

...Ideas and solutions to jump start the retail sales

# It's Not Just About The Merchandise

## 7 SALES STIMULATING TECHNOLOGIES

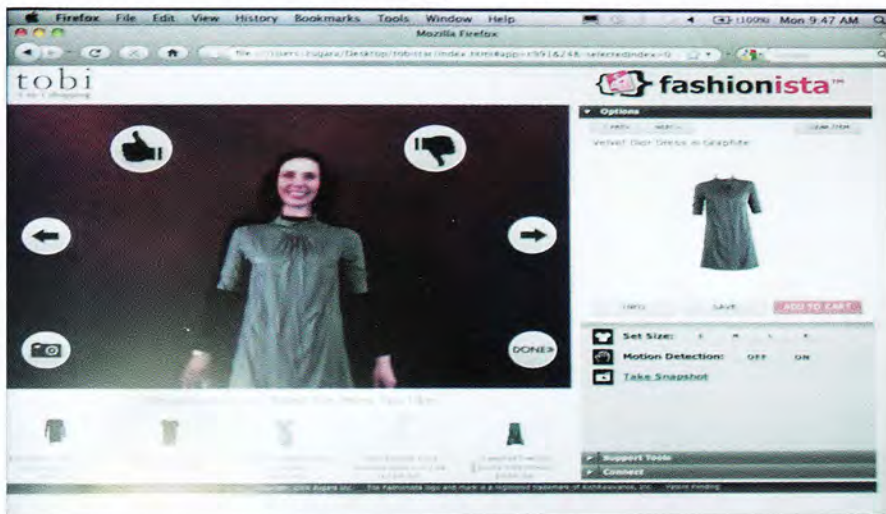
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Multi-Channel Retailing brings with it a whole new set of issues for retailers to address. The Innovation Station at the recent NRF Big Show highlighted several of the best current solutions in technology innovations.

The "take-away": Retailers must now integrate product information through multiple platforms: in-store, website, catalog and call centers.

### FASHIONISTA BY RICHRELEVANCE

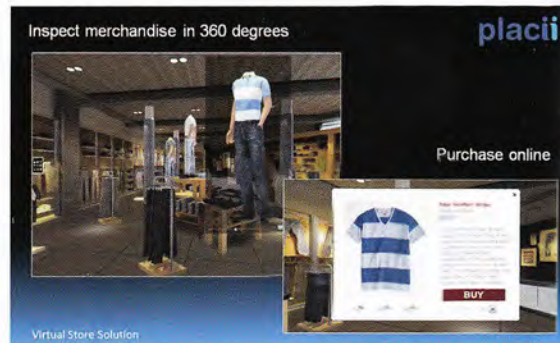
Fashionista is a webcam social shopping tool. Provides virtual try-on, images of clothing are merged with live video of the shopper, through the shopper's webcam. A shopper can virtually try-on their selections, onto an image of themselves, changing selections easily. Combines real-world and computer-generated data. Motion capture records an individual's movements onto on-screen model. Also provides personalized clothing recommendations.



In addition, Fashionista is a social shopping tool. Shoppers can share looks via Facebook, or email for feedback from friends. Virtually duplicates the "shopping with your friends" experience.

### Market Deals

Market Deals is an integrated marketing platform leveraging the internet, mobile media and social networks. Through their technolo-



gy retailers can reach and engage customers in and around local stores, deliver promotions and increase foot traffic. Customers can locate the nearest store and get directions.

- Market across digital channels
- Target promotions by GEO locations
- Personalize promotions
- Connect with customers, enable viral marketing

- Analyze buying patterns
- Cost-effective marketing vehicle. Traditional vehicles too static to react to changing market conditions.

### Placii

Placii offers a virtual online store, an interactive 3D store experience that has a realistic look similar to brick-and-mortar shopping. The vir-

tual store is targeted toward customers who consider shopping a recreation and enjoy social interaction with other shoppers, complete with 3D avatars, and the customer's friends via webcam to shop with. Clothing images may be viewed in 360°. Placii closely duplicates the retailer's environment and brand image. The virtual store can be embedded into a retailer's existing online shopping site. Placii can manage and host the service.

## MultimediaPlus

This company helps train sales associates and management staff for large retailers, where company-wide consistency is important. They specialize in developing internal communication programs for retailers. They provide custom interactive learning tools, CD or video, which allows a retailer to visually instruct staff. Makes learning more fun than reading a manual. Online evaluation of QuizScore results, provide a measurable ROI.

The interactive environment duplicates real-world possible scenarios an associate may en-



counter. Trainees are tested on their responses to customer situations and inquiries. The look of the environment is created to closely represent the brand image.

## Red Laser by Occipital



RedLaser provides barcode scanning, through an iPhone app. RedLaser searches for low online and local prices from thousands of retailers. Product search is available in the US and UK only. RedLaser can also send barcodes as an email attachment or email a list of products, plus website search capability. The app is considered a bargain-shopping assistant for iPhone users.

Retailers need to be aware that customers can be shopping in your store and be checking prices elsewhere. To prevent this from becoming a race to the bottom price, the emotional connection with the customer becomes all the more important.

## NAVTEQ

Navteq, a map technology company, provides location-specific advertising over all mobile devices, i.e. Blackberry, iPhone, and others. The service targets the location of the customer.

For example, a message will pop up on your iPhone: "There's a Starbucks 25 ft. from you. Here's a coupon for \$2 off." Starbucks can scan barcode from the customer's iPhone to give them discount.

When I asked how they generate the lists of people's numbers to send these ads to, Navteq's representative said through publishers. Hmmm... this sounds a little

bit like spam or telemarketing on mobile devices. Seems to me a retailer has to be sure that their customers want to receive these offer messages.

## CrossView

Crossview's technology enables a retailer to tie together all sales channels and create a cohesive brand experience. Their tagline: Upload (integrate) Once, Sell Anywhere.

For example, a customer can start an order online, then decide they need to speak to someone. A call-in station can take the call and pull up the order. The call station can contact a brick-and-mortar location to pull merchandise and have it ready for pickup by customer. Payment is the same across the board.

## CHANGING THE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

Today's teens, tweens, and twenty-somethings are changing shopping for all consumers.

- THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW SHOPPING ENVIRONMENTS FOR SHARING THE EXPERIENCE WITH FRIENDS TO REVIEW OUTFITS.

- NEW TECHNOLOGY MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO INSTRUCT RETAIL STAFF WITH A GAME-LIKE INTERACTIVE TEACHING TOOL. "EDUTAIN" IS COMBINING EDUCATION AND ENTERTAINMENT.

- MOBILE DEVICES OPEN UP NEW WAYS OF SELLING AND ADVERTISING.

- BARCODE READING THROUGH THE IPHONE APP REDLASER MEANS NOW CUSTOMERS CAN BE SHOPPING IN YOUR STORE, SCAN THE BARCODE OF AN ITEM, AND CHECK FOR PRICE AND AVAILABILITY AT OTHER RETAILERS.