

Best Practices for Opening Your New Store



Congratulations! You're opening a new store.

You're in good company: recent data suggests [brick-and-mortar stores](#) are making a comeback. And, it doesn't hurt that [seventy-eight percent](#) of consumers prefer to shop in store, or that physical stores [generate 94%](#) of total retail sales.



78% of consumers¹ prefer to shop in store and physical stores generate **94% of total retail sales.²**

But opening a new location is stressful. We would know! Our founders, Gordon Russell and Jay Stotz, built a successful apparel chain that had 13 locations and a thriving online store. By following these best practices (and making sure you have the technology to support them!), you'll be off and running in no time.

1 Create micro sales plans for each location (and channel!)

Traditionally, the rule was to confirm that you have enough product on hand or on order to meet a master sales plan, then distribute inventory across your channels and locations based on store size and floor space. But this "set-it-and-forget-it" method will no longer cut it in today's competitive environment. Customers demand instant satisfaction, and you need real accountability and a "sense of ownership" from your associates.

To ensure you have the right product in the right place at the right time, create micro plans by store location or channel, merchandise class, season, and any other categories that define your merchandise. What sells at a high volume in your first location, be it sundresses, neutral colors, petite styles, or size 6 shoes, may very well be opposite from what performs in your next one.

Fortunately, a robust omnichannel retail management system can help you build robust sales plans from the ground up, and then report against your plans in real time.

2 Dynamic Inventory Management is better than Static Inventory Management

In the omnichannel environment it is critical to maintain accurate inventory balances. To do this conduct cycle counts weekly, or at least monthly in your brick & mortar locations. Essential that cycle counts are called out as soon as you uncover a pattern of discrepancy (i.e., your inventory

Build a sales plan

SALES PLANS

New Import Search...

LOCATION	AMOUNT	DATE
Boston	\$932.00	07/13/2015
New York	\$846.00	07/13/2015
Boston	\$780.00	07/12/2015
New York	\$700.00	07/12/2015
Boston	\$660.00	07/11/2015

COMPANY

LOCATIONS

USERS

ROLES

POS

SALES PLANS

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Report against your plans in real time.

FILTERS GROUPS METRICS PIVOTS BETA SORT COMPARE OPTIONS

Select to add

Source Sales » Net Sales

Sales Plans » Amount

06/16/2019 - 06/30/2019		06/01/2019 - 06/15/2019	
LOCATION » NAME	SOURCE SALES » NET SALES	SALES PLANS » AMOUNT	SOURCE SALES » NET SALES
Online	\$35,329.47	\$37,953.00	\$34,880.93 1.29%
San Francisco	\$50,362.93	\$50,603.00	\$32,793.03 53.6%
New York	\$86,053.04	\$114,221.00	\$59,381.31 44.9%
	\$171,745.44	\$202,777.00	\$127,055.27 35.2%
			SALES PLANS » AMOUNT
			\$35,389.00 7.25%
			\$26,969.00 87.6%
			\$60,679.00 88.2%
			\$123,037.00 64.8%

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#	DESCRIPTION	CURRENT PRICE	EXPECTED QTY	COUNT QTY
101663	Allen Sweater - Green - XS	\$20.00	2	<input type="text"/>
101664	Allen Sweater - Green - S	\$20.00	2	<input type="text"/>
101665	Allen Sweater - Green - M	\$20.00	2	<input type="text"/>
101666	Allen Sweater - Green - L	\$20.00	2	<input type="text"/>
101667	Allen Sweater - Green - XL	\$20.00	1	<input type="text"/>
101668	Allen Sweater - Green - XXL	\$20.00	2	<input type="text"/>

LEARN MORE > about Springboard Retail's best-in-class inventory management capabilities.

management system shows you have an item in stock when it's nowhere to be found on the sales floor or backstock).

A robust inventory management system can allow your locations to update and reconcile inventory in real time, ensuring that your business won't suffer from the "fog of war" that comes from you not being able to be everywhere at once.

Waiting a full year between physical inventories means you could be sitting on many undiagnosed issues—employee theft and extended periods of selling mismarked items being two of the most concerning.

3 Location, location, location

Regardless of what you'll be selling, where you'll be selling will be critical to your success. Though there are a few questions you should ask yourself before those realtor appointments.

Determine where your customers are, using the data you've already collected from their online orders. Running a report of all customers by ZIP code will give you an easy starting point; then cross check with your target areas' population demographics—the local chamber of commerce can help here.

Consider where your competition is, and remember that being close to them isn't necessarily a bad thing. They're already attracting your target customer, giving you the opportunity to save marketing and advertising dollars. But it's up to you to determine if your proximity to similar sellers will help or hurt your business, so conduct market research to remove some of that guesswork. Also consider cases in which you are selling the same brands and confirm that the competitor doesn't have exclusive contracts in areas you are considering.

Make sure the location is accessible. If parking is a headache, patrons won't come back, or even show up in the first place. Likewise, choosing a storefront with ample foot traffic is going to pay dividends.

Online-only brands hardly get to take advantage of customers “stumbling” upon their site, whereas a physical location in a high-traffic area has the potential to consistently bring in new business.

4 Get Serious About Staffing

Customer service, stocking, ordering, accounting, marketing, merchandising, and cleaning are all hats that need to be worn. Plus, you’ll want a staff sizable enough that employees calling out sick or taking a vacation won’t become stressors.

As one Springboard Retail customer put it, “location matters a lot, but the longer I’ve been in this business the more I get the best performance where I have the best store managers.”

Real time reporting and sales contests can help align incentives and drive accountability, but the best technology needs great people, too.

Charisma, strong customer service skills, and a personal connection to and/or interest in the product are crucial traits of strong sales associates. Here are a few questions you shouldn’t end an interview without asking:

- What is your connection to our customers and aesthetic?
- What have been your best shopping experiences? How will you recreate them here?
- What is good customer service?
- What is more important—a good product or friendly service?
- If you disagreed with another employee, how would you handle it?



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Springboard Retail is a cloud POS and retail management platform designed for retailers, by retailers. Built with omnichannel brands and retailers in mind, Springboard Retail's software features highly flexible, comprehensive, and data-centric functionality that gives retailers the edge they need to sell more, profitably. For more info, contact concierge@springboardretail.com

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