



Unilever

How FMCG businesses can centralise their e-commerce efforts

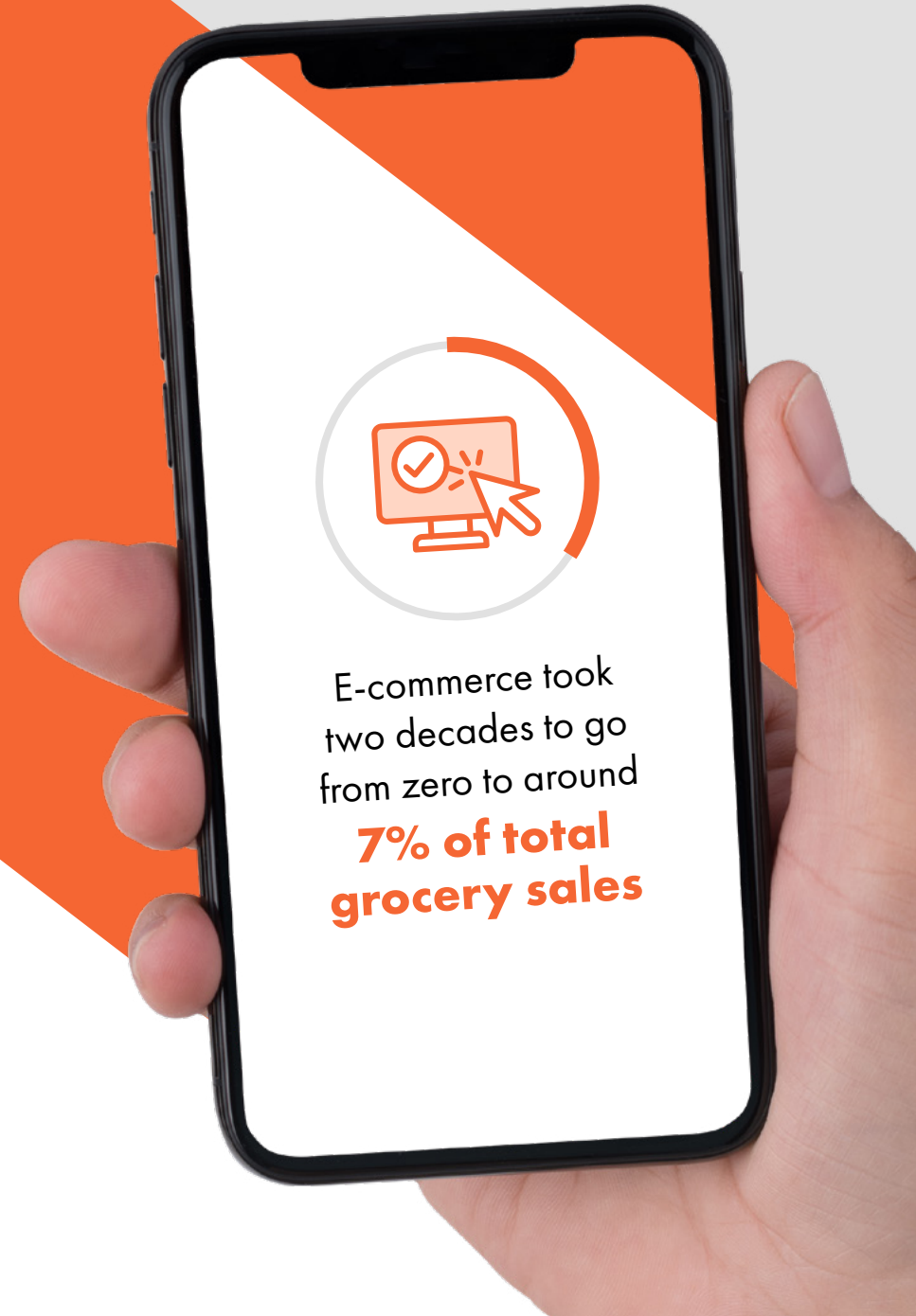


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To meet the ever-changing needs of today's consumers, FMCG businesses have been forced to expand and evolve, and in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, this has become even more pressing. In the UK, e-commerce took two decades to go from zero to around 7% of total grocery sales. Over the lockdown period, it then went from 7% to 13% in about eight weeks.¹

Whilst this surge in customers is positive, many FMCG businesses are struggling to evolve their offering so they can meet this new online demand. Businesses are faced with increasing complexity and fragmentation across their data, internal processes and supply chain. So, how can you overcome these challenges at your organisation, and capitalise on new opportunities?

Well, the answer lies in centralising your e-commerce efforts. This will ensure you can meet the requirements of today's e-commerce landscape and best position yourselves for growth now and in the future.



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Create a single point of truth for your data

One of the key reasons that FMCG businesses are struggling to evolve their offering is because their internal IT systems struggle to keep product data, customer data and order data straight across disparate systems, sources and marketplaces.

Add to this the fact that these brands must keep pricing and promotions consistent across channels, update in-stock inventory and get to grips with new channels that appear in the mix, and it's easy to understand why internal teams are disconnected, and struggle to innovate.

Unfortunately, this isn't the only challenge faced by FMCG businesses. Much of their product and sales data is currently held with retailers, making it difficult for them to unearth the key insights they need to drive innovative customer experiences and increase their sales. To combat this and drive superior customer experiences,

many brands are embracing a direct-to-consumer (D2C) model, enabling them to collect their own unique customer and product data. However, without the right tools at their disposal, FMCG businesses may struggle to implement a D2C model, as they don't have 360-degree access to the data and insights they need to deliver compelling e-commerce experiences.

Ultimately, the only sure-fire way to overcome these challenges and capitalise on growing online opportunities is through data transformation. To achieve this, you will need to centralise data business-wide, and this means investing in an e-commerce platform with a powerful transformation engine which collects your product data once, and then harmonises it across the full range of marketing, selling and fulfilling activities.

With the right solution, you'll gain the ability to:



Optimise the flow of data

across hundreds of e-commerce channels worldwide.



Boost productivity

by eliminating the need to manually check your product pages on e-commerce sites globally.



Build a powerful brand

by protecting your brand image and ensuring that your products look their best on retail e-commerce sites.



Get easy and efficient access to analytics-driven insights

via dashboards, Excel reports, APIs, or a browser extension.



Achieve profitable growth

by learning from the competitive landscape and identifying new e-commerce opportunities.

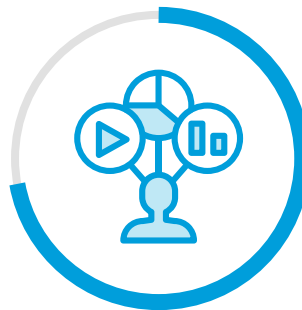


Automate and consolidate

Over the past few months, FMCG businesses have faced an unprecedented workload – not only has online consumer packaged goods (CPG) shopping increased by 58% since the crisis began, but 72% of CPG shoppers have also stated that they're influenced by brands' activities during the crisis, and 48% said they would consider brand switching.^{2,3}

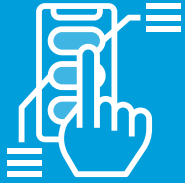
So, as your internal teams attempt to capitalise on this surge in online shoppers, manage your brand's response to the crisis and find new ways to serve and retain your existing customers, how can you reduce your team's workload?

The answer lies in automating time-consuming tasks such as product data management, and consolidating orders from marketplaces, webstores, and first-party retailers in a comprehensive, unified view.



72% of CPG shoppers have also stated that they're influenced by brands' activities during the crisis^{2,3}

This will give you the power to:



Launch and track and automate

your inventory quantity, prices, and product data across global marketplaces such as Amazon, eBay and more, eliminate duplicate product data and prevent potential overselling scenarios.



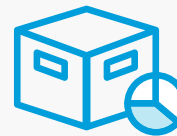
Consolidate inventory management

to reduce the possibility of overselling by synchronising inventory quantity across all of your selling channels.



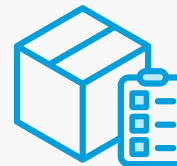
Include the characteristics that define a product

to ensure that it's correctly listed and easily discovered on a marketplace, and define custom attributes for added flexibility and more accurate product information.



Supplement or improve product data,

optimising for the unique requirements of each marketplace.



Group individual products into bundles

to keep your quantities in sync across bundles, individual SKUs and channels.



Optimise fulfilment operations

The pandemic has had a substantial impact on the global supply chain, and your FMCG business is likely to have realised the consequences – from the limited availability of materials, to manufacturing and delivery delays, the closure of your warehouse and fulfilment centres, and the continuing problem of reduced capacity caused by social-distancing requirements.

Many FMCG businesses rely on workers to manage operations across their supply chain, and it's only in the wake of Covid-19 that these organisations have been forced to recognise that even a small loss in the number of staff working can create significant gaps in logistical networks.

But it's not all doom and gloom – as beauty-product brands and retailers who were prepared to scale up their inventory and shipment operations during the pandemic reported that e-commerce sales were twice as high as their pre-COVID-19 levels.⁴

So, how can your business optimise your fulfilment operations, so you can proactively protect against issues now and in future, and ensure you are prepared to capitalise on new opportunities? The answer lies in partnering with the right organisation who can help you to automate, optimise and centralise your operations.



Here's what this can help you to achieve:



Build a diversified, resilient fulfilment network

and protect your business from future crisis by leveraging a network of reliable partners.



Maximise efficiency

by automating inventory synchronisation and enabling intelligent order routing.



Quickly pinpoint inventory issues

including excess inventory, stranded inventory, and aged inventory.



Efficiently manage orders from your sales channels

by consolidating all marketplace, website and even first-party retail orders into a single view.



Integrate with your third-party logistics partners

quickly, easily and accurately, and synchronise product availability for updates across marketplaces and websites.





Centralise your marketing campaigns

Right now, many FMCG brands are searching for new ways to reach their audience and maximise their sales online, so they can remain competitive in such a volatile marketplace. To achieve this, businesses are increasingly incorporating relevance-led brand building into their strategies, adopting cross-channel to scale their efforts, and sharpening their consumer targeting with personalised point-of-sale marketing.

However, to realise the true value of these tools, FMCG businesses need visibility of all their marketing efforts, so they can build a unified strategy, develop new insights from their digital campaigns and ensure this information is fed back into product development and customer experience.

So, how can you centralise your marketing efforts at your FMCG business? Well, you'll need to invest in a platform that gives you more control to create, monitor and manage all your campaigns from within one central interface.

Here's what this will enable you to achieve:



Build your brand and drive sales

on search, shopping, social and marketplace channels.



Stay ahead in a highly competitive space

with deep market insights and creative competitor tactics.



Drive ad spend effectiveness

by streamlining campaign setup, management and tracking.



Reach more destinations faster

and accommodate cross-channel opportunities with ease.



Reach your best audience

with top-notch segmentation and refinement across multiple channels.



Achieve all of this and more with ChannelAdvisor

At ChannelAdvisor, our experts have spent nearly 20 years helping brands to better execute their marketplaces, digital marketing, and fulfilment strategies – all within a single platform. Our powerful and proven solution will help your FMCG business centralise your e-commerce efforts and realise real results. As your trusted e-commerce partner, we're here to help you optimise your data, drive efficiency across your organisation and expand your business across the globe.



[Request a consultation](#)

To discover how we can help your FMCG business to evolve your operations, deliver exceptional customer experiences and succeed in the online world, speak to your Account Director, Arlando, on **+44 2033 566 246** or email **arlando.velho@channeladvisor.com**



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