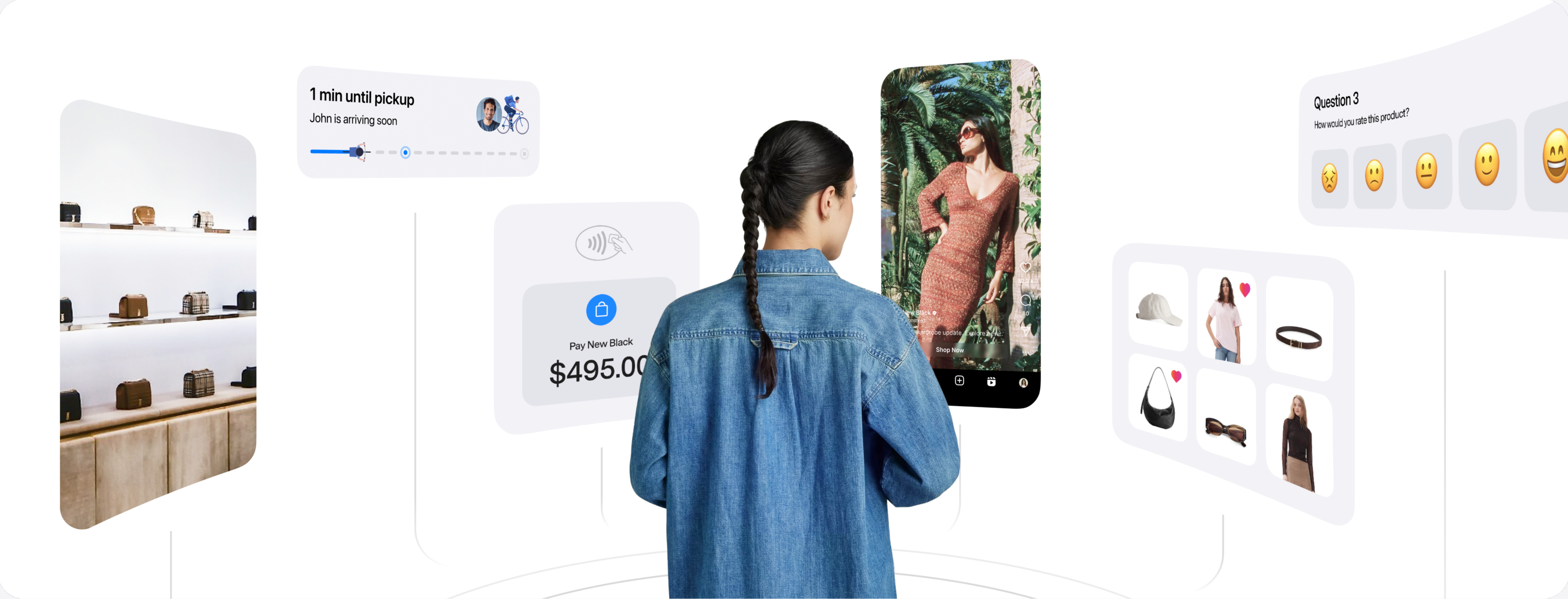


Unified Commerce Is Not a Thing

Summarized Forrester Report — 29 Oct 2024



Publication Details

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A simple question was asked to various vendors:

“What does 'Unified Commerce' mean to you?”

Some said it's about merging technical functions into a single platform

Others talked about integrating tech across platforms.

A few simply described the functionality that their company offers.

A popular one was: “Unified commerce is about selling and interacting with customers, seamlessly, across channels including digital and physical.” Sound familiar? Yes - it's basically just “omnichannel” (... which is already a term).



Most of the time when a vendor uses the term, it doesn't even offer a commerce solution.

Rather, it provides systems that are a part of the great commerce tech ecosystem (no matter how unified it may be). Like providing just an order management system, a point-of-sale solution, or a payment provider.

We can conclude that the term “Unified Commerce”

Overlaps with
existing concepts

Is bound to
vendor-specific
interpretations

Lacks a clear,
consistent definition



If you're confused about what vendors mean by "Unified Commerce" and its benefits, you're not alone.

While "unified commerce" itself isn't a concrete concept, the unification of commerce strategies and technology offers real value.

The Real Value

Unification

As in unifying commerce strategies and technologies.

Need for Clarity

Businesses should seek clarity on what specific unification strategies and technologies would benefit their tech ecosystem, rather than relying solely on the term "unified commerce" that a vendor offers.

What is the Value in Unification?

Flexibility and Scalability

A unified approach can make it easier for businesses to adapt to changing market conditions and scale their operations. It allows for the integration of new technologies and platforms without disrupting existing systems.

Data Integration and Insights

Unified systems allow for better data integration, providing a comprehensive view of customer behavior and preferences. This data can be leveraged to create personalized marketing strategies and improve decision-making.

Operational Efficiency

By integrating various systems and processes, businesses can streamline operations, reduce redundancies, and improve efficiency. This can lead to cost savings and faster service delivery.

Enhanced Customer Experience

Unifying commerce strategies and technologies can lead to a seamless customer experience across all channels. This means customers can enjoy a consistent and integrated interaction with a brand, whether they are shopping online, in-store, or through mobile apps.

Why is there a “Need for Clarity”?

Tailored Solutions

Rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach, businesses should seek tailored solutions that align with their unique objectives and challenges.

Strategic Planning

Implementing unification requires careful planning and strategy. Businesses should assess their current systems, identify gaps, and develop a roadmap for integration that aligns with their long-term goals.

Vendor Communication

Clear communication with vendors is crucial. Businesses should ask vendors to specify what they mean by "unified commerce" and how their solutions will meet the business's specific needs.

Understanding Specific Needs

Businesses should focus on understanding their specific needs and how unification can address them. This involves identifying which processes and technologies will benefit most from integration.

To sum up

Unified Commerce is not a thing it is the action of “Unifying” commerce strategies and technology. This requires a “Need for clarity” of what integrations are needed to form a comprehensive tech ecosystem from the retailer's current perspective.