# POINT OF VIEW

*Powerfully Simple Point of Sale*

**TURBO TIP**

"The key is to set realistic customer expectations, and then not to just meet them but to exceed them - preferably in unexpected and helpful ways. "

Richard Branson

# What Retail Trends are in Store for 2019?

*By Brian Bullock*

Online businesses opening brick-and-mortar storefronts. Artificial intelligence and augmented reality showing up on sales floors. Mobile technology improving and streamlining sales, payments and customer service. Stores without checkout counters. Where is the retail industry going?

Even though there are many opinions about how the future of retail will shake out, experts agree that shopping in stores is not going away and technology will continue to change retail processes. Gartner's Intelligence Report: Omnichannel 2018 says nearly 85% of sales still take place in brick-and-mortar stores.

Amazon's insurgence into physical stores shows how much the company values personal customer interaction. Its purchase of Whole Foods in 2017 was the first step. The grab-and-go Amazon Go convenience stores, its books stores and now Amazon 4-star have followed. According to Bloomberg reports, the company expects to have 3,000 stores open by 2021. Many other online companies have followed, and they're bringing new ways of doing business to brick-and-mortar retail.

Branding, technology and personalization will continue to be prevalent themes in 2019.

Brands are working hard to get to know their customers. Beauty stores now interact with customers by offering makeovers, product samples and styling. Hardware stores for years have treated their customers with new product demonstrations and how-to instructional workshops.

However, even though companies seek more personal interaction with their customers, it takes the world of data and technology to make shopping experiences memorable and marketable.

The Internet of Things (IoT) will likely end up being the ultimate customer interaction. It connects billions of consumer goods through wireless technology to a cloud-based network where data is gathered, stored and analyzed.

Due to the growth of mobile technology, more consumers expect the point of sale to be at their fingertips because they use their smartphones to shop. Christmas Day 2017 was the first time that mobile accounted for more than half of all purchases.

The Mobile Shopping Focus Report calls mobile shopping the "biggest disrupter to retail since the inception of eCommerce," and mobile is the No. 1 source of growth in retail. Expect that retail industry trend to continue. Learn more on the Retail Science website.

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# Aging Hardware Might be Slowing Down Your Business

*By Brian Bullock*

Merchants are great at stretching a buck. That effort normally includes making all kinds of equipment last as long as possible including service vehicles, tools and business computers. While it may be a good idea to squeeze a few extra miles out of a delivery van, doing that to a business computer that holds all the company's valuable data isn't very wise. According to a study by J. Gold Associates, if PCs are 5 years old or more:

- Employees using them are 29% less productive.
- Those PCs are costing up to $17,000 a year each in lost productivity.
- And each one wastes an average of 11 hours a year because of slow start up.

"Best practices dictate that you should look at replacing your computers every three years," says Mike Horn, Paladin Data Corp senior operations manager. "Your business relies on this equipment, so if you have your customer's interests at heart, it's important to run on new equipment."

That means keeping hardware up to date is a good idea and here are just a few reasons to upgrade.

**Outdated security** is probably at the top of the list. In an age when 55% of small businesses report a cyberattack each year, network security is crucial. According to a PwC report, data loss can cost small businesses up to $148,000 per incident.

**Slow performance** is an obvious and key reason to upgrade. If your computers are more than 3 years old, chances are you're running newer and more taxing software than when you purchased the system. Old hardware also slows customer checkout.

**System requirements** needed to run a digital business platform can be more demanding on older PCs. It can also lead to data loss, which can cost a business time, money and customer loyalty.

If any of this sounds familiar, it may be time to consider upgrading your hardware.

# Executive Perspective: Business Success Starts With People

Ten years ago, during the depth of the Great Recession, who would have thought finding good employees would ever be a problem. But now, with unemployment at historic lows – 3.7% in October 2018 – finding and hiring the right people isn't easy. In fact, Indeed, one of the top job websites in the world, says it's a problem for more than half of small businesses. However, there are still ways to find quality workers.

At Paladin Data Corporation, we have adopted the Rockefeller Habits explained in Verne Harnish's book "Scaling Up" to grow our business and recruiting quality employees is part of that process. Like many of the stores we service, we are a small business. So, finding and hiring good people is important to us, too.

The first step in the process is getting the word out, which should feature more than a Help Wanted sign on your front door. Spreading the word through job websites and social media is crucial in finding motivated and qualified applicants.

**Ryan Dunn**
**Chief Operations**
**Officer**

*Inc.com* says 79% of job seekers use social media in their searches.

In such a shallow applicant pool, businesses are often competing for top talent. So, it's important to emphasize what you can do for the candidates as much as what skills they need to get the job. Advertising benefits, perks and your region's attractions – proximity to beaches, skiing, hiking and biking trails and more – is often attractive to applicants.

One of the most important tools in our recruiting process is the "Topgrading Interview Guide." Even in its abbreviated form, it provides extensive and accurate insights into how job candidates will fit into and perform in your organization.

Once you find a group of "A" players – applicants with the right skills – it's also important that they fit into your company's culture. They must share the company's core values to fulfill its mission of great customer service and be solid contributors.

# Paladin Recognized for Growth

For the second consecutive year, Paladin Data Corporation has been recognized as one of Central Oregon's fastest growing companies by Cascade Business News.

"It's nice to be recognized for our annual growth. We have been growing steadily for nearly 40 years. Paladin has evolved into an intuitive business platform that simplifies operations for retail merchants," Founder and President Dan Nesmith explains. "We take pride in offering a powerful, but simple-to-use platform that automates the many, time-consuming tasks required to run a successful business."

"The retail industry is changing, and our business is helping merchants stay out in front of those changes. When they succeed, we succeed, and overall the industry is doing well," adds CEO Mike Williamson.

Photo courtesy of Cascade Business News: From left: Cortney Kivett, Paladin Marketing Director Jeff Rogers, Paladin CEO Mike Williamson, Leticia Williamson and Stryker Williamson.

# Going Mobile: Wireless Makes Sales, Customer Service Nimble

*By Brian Bullock*

What's an easy way to sell more goods and services?

Making them available to more customers is an effective tool, and using mobile technology to do it is becoming more prevalent for merchants today.

For customers, it's pretty simple to pull out a cellphone, do a Google search to go "Windows" shopping.

The Mobile Shopping Focus Report says mobile is the No. 1 source of digital growth in retail, and the figures are backing up that claim.

While most of the focus on mobile in retail is customer facing for browsing or shopping, the technology also makes businesses more agile, flexible and easier to operate.

The 2018 POS/Customer Engagement Survey by BRP says 62% of retailers planned to increase the use of mobile devices in their point of sale system by the end of last year.

It's not just making their products easier to purchase with mobile technology, either. Retailers are putting mobile tech in the hands of their store associates to help them do their jobs more efficiently.

These innovative applications can help sales associates demonstrate products, compare prices with other retailers, and make recommendations when working with customers on the sales floor, or out in a garden center or lumber yard.

Applications such as Paladin's Mobile[2] lets retailers utilize wireless technology to enable employees to complete sales transactions, schedule deliveries, capture signatures and display invoices, all from remote locations.

Other applications linked to digital platforms and point of sale systems, allow merchants to monitor their business from remote locations, as well.

Going mobile can set any retail business free.

A little over 40 years ago, John Pinkney and Steve Dodd started working together in a small lumberyard John's family had purchased in La Pine, Oregon. They began unloading lumber trucks, and soon were running the place. Today, they're co-owners of one of the busiest businesses in town.

Much of the store's business comes from local building contractors and area residents who handle their own home repairs and remodels.

"It seems like everybody is a do-it-yourselfer in La Pine. We're here to help them, though," John said.

Not long after they bought the business, they added hardware to their store. They chose Paladin Data Corp as their first point of sale system.

A few years later, John and Steve joined Ace Hardware and went to a point of sale system recommended by the co-op. They returned to Paladin in 2014.

"Our other system was fine, but it was much too complicated. This is easier to use, easier to explain. It's common sense," John explained.

The store recently implemented EZ-AD TV, one of Paladin's valuable integrations, which helps independent hardware retailers compete with online giants such as Amazon and Home Depot. The integration enhances customer service and the brick-and-mortar shopping experience with digital signage and a mobile app featuring real-time data from point of sale. The mobile app also uses the device's camera to scan barcodes and then displays pricing from across the web. Click here to learn more.

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# Paladin
# Tech Buzz
## *How BIG is Your Digital Footprint?*

*By Brian Bullock*

Now that 2018 is in the books, it's probably a good time to evaluate the effectiveness of your digital footprint – your website along with online, email and social media marketing. If that footprint isn't trackable, both by you and your customers, it's probably time to make some changes.

The inability to adapt to the new way of doing business, including competing in an increasingly digital marketplace, has led to much of the disruption in the retail industry. According to the 2018 POS/Customer Engagement Survey, from retail consulting firm BRP (Boston Retail Partners), future retail success belongs to the agile, mobile and flexible.

The study shows that retailers believe engaging customers with a seamless shopping experience, which spans their website, electronic marketing, brick-and-mortar store, and customer loyalty programs, is a key to success.

That means merchants need to:

- **Make sure your business is visible online.** A 2017 survey by Bright Local says 97% of consumers searched online for local businesses. So, if your website can't be found through those searches, you're invisible. Make sure your site is mobile-friendly, too.

- **Develop consistent and familiar brand messaging.** Website, email and social media marketing, and online advertising should all be consistent in look and message, and should be recognizable in your store, too. It helps customers connect your marketing and messages to your store. Creating omnichannel messaging and adding those capabilities to a point of sale system were the goal of 56% of respondents to the BRP survey for 2018.

- **Track your efforts.** There are many ways to track success. Customer reviews on Yelp and Google are easy and relatively pain-free sources. Facebook posts are another. Customer surveys through your loyalty programs, website or emails are other ways to gain valuable feedback.

Whatever your goals are for 2019, they should include making sure your digital footprints are effective and easy to follow.

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# Upcoming Events

*Paladin will be attending the following events. To arrange a visit, please email us at sales@paladinpointofsale.com*

**Ace Hardware Spring Convention**
March 26-28 | Orlando, FL
Learn more about this event

**Wallace Hardware March Market Madness**
March 27-29 | Pigeon Forge, TN
Learn more about this event

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## Learn How Paladin Can Put Your Data to Work

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# WEBINARS

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