

Retail: The New Normal

Adaptive Interventional Solutions for Post-Covid
Retail Environments



INTRODUCTION

Post lockdown, people are expected to come out. Shopping remains an intensely social phenomenon, with the caveat that customers now expect to follow mandated and visible safety measures. While the growth of online shopping poses a threat to physical retailers, a large volume of shopping is still expected to remain an in-person experience. Physical retailers and Brand stores must adapt and demonstrate their understanding of customer mindsets to win customers back into their stores.

This report details various store-level customer scenarios and touch points and is intended as a guide for retailers to understand the expected norms and best practices for their store format and environments. The report identifies various customer touch points under three broad Ps- People (staff and customers), Products (merchandise) and the Place (store environment).



**COVID-19
RESPONSE**

ACTION



EMPATHY



COMMUNICATION



CONTENT

People.

Page: 5 to 16

- Support
- Safety
- Clean hands
- Protective gear
- Shoes
- Protection
- Interaction
- Services
- Attire
- Hygiene

Product.

Page: 17 to 29

- Service
- Interaction
- Experience
- Hygiene
- Information
- Display
- Protection

Place.

Page: 30 to 44

- Avoid crowding
- Physical distancing
- Minimizing contact
- Navigation
- Signage
- Elevators
- Design
- Services
- Creating Awareness
- Empathy

People



PEOPLE

Support

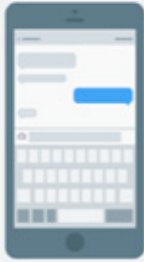


Image Credit: proprofs

ONLINE SUPPORT

Apps to book slots for visiting stores to keep customers in a safe environment that is not crowded.



Image Credit: kinstacd

ENTRY LEVEL SCANNING

Primary scanning at entry of large malls and shopping areas.

PEOPLE

Safety



TEMPERATURE CHECKS

Employees and customers are regularly checked for body temperatures to provide a safe environment in the store.

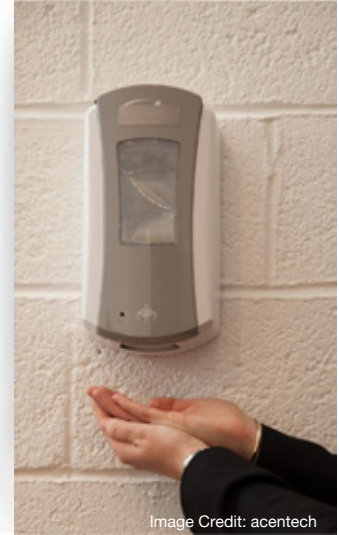


THERMAL SCREENING

Thermal cameras for screening in large areas to detect body temperature and capacity.

PEOPLE

Clean Hands



SANITIZER STATIONS

Establishing sanitizer stations at the entrance points of every premise to ensure clean hand hygiene for people entering in.

AUTOMATIC HAND SANITIZER DISPENSER

Automatic Hand sanitizer dispenser at entrance (for both staff & customer) and hotspots (trolley station / bag counter etc).

PEOPLE

Protective Gear



FACE MASKS

Establishing that people should start bringing their own masks and wear it in public spaces/crowded area.



MASK & GLOVE VENDING MACHINE

Masks and gloves vending machine could be placed near the entrance of main markets, institutions, malls etc. to ease the availability of such protective gear.

PEOPLE

Shoes



Image Credit: shutterstock

SHOE COVERS

Disposable shoe plastic covering can be provided at the entrance as a safety measure.



Image Credit: euronics

DISPOSABLE/WASHABLE FLOOR MATS

At the entrance and exit such washable / disposable door mats could be placed to sanitize shoes.

PEOPLE

Shoes



SHOE SANITIZING STATION

Automatic sanitization units which helps maintain the safety without any employee assistance.



SHOE CLEANING STATION

Show cleaning stations placed near entry to clean shoes which helps maintain the safety with some employee assistance.



PEOPLE

Protection



DISPOSABLE GLOVES

Disposable gloves should be made available at different places for the staff to use while tackling un-sanitized products and have to be disposed off immediately after use in a closed bin.



PERSONAL PROTECTION

Face shield and gloves for staff while handling products.

PEOPLE

Interaction



SANITIZING STATIONS

Sanitizing wipes and stations to be made available at the entrance as well as near the high touch point areas for customers and staff to clean the cart handles and other commonly touched areas. Trolley/ carts with plastic covering can also be provided. Such measure can make the cleaning process faster and easy.



PARTITION FOR SAFETY

Partitions in bars and dining areas for customer protection.

PEOPLE

Services



Image Credit: bitrix-cdn

SPACES HYGIENE

Portable UV-sterilization* or decontamination modules can be fitted in the fitting room as well as stock room and other BOH areas.

**Under professional guidance.*



Image Credit: businessadvising

SERVICE COUNTER

Separate service counter to be created for certain categories like lingerie, accessories, footwear, handbag, etc to avoid repeated touching.

PEOPLE

Attire



CLEANING UNIFORMS

Uniforms need to be cleaned by staff everyday by washing or using a method of disinfecting to ensure hygiene.

SAFETY ROBE/GOWN

Robes/gowns worn by staff over the uniform which are washed/replaced everyday to ensure hygiene.

PEOPLE

Safety



CLOSED BINS

Disposal bins should be placed within designated zones in store, structured with effective communication to safely dispose protective gear.



DECONTAMINATION

Use of UV-C decontamination boxes* to reuse protective gear
*Under professional guidance.

Product



PRODUCT

Service



PICK-UP COUNTER

Order via WhatsApp/phone/app and collect in store at the delivery counter which can be placed near the entrance as it is a low tech solution but with high human interference level.



ORDER IN APP

Order and payment through the WhatsApp and pick up in store to minimize interactions and contact with products in store

PRODUCT

Service



LOCKER SERVICE

Products ordered online can be picked up in store or in pick-up locations across the city using locker systems



CURBSIDE PICKUP

Delivery is done to the car so that customers just come and park in designated spot for pick up.

PRODUCT

Interaction



CLOSEUPS OF PRODUCTS TO MINIMIZE TOUCHING

Screens showing magnified digital high res pics of jewellery as catalogue to minimize touching.



DISPENSERS

Dispensers for grains and packaged goods day to day use products to avoid repeated touch.



PRODUCT

Product Experience



SEALED GARMENTS

Use of garment covers on expensive and non seasonal range to protect the garments.



VIRTUAL TRIALS

AR Mirrors to reduce physical trial and placed near the product or in more private trial rooms to ensure people use it as an alternative to experience the product.

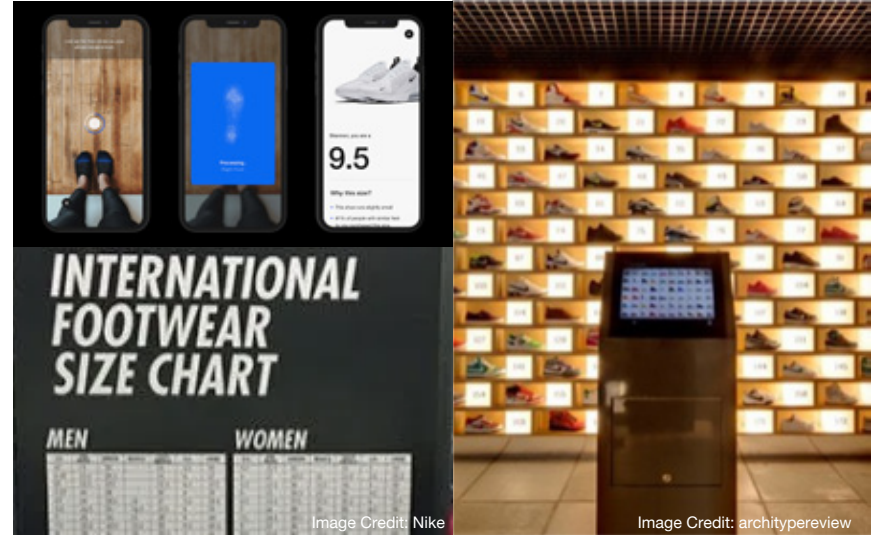
PRODUCT

Product Experience



DISPOSABLE PROTECTIVE GARMENT

Providing disposable socks to customers who want to try shoes in store.



GALLERY EXPERIENCE

Store showcasing product for customers to see and buy online.

PRODUCT

Product Hygiene



Image Credit: American River medical; Lanieri

SANITIZING & QUARANTINING PRODUCTS

Sanitize with steam cleaning/UV lamp and quarantining products in a designated space when stock arrives to the store and after customer trials.



Image Credit: wp

DISINFECTION ROOM

Disinfection of Tried apparels - same technology is being used to sanitize masks in large quantities.



PRODUCT

Product Hygiene



PROVIDING BINS FOR TRIED GARMENTS

The visible treatment of segregating used products from unused ones to create a more safe environment for customers.



SCANNING OF GOODS

Sanitization tunnels or shelters* for the sanitization or quarantining of products and goods.

**Under professional guidance.*

PRODUCT

Information



Image Credit: talkbusiness

DIGITAL SHELF TALKERS

Digital shelf talkers preventing people from touching products to check price and other information etc that can be easily programmed by retailers.



Image Credit: Getty

ELECTRONIC LABELS

Larger graphical call outs for product information in shelving with digital advertisements.



PRODUCT

Information



Image Credit: pixelart

VIDEO SCREENS

AI/ gesture / voice operated video screens to provide product information and to avoid touching or opening of products.



Image Credit: lego flagship store | Amsterdam

DEMO TABLE

Dedicated counter for demonstration of Newly launched products by staff to prevent touching of products.

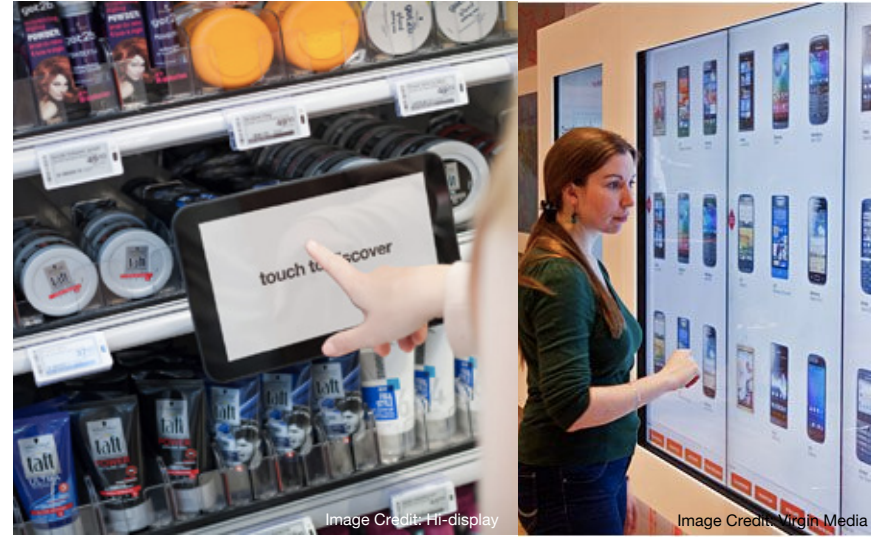
PRODUCT

Display



LIMITED PRODUCT DISPLAY

Limiting FOH display and expanding BOH, focussing on display of styles rather than stock density, and a larger stock room serving the required size from a larger BOH.



DIGITAL CATALOGUE

Showcase more options/colours or similar/matching products through a digital library available to browse on digital screens on shelf.

PRODUCT

Protection



Image Credit: Funnynewsfix

FAST MOVING ITEMS IN MULTIPLE SPOTS

Having commonly purchased / fast moving items at multiple places to prevent crowd build up.



Image Credit: Food Navigator USA



Image Credit: Urban Taste Bud

PRE-PACKAGED GOODS IN COMBOS FOR QUICK CHECKOUT

Selling combos of frequently purchased items such as breakfast cereal and milk or bread and butter near the checkout counter to promote convenience, quick checkouts, impulse purchases and reduce touching of products.

PRODUCT

Protection



Image Credit: Freepng

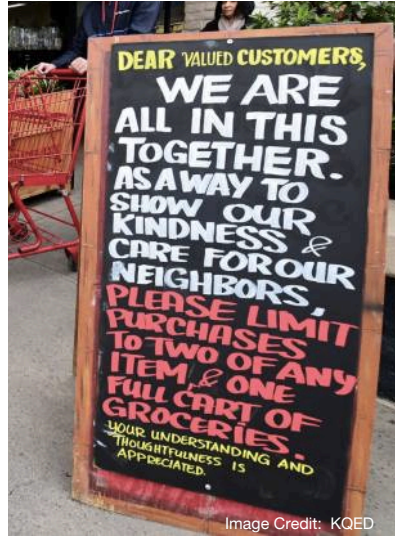


Image Credit: KQED

RESTRICTING TAKEAWAYS

Restricting takeaways from stores to restrict traffic at billing and checkouts and promoting home delivery for customer convenience.

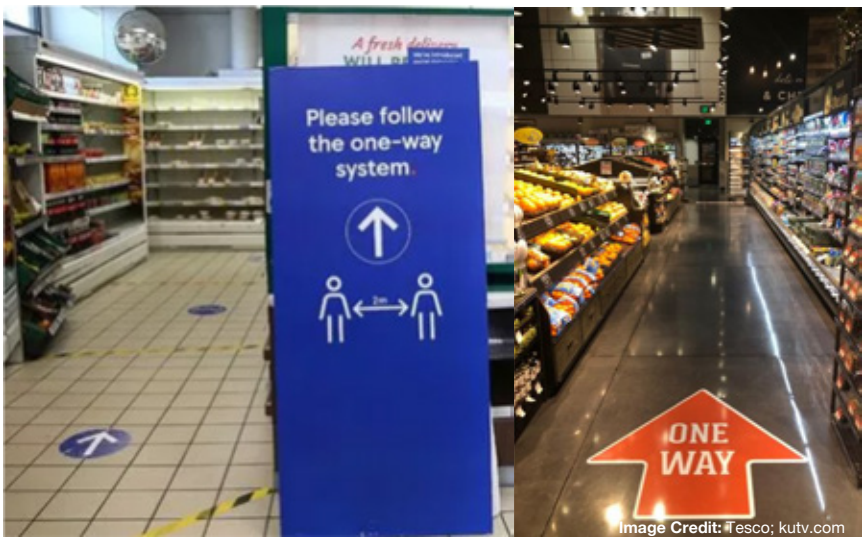
Place





PLACE

Avoid Crowding



ONE WAY SYSTEM

Creating one way aisles to minimize contact while crossing paths.



OUTDOOR SIGNAGE FOR GUIDELINES

Guidelines communicated at entry point to make the safety measures taken in-store clear for the customer

PLACE

Physical Distancing



CAPACITY CONTROL

Allowing a fixed number of customers in the store - 1 person per 4sq.m. of retail floor area to minimize crowding in store.



QUEUE MANAGEMENT

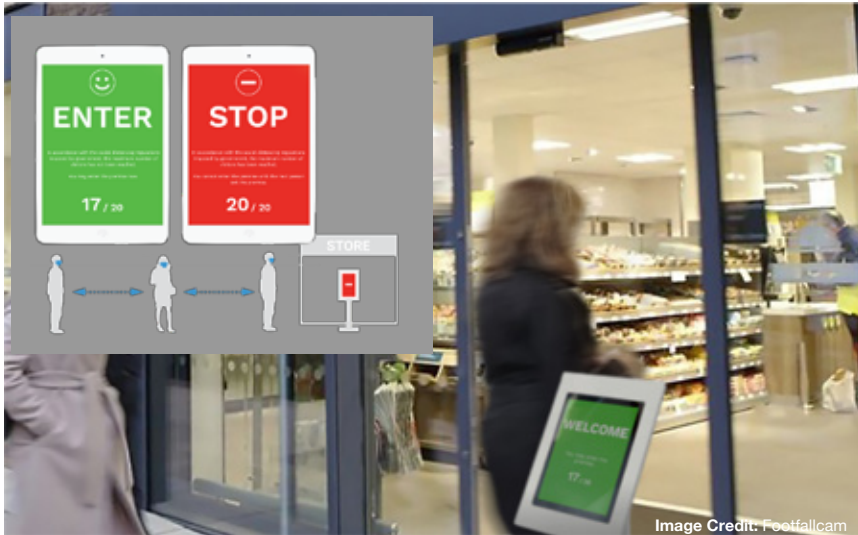
Queue boxes or markings with/without seating near store entrance area and check-out.





PLACE

Minimizing Contact



CUSTOMER OCCUPANCY SYSTEM

Developing an app or token system which helps to provide information of how many customers are currently in the store waiting time.

SEPARATE ENTRY AND EXIT

Providing separate ways to the entry / exit for store.

PLACE

Minimizing Contact



AUTOMATIC / GESTURE OPERATED DOORS

Preventing customers from touching commonly touched surfaces such as doors by providing automatic sliding doors with motion sensors for entry or gesture sensor operated doors for toilets and trial rooms.



SAFETY PRECAUTIONS FOR FOOD

Open kitchen with a plexiglass separator to allow customers to see hygiene measures taken in the kitchen during food preparation



PLACE

Navigation



OVERHEAD SIGNAGES

Aisle markers with sub-categories to help the user in finding the required product easily.



STORE NAVIGATION - COMMUNICATION

Ease of In-Store Navigation (Due to one way aisle system) .
Such communication can be placed at entry of the store and important midpoints



PLACE

Signage



FLOOR PROJECTIONS

Floor guides to help the customer for better navigation of desired products.



VINYL FLOOR STICKERS

Marking on floor or safety grid to maintain the protocol of physical distancing inside and outside the store.

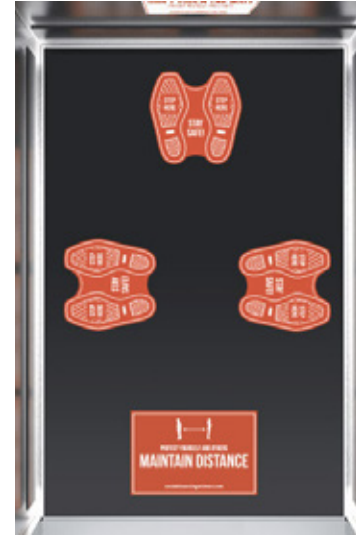
PLACE

Elevators



LIFT OPERATORS

Avoiding repeated contact of surfaces in multi-storey stores by employing a lift operator and/or providing AI/Voice command operating panel.



MAINTAINING DISTANCE IN ELEVATORS

Physical distancing in elevators using markers and communication on the floor.

PLACE

Design



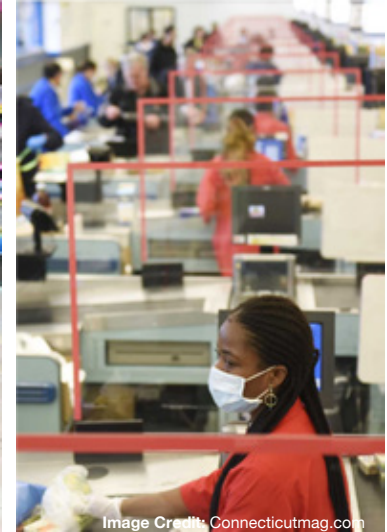
RAISED RACKS FOR HYGIENE

Raised floor display allowing to reduce the number of gondolas, providing more space for physical distancing.



MULTIPLE CHECKOUT STATIONS

Multiple check out stations with/ without glass partition will help to maintain the safety of employee and allow faster check-out.



PLACE

Services



Image Credit: 7 Eleven

Image Credit: Uniqlo



Image Credit: Amazon Go

VENDING MACHINES

Allowing users to purchase and pay for products in supermarkets, apparel stores and even food in public places, vending machines minimize product contact and allow hassle free purchase if they are user-friendly

JUST WALK OUT SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

Technology that detects when shoppers have taken or returned products on the shelves and automatically bills them based on their membership.

PLACE

Services



PERSONAL SHOPPER SERVICE

An offline or online service, a personal shopper can minimize customer contact with multiple products in store



MANNEQUINS FOR TRIALS

Customers will be hesitant to try products for hygiene purposes, having more mannequins of varying sizes will help customers visualize them better, helping them make purchases without trial.

PLACE

Services



Image Credit: Mynorthwest

SELF CHECKOUT

Providing self checkout counter for easy check-out and minimized interactions.



Image Credit: Expactwoman ; Visa

CONTACTLESS PAYMENT METHODS

Encourage mobile/contactless payment options with cards and UPI for paperless billing. Such codes and system can be placed over checkout counter.

PLACE

Creating Awareness



TECHNOLOGY

Smart Dome and similar technology which reminds the customer to maintain physical distance, fitted on the ceiling.



EMPATHY IN COMMUNICATION

Communicating customer safety and guidance with empathy through signage.



PLACE

Creating Awareness



Image Credit: Thomas Maresca/UPI

CREATING AWARENESS THROUGH INTERACTION

Encouraging kids and customers to use hand sanitizer using mascots to grab their attention.

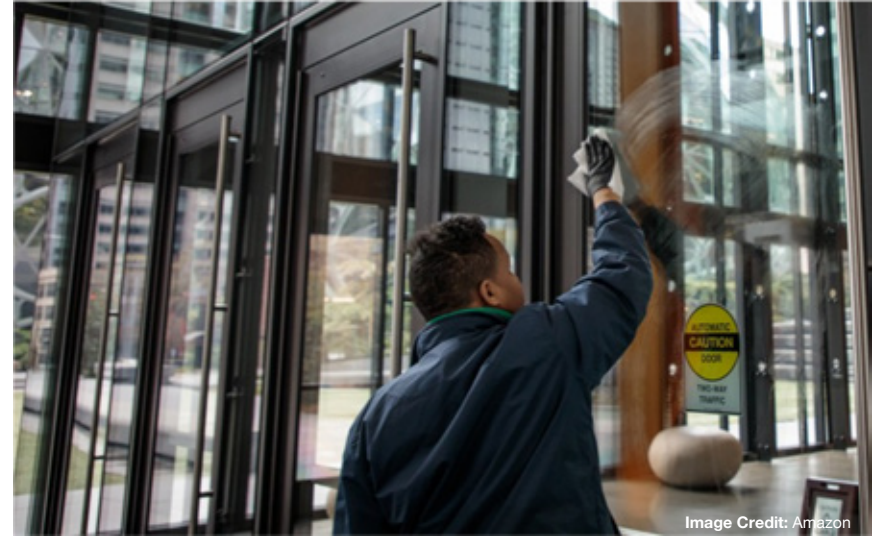


Image Credit: Amazon

VISIBLE CLEANING

Cleaning commonly touched surfaces in intervals by the staff to ensure sanitization and prevention of spread. This should be visible for customers to feel safe.





PLACE

Empathy



Image Credit: Tesco



Image Credit: nbcсандiego.com

STAFF INVOLVEMENT

Training store staff to communicate effectively, T-shirts with empathetic messages.

SPECIAL SHOPPING HOURS FOR SENIORS

Providing specific services and hours of operation to seniors and the differently abled.

CONCLUSION

Customer's happiness is dependent on their in-store experience and comfort. Stores taking basic steps, necessary to give customers and staff peace-of-mind regarding their health and safety are sure to win their loyalty and stay in the game.

Physical retailing can always be made more enjoyable by improvising store environments.

For more information contact:

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