their skin tone, areas they want to accentuate or to hide.

Customers value personalized recommendations. Now, more than ever, this is a golden ticket to revive your retail business by driving higher basket value through added recommendations. It’s time to deliver a better service, faster, and with more profitable results than before.

Virtual services offer flexibility. Whereas in-store appointments are constrained to store opening hours, and customers who could physically make it to the store, virtual consultations and appointments open you up to a much larger market of opportunity - with longer hours of operation, and tighter scheduling between appointments to ensure maximum engagement per client.

Can you be widening your scope to offer services across different geographies and timezones?

Appointedd’s award-winning technology can handle different timezones, online payments in different currencies, and multi-language bookings for your international customer base.

Find out how SpaceNK drove a 360% uplift in makeup-related queries through their full suite of online events.

Click here to read the Appointedd and SpaceNK case study.
Group bookings and celebrity-attended events have been successful for those retailers who have embraced change early. If played right, there’s huge potential for virtual events to pick up the slack left by store closures. And we don’t expect this avenue to go away when lockdown eases.

We are witnessing a fundamental shift in how retailers engage with their customers - both online and offline. We expect online events and engagement to play a stronger role in boosting in-store and mail-order profits in future.

With Appointedd’s online booking and scheduling software, it’s easy to set up a whole range of bookable virtual, click and collect, and in-store events and appointments and find creative ways to serve your clients virtually.

Next, you need to start planning for a gradual return to in-store retail.
BATTLE PLAN ACTION 3
Ensure your customers are safe
Ensure your customers are safe

Safety will be paramount in high-contact industries like retail for the foreseeable future.

The safest way of serving your customers is with appointments.
“Appointments” is the buzzword

For at least a year, tight scheduling of store visits will be essential to maintain social distancing.

Scheduling every visit manually isn’t scalable even for smaller retailers, never mind larger, multi-location or multi-national brands.

All types of retailers, large and small, now need an automated, integrated online scheduling solution for appointments.

“Across the retail industry right now, the safest way of serving the customer is with appointments. We know that we’re going to need tighter scheduling to maximize both the value and safety that each appointment delivers. We’re confident that Appointedd gives us all the tools we need to do this effectively.”

Ian Shaw, Retail Director, Moss Bros

Appointedd works with world-leading retailers to add safe buffer zones to appointment bookings for in-store appointments - Read more on buffers on the next page.
As we entered lockdown, Appointedd worked with retailers to add safe buffer zones to appointment bookings for in-store appointments, to ensure social distancing and allow for cleaning and sanitizing of the store before the next appointment.

By maximizing the online engagement with customers, retailers can have a positive impact on not only how much they will spend in-store, but on the time they take to do so.

It’s time to think differently about what you do in-store, what you offer online, and how you can marry the two to offer a well-rounded customer experience in a changing retail landscape.

“During the initial phase of COVID-19, we used online scheduling to offer one-on-one appointments with buffers for safe social distancing. Then when lockdown came into effect, we adapted to offer online consultations and events. The Appointedd widget has helped us to be flexible and to offer meaningful engagement with our customers. We always want to give the best customer experience, so this just makes sure we’re doing that well.”

Hannah Templeman, CRM and Loyalty Manager, SpaceNK
Offer contactless payments

We’re expecting to see a monumental shift to contactless payments in the future. Card readers and card payments are already proving essential in the fight against COVID-19 - as the virus continues to spread, we expect them to become even more important.
Walmart recently announced its customers can pay in-store and pick up their order deliveries contact-free. The approach has them using Walmart Pay on the Walmart app to initiate payment via barcode scanning. This approach has been used by Target and Starbucks in the past, and it looks to be catching on.

With cash being sidelined from a safety perspective, Appointedd’s integrations with online payment processors like Square, Stripe, Braintree, and Epos Now can offer you a seamless transition to cashless payments with a very user friendly user experience that is fast, simple, and easy to set up.

“We’ve received a solution that is reliable. We are now able to look at the customer journey, or the funnel of customers coming in and really understand what’s going on.”

Chris Greenwood, CIO, Mamas & Papas

**SPECIAL OFFER**

Appointedd integrates with Square to make it easier for you to manage your payments. For startup and small business retailers, Appointedd and Square are offering a free card reader and up to £1000* of free processing fees to all those who sign up for an Appointedd and a Square account, or £2000* of free payment processing with no card reader. To get this offer, sign up here.

*or the equivalent in CAD, USD and AUD.

Once you’ve planned the transition back to serving customers in-store, it’s time to think about building long-term customer loyalty with more personalized engagement.
BATTLE PLAN ACTION 4

Personalize the customer journey
Personalize the customer journey

Customer journey planning is a key pillar of successful retail businesses.

Appointedd partnering with Zoom has meant fast and simple integration with virtual meetings and webinars for multiple business types when in-store appointments weren’t possible.

"Appointedd is really helping us bridge the gap between the online and offline customer journey. We are an omnichannel business and we want our customers to engage with us via our website and to visit us in-store. So for us, Appointedd has been key in connecting the two - it’s created a more streamlined customer journey."

Hannah Templman, CRO and Loyalty Manager, SpaceNK
Virtual services aren’t going away after lockdown. We expect businesses will continue to save time and offer greater value, by combining virtual consultations with in-person appointments as we move out of lockdown.

As René Vader, Global Sector Head, Consumer & Retail from KPMG International says: “How will you maintain trust in your brand and your products and services? How will you reset expectations for today? And how will you recover the customer experience in the future? In this environment, shoring up the customer relationship is just as important as shoring up the bottom line.”

In tomorrow’s world, a more personalized customer journey from appointment to sale will become essential to business continuity.

Next, you need to harness a full suite of business continuity tools.
Business continuity

Successful retailers are harnessing a full suite of business continuity tools to boost basket value, recover abandoned baskets, and build brand loyalty.

Appointedd’s booking tools give you everything your retail business needs to perform at its best. With the world changing so rapidly, retailers need a tech solution that can get everyone in their business to where they need to be, efficiently, safely, and perhaps most importantly, quickly.

Appointedd’s online booking system provides a full suite and integrates with all your business intelligence tools to help you better engage your customers for increased profitability and longer-term brand loyalty.
Retail has changed
Retail has changed
Your strategy has to change with it.

“As we continue to deliver on our promise that no one gets parenting better, Personal Shopping at Home allows the customer to connect with one of our Personal Shoppers in-store and get all the help and advice they need from the comfort and safety of their own home. Using live video, we can guide the customer through everything they need to know when it comes to those parenting essentials.

COVID-19 has accelerated our digitally native approach to putting the customer first to facilitate discovery around both the brand and the product. Appointedd’s easy-to-use scheduling software has simplified the process and elevated our service offering.”

Alex Holt, Interim Marketing Director, Mamas & Papas

The future of retail will demand far more efficient scheduling of both online and offline appointments, greater attention to personal customer offerings, and the ability to engage customers wherever they are.

It will not be possible to scale this without an online booking and scheduling tool which allows you to integrate with existing business intelligence tools.

Appointedd is already helping retailers like SpaceNK, Moss Bros, and Mamas & Papas deliver seamless, flexible, and scalable appointment scheduling to offer an incredible customer experience. One which will revive their retail businesses as lockdown lifts.

Click here to book a call and discover what we can do for you.
“What became blatantly obvious to us as the COVID-19 outbreak unravelled, was that our scheduling platform covers everything retailers need to pivot quickly to the changing business environment.

We realized our online scheduling tool was the answer to a myriad of retail business problems in this new marketplace, and would continue to solve a huge array of business problems and provide opportunities as we emerge from lockdown.”

Leah Hutcheon, Founder & CEO, Appointedd

We do not expect any of the issues covered in this eBook to go away in the future. Retailers who target the key areas discussed in this retail revival battle plan will be future-ready.

Appointedd will use the experience we have gained from entering lockdown, to support retailers in safely emerging from it. In the next of our series, we’ll look at how you can utilize this experience to help create a thriving retail sector in the future.