

# THE IMPACT OF COVID-19, WHAT'S NEXT?

## THOUGHT LEADERSHIP SERIES

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It is without doubt that retailers are working on a strategy for 'what is next'. The need to remodel operations and practices to meet new ways of shopping, the changes in consumer demand, the need to consolidate and reduce costs and the prerequisite to instil brand loyalty is at the forefront. Daily we read news about the impact of the virus, what retailers should be doing to survive, but we also read how leading retailers are innovating and adapting quickly to ensure they continue to have a place in a difficult marketplace.

Technology has a role to play in providing retailers the means to innovate and stay relevant quickly whilst ensuring they have a foundation to ignite their transformation for continued success. The following discusses how to balance the immediate response you need to be working on in order to be back in the game, but also how you can springboard into the future with a winning strategy.

### IMMEDIATE DEMANDS

Covid-19 has led to businesses having to consider the following to enable them to reopen or continue to trade:

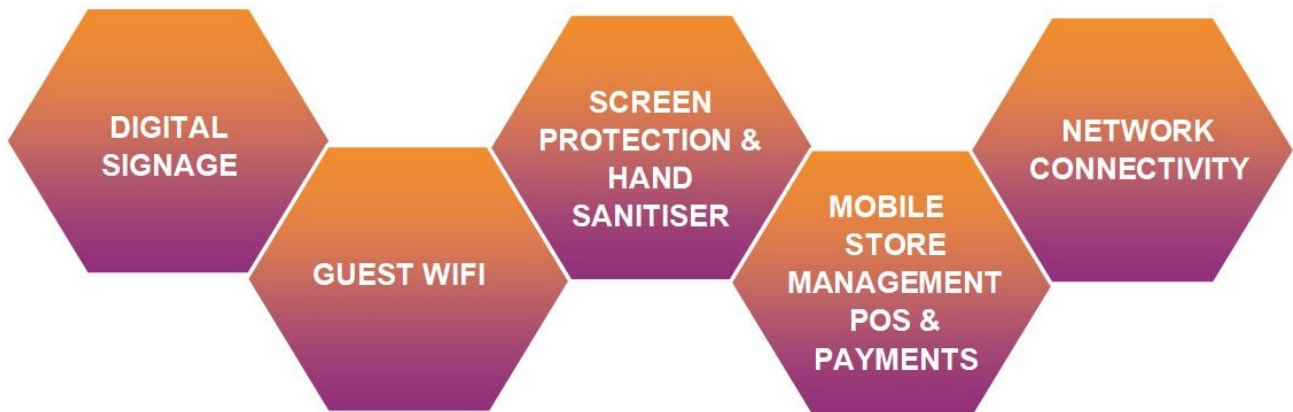


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### THE TECHNOLOGY

Technology provides a means to deliver to these new demands, but if you choose right the technology can also provide your business with a platform for digitalisation and optimisation for the future.



### THE NOW SOLUTION

As we can see from the above the solutions can help you mobilise new practices and ways of working whilst considering the customer journey and protecting your staff. For instance the technology can help:



As it is pertinent at present our partners Ergonomic Solutions and ClearWater Hygiene are able to support your PPE needs including; **Liquid hand sanitiser** plus dispensing units or mounts and **Protective screens** and **PED paddles** for POS to ensure the 2 metre guidance can be maintained at point of sale.

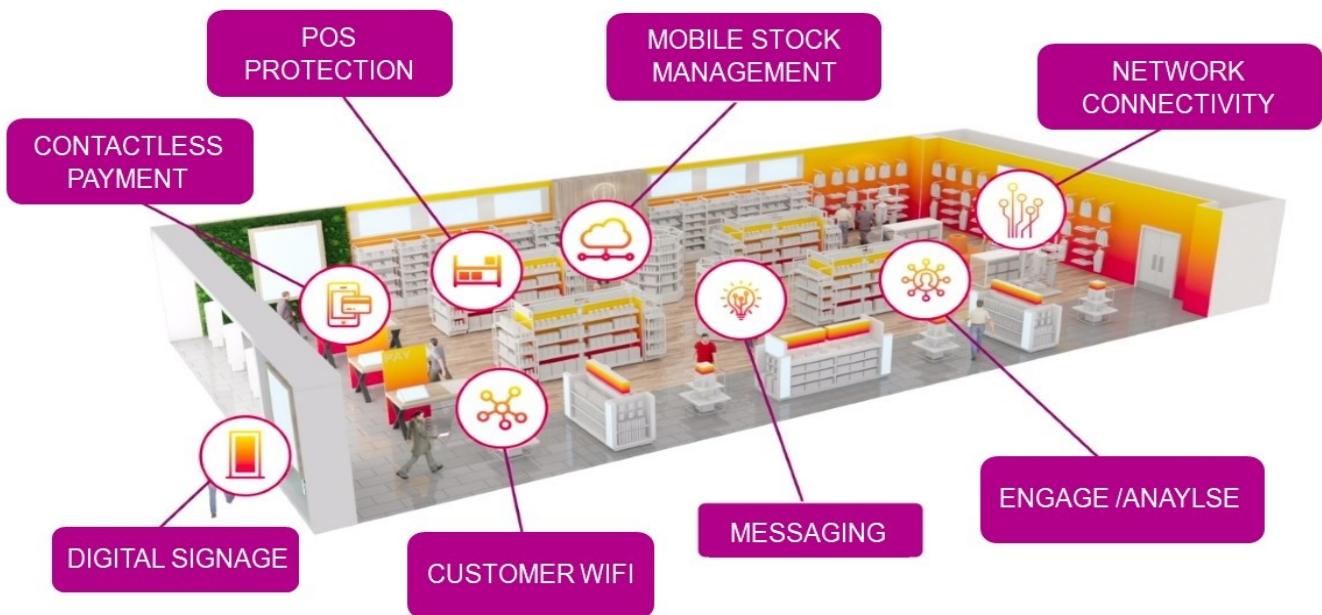
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### THE FUTURE SOLUTION

But as a business you need to be thinking of the future. You need a strategy that enables you to recover from the impacts of Covid-19. With recent figures stating the decline in overall sales in some retail sectors you need a strategy to shape your business for the future and as part of this you need to consider store optimisation, excelling at customer experience, ensuring a seamless experience between online and offline, nurturing and helping your staff excel at what they do, consider the layout and utilisation of your stores and much more.

We explore how technology provides you with the ability to deliver this much needed innovative strategy. Let's take a look at a customer journey and the touchpoints where digital, mobile and cloud solutions can deliver a customer experience, optimise store operations, streamline online and offline to ensure they are a seamless experience and instil brand loyalty, ultimately transforming your retail experience to make your brand thrive.



### DIGITAL SIGNAGE

With **Digital Signage** it simply is 'more than a screen'. The solution enables content to be managed and updated instantly and remotely giving you ultimate flexibility. Utilise it to communicate to customers and staff how to behave whilst visiting your store and support and aid queue management and virtual queuing. Create retail theatre to help your brand resonate with your customers.

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### CUSTOMER WIFI - CONNECT, ENGAGE & ANALYSE

**Customer WiFi** enables you to connect with your customers during their visit and after. From providing guidance with a message to **engaging** with them with relevant product information, offers, providing services, to entertaining your customers with gamification and advertising.

Critical to help mould your strategy is **analysis** – our solution helps you understand customer behaviour, what stores they visit, what days and times, customer demographics and much more.

### POS and PAYMENT

**POS and Contactless Payment** – in a mature market you are well versed on traditional POS solutions. But what if you did something different. What if you introduced a solution that was a fraction of the cost of traditional solutions, not only to purchase, but to maintain and manage? A solution that was Android based enabling you to revolutionise the fixed POS and payment point. Free your staff to carry out transactions anywhere in the store. Free up your retail space with instore colleagues having everything they need to do their jobs and enhance the way they do with Mobile Stock, POS, Payments on one device in their hand.

### MOBILE STOCK MANAGEMENT

Utilising the latest technology built for smart devices your store colleagues can have everything they need to manage stock accessible in their hand. Having the right stock at the right time and having clear visibility of stock is crucial in the retail environment. If this is not managed effectively your customers are disappointed, resulting in lost sales and excessive stock, both incur high costs. Our mobile stock management solution enables store colleagues to count stock, have visibility of stock balances, check orders due for delivery all in an intuitive solution on a mobile device. Basically a mobile version of your back office system.

With consumer expectations growing and the move to an increasingly digital world this solution gives retailers the edge in a hugely competitive landscape creating a mobile ecosystem for operational excellence. Connecting your store colleagues leads to a connected customer experience leveraging brand loyalty and increased sales. Once mobile you can further digitally transform your business with our Mobile and Fixed POS solution, Mobile Pay, Click and Collect, the options are endless.

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### NETWORK CONNECTIVITY

Without the right foundations your digitalisation strategy will not reap the benefits you expect or desire. The provision of a robust, flexible wireless network that enables you to adapt and expand is crucial. Any offering needs to deliver the appropriate network security and a central point of visibility and management. With the impact of Covid-19 businesses are reviewing Business Continuity in a different light and networking and connectivity needs to be agile to support a new type of circumstance.

Does your solution deliver a high-speed, resilient network access for staff, customers, and business devices? Are site routers that integrate WiFi, wired, firewall, and VPN services a single solution? Do you have cloud-based management and services to give you agility and reduce costs, automate deployments and centralise support? In a time when you are looking to reduce costs. You will be surprised how the right network connectivity not only can facilitate new technology and solutions, but it will also ease your IT burden and operational expenditure.

### MANAGED SERVICE

A complete Managed Service can deliver the streamlined requirements necessary to help manage costs in your business. By optimising and managing your IT environment you not only improve costs and service you also give your business the agility to grow and adapt to new situations. A Managed Service can provide datacentre deployment and management, customer service desk with full support and maintenance, hardware management, application hosting, field services support, security consultancy and much more.

## Embrace the Digital Transformation Journey by bringing Technology and Strategy Together for a Better Future

**It is clear how technology can support your retail business with the 'new normal' and by embracing these solutions you can begin a digital transformation journey. It is vital to ensure you bring technology and strategy together as this will enable you to transform your customer experience, operational processes and business model. Utilising innovative and flexible technology such as Cloud and Android will take you to the next level in delivering business strategy with innovation.**