

## 5 Issues Retailers Are Dealing With During COVID



As markets dip their toes into the reopening process and stores are welcoming shoppers through the door again, retail is facing never before seen challenges.

Here are a few of these issues that retailers are dealing with while operating amid COVID:

### Pressure from Wary Consumers

We all knew that regaining consumer trust wouldn't be easy for the commercial scene. One of the greatest challenges retailers are facing today is consumer distrust. Retailers are responsible not only for keeping the store safe and clean but also to ensure that guests feel that way, too.

This is being accomplished by relaying the new measures and protocols for cleaning on signs and through store-wide announcements.

Masks are a must to enter, hand sanitizers can be found at every corner, one-way signs are along the floor to guide traffic, and social distancing reminders are posted on aisles.

### Keeping Up with Sanitization

The reopening process is all about keeping the space clean. Sanitization needs are more extreme than ever before as stores are faced with a totally unforeseen retail atmosphere.

Stores are dealing with the new demand for disinfecting by increasing their cleaning staff, embarking on hourly clean-ups and wiping down high-traffic areas after each use. Merchandise that is handled by shoppers is taken off the floor and put into a separate bin for sanitization while carts and baskets are disinfected upon return.

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### Payment Methods

COVID revealed that cash payments can be a large hazard for shoppers and store workers. After discoveries that the coronavirus pathogen can stay alive and active on paper-substances for an alarming amount of time, cash became a taboo for many businesses.

Right now, some retailers are going completely cashless to avoid the risks altogether. Others have certain lanes for cash payments and others for cards only.

Moving forward, we may see brands opting for self-checkout and other cashierless methods to deal with the challenges posed by paper currency during virus outbreaks.

### Limitations on Supply

COVID's global impact on the supply chain was one of the greatest disruptors that modern society has ever experienced. Shipping delays, backorders, oversupply and other inventory stresses were the norm for any retailer that stayed open these past few months.

Now that markets are reopening, the supply chain situation remains outside of the norm. Distribution and import issues, changing consumer preferences and a massive e-commerce boom are forcing physical stores to rethink the way that they're selling and ordering their goods.

### Keeping Team Members Protected

On-site teams need to be at the forefront of retail concerns as doors are reopening to welcome guests.

The customer is always right, but COVID is funneling more attention to team members that are on the floor. After all, it is team members that are keeping business afloat in these difficult times. If a team member would be compromised, it would be a major hit to the brand and store location.

All this and more is being done within retailers to maintain a safe and healthy staff. In the future, expect to see stores designed with enhanced measures in place to keep everyone protected.

