

## 13.8: User Experience

### Learning Objectives

- Define UX and the role of user experience in web retailing

The shopping experience. Brick-and-mortar retail stores are reinventing themselves to provide better, more engaging experiences for their shoppers, knowing that the physical shopping experience is what differentiates them from the crushing trends of online shopping. At the same time, ecommerce platforms are looking to up the ante on the shopping experiences they provide. Right now, most ecommerce is a bunch of pictures and a check out process that requires a credit card and a shipping address. How does it get more exciting? How does ecommerce platform A steal share from ecommerce platform B by being a little different?

User experience, or UX, is defined as the overall experience of a person using a product such as a website or computer application, especially in terms of how easy or pleasing it is to use. Ecommerce platforms are looking at new ways to enhance UX to attract new customers and entice them to spend more.

Users have certain expectations when they visit a website, and those expectations should be served if a site is to be successful. Users expect that a site will:

- Load quickly
- Be easy to navigate
- Have good photos
- Have a good search feature
- Have concise but excellent product descriptions
- Offer live chat or some form of instant customer service
- Have a quick and secure checkout option

Those website UX features need to be in place if a retail ecommerce platform is going to be successful.

Of course, UX will need to reach beyond the basics in order to keep shoppers engaged with their products. Adding the clever, easy-to-understand visual display features like what we saw on the Nordstrom site is a great next step. Then, here are some new techniques being tested to enhance UX:

- **Recognizing that shopping is becoming an omnichannel experience.** “Omnichannel” refers to a multichannel approach to sales that seeks to provide the customer with a seamless shopping experience whether the customer is shopping online from a desktop or mobile device, by telephone or in a brick- and-mortar store. As shoppers look to purchase online and pick up in store, or shop in store and order products online while they’re there, retailers are responding by adapting to the non-linear shopping trend. Today, if a shopper walks up to the makeup counter at Macy’s and they don’t have the product she wants, they offer to place and order and ship it to her home for free. Lowe’s offers a buy-online-pick-up-in-store option that allows customers to shorten their shopping trip by purchasing online, and yet they’re still there for add-on sales in the point of sale area when they pick up their merchandise.
- **Voice-activated shopping experiences.** Pet specialty chains like PetSmart and Petco have something to worry about, because dog food is the number one item ordered on Amazon’s Alexa. Voice-activated shopping experiences are taking off quickly, and grocery store pantry items and pet specialty items are among the first to take a hit as people look to this easy solution.
- **Subscription shopping.** Dog owners love Barkbox.com, where a package of fabulous doggie treats arrives at the door monthly to dazzle the canine member of the household. Similarly, the lady of the house looks forward to her monthly delivery of StitchFix, an online retailer that offers personal stylists who build outfits for their customers based on information in an online profile. Ecommerce platforms make it easy to offer monthly, even weekly, interactions with customers that surprise and delight. Ask any Hello Fresh subscriber how easy their family dinners have become if you don’t believe me.

Retailers will continue to innovate around UX to achieve higher levels of engagement and conversion. Expect to see new and fascinating trends popping up everywhere.

## ? Practice Questions

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...sessments/9298>

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