

The Endless Aisle Opens the Door to Omnichannel Retail

When it comes to buying clothing, it's no question that brick-and-mortar stores provide the superior experience. You can feel the fabric, discover new styles, and ensure the right fit before you walk out the door with your new outfit. But what physical retailers can't do is provide unlimited options and relevant recommendations like online stores; they're limited by square footage, inventory management, and staffing constraints. But store digitalization technology can bridge the gap, helping these retailers become bigger players in an omnipresent marketplace.

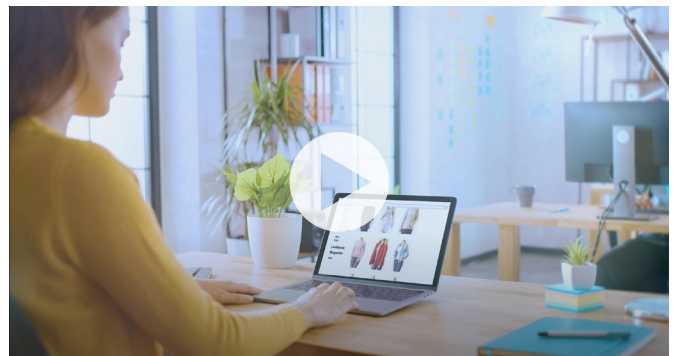
Physical stores have an advantage, says [Oskar Jakobsson](#), Chief Product Officer for [Ombori](#), a smart-store solution provider. "They usually have a longer legacy while eCommerce are newcomers," he says. "We're seeing omnichannel retail pushing the boundaries and stepping more into the physical space, but old-school stores have fiscal and brand presence and High Street access. They can offer more value if they do it right."

One way to do it right is by installing interactive retail kiosks equipped with endless aisle technology, such as Ombori Grid. The solution enhances the in-store experience and drives greater conversions by satisfying shopper demand for variety. And it engages the always-connected generation that considers retail a multichannel experience.

"If you want to be relevant, you need to cater to customers across all channels, including social platforms, online, and the physical space," says Jakobsson, who headed up the innovation department for global clothing retailer H&M prior to joining Ombori. "Your physical location cannot be unconnected, which has been the case in the past. It must be part of the omni journey."

Retail Kiosks Enhance the In-Store Experience

Ombori Grid teamed up with Microsoft to modernize retail businesses by extending the digital experience—where most modern customer journeys begin—to the in-store experience. The retail kiosk solution consists of a touchscreen mounted to a stand. Barcode scanners and RFID readers allow customers to pull up product information. The Ombori Grid platform is loaded with the "endless aisle" software that populates the inventory. And the solution is powered by the Intel® NUC mini-PC, which runs all the IoT edge components with frictionless speed (**Video 1**).



Video 1. Ombori Grid bridges the gap between online and physical retail to create an omnichannel experience for customers. (Source: [Ombori](#))

The Ombori Grid solution also incorporates a customer's mobile phone. "It's very much an interaction between the screen and your mobile phone," says Jakobsson. "You can start at the kiosk with a larger screen that can be more engaging. You can scan a QR code and get the basket you have built on the endless aisle. You could then do the payment or size and measurement part on your mobile phone, which is more private."

In addition, Ombori has partnered with [Pathr.ai, leveraging the retailers' current cameras to collect spatial intelligence insights](#). The integration helps stores analyze the effectiveness of the Ombori Grid platform by determining where customers go after using the kiosks.

Omnichannel Retail Becomes Physical

Ombori Grid helps increase conversions through a greater assortment of goods and a seamless journey that can start online and wrap up in the store. One example is a large Asian retailer that recently installed the solution. Customers who come into the store can complete their transaction even if the item they want isn't available, and have it shipped to their home. The retailer can scale the sale by highlighting products that are related to items in their basket. The solution also has RFID integration that detects the products customers are holding when they walk up to the kiosk.

If a customer is holding a pair of shorts, for example, the solution will show them t-shirts, sneakers, or other summer gear, or it will display the shorts in other colors or styles. "You fulfill the complete customer need, not just the product they picked, which can increase conversion," says Jakobsson. "The store gets to sell more, and the customer gets recommendations to things that are relevant to them. Endless aisle is a knowledgeable, value-adding salesperson. It can answer questions and be relevant and helpful from a customer point of view."

The Future of Omnichannel Retail

Endless Aisle technology and solutions like Ombori Grid help retailers keep up with the changing retail landscape, such as the trend toward small-format stores. Companies save on rent costs while building relationships with their communities.

"Post-COVID, we see that customers want to get back to the stores, but they have more experience with online retail and expect the store to be something new," says Jakobsson. "It needs to be more local, tailored, and relevant. Friction-free, building on the company promise, and driving omni sales and experience."

Technology is merging online and in-store shopping to create a cohesive experience. Are you ready to step into the future of retail where digital and physical become one?