

# Future Ready Retail



A guide for Australian retailers

**Vodafone**

Power to you



# Executive summary

There's great potential for your business to grow and succeed in this fast-moving market. Retail and hospitality businesses know they need to be able to respond to their customers' needs, whether you have a bricks-and-mortar store front, an online shop, or sell on the move. Successful businesses across every part of this industry are fast-moving, efficient, scalable and connected to the digital world.

But just how do you deliver on changing customer expectations? Should you be upgrading your current technology and communications setup? If so, how do you choose what to invest in?

All types of Future Ready retailers have the power to succeed today, while always being prepared for tomorrow. This guide will introduce you to the exciting opportunities that are within your reach. Get to know the strategies, tools and innovations helping businesses like yours to keep on track for future success.



### **An online landscape**

According to Google, Australians have used the internet for 58% of recent purchase journeys. They 'showroom' purchases in store, and before making a hotel or restaurant reservation, they search for other guests' reviews. Price is important, but your clientele also value quality and service. Customer experience matters more than ever.

For small to medium sized businesses, this all adds up to a superb opportunity to grow online traffic – and increase order value. The right web presence can help increase foot traffic in your outlets and stores, and earn you valuable repeat business from loyal customers. Retailers are maximising their revenues by delivering a customer-focused online experience that feels personal and tailored to their shoppers' needs.

The physical shop front is far from dead. But in this new 'omni-channel' world, a retailer's website, mobile app and customer support service are just as 'flagship' as any bricks-and-mortar store. Having an online presence is now a must for retailers of all sizes, whether that's via a simple website, being active on social media, or investing in a full e-commerce site.

Seizing new opportunities now means considering added-value services, like:

#### **Smart employees**

Your best advocate. Equip customer-facing staff with tablets to help shoppers navigate options, explain features and take cashless payments through mobile point-of-sale terminals.

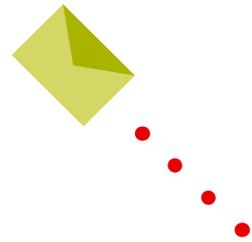
#### **Direct marketing**

Use SMS, social media and email to reach your customers with targeted messages, based on their purchase history and the latest stock data.



All services to use in Australia.

Google, 2015. The Consumer Barometer: New Insights for Australia.



### **Security matters**

The onus is on retail and hospitality business owners to comply with all required data privacy requirements (like securing a customer's personal information and knowing how this information can be used and disclosed) and deliver a secure purchase experience to consumers.

With every interaction with you, customers are entrusting you with more than just their business. What's clear is that no matter how they choose to pay, shoppers expect you to minimise the risk of fraud or identity theft. Choosing and using the right level of data protection technology for your business can safeguard against this risk.

### **Retailers as informers and advocates**

The most profound shift of all? The permanent shift from a 'Buyer Beware' attitude, to an emerging new role for retailers of every size and type. In response to changing customer behaviour, smart retailers know they need to earn the right to sell to customers. Shopping, travelling, eating – they're all social, shared experiences.

Customers amplify their experiences through social media. Table J complaining about a bad meal? Sort it out before they walk out and they might even recommend your restaurant. Get it wrong and you could lose more than just a single customer's business.

Enterprises of any size can help customers navigate choices, demonstrate they can meet their needs and then offer a seamless purchasing experience. These businesses are Ready retailers – prepared for changes and opportunities, both now and in the years to come.

### **Customer service as a priority**

What are customers saying about you? What will put your business above its local competitors? A warm and welcoming reception, fantastic customer service and great communication from start to finish. Customers can share their experience across countless social platforms and on many category-specific review sites covering everything from travel to restaurants. Be sure to follow up on customer comments, address poor feedback directly and thank those who have posted glowing reviews.



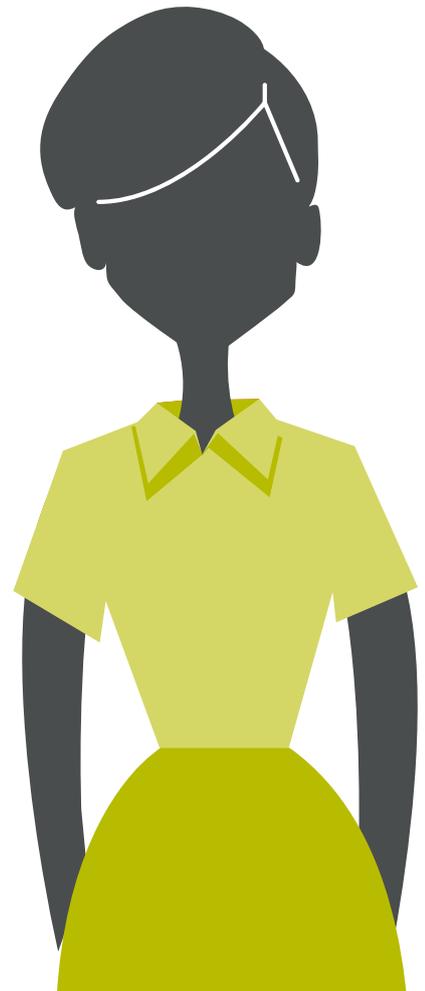
### **The power of data-driven insight**

Successful restaurateurs, retailers and all types of smaller business owners have always made it a priority to know their customers. Now they can harness technology to get insight into how their customers think and feel, to make their products or services as convenient as possible. For example, queue-busting capabilities, relevant suggestions for passing shoppers and targeted product recommendations.

Customer insights captured via databases (also known as Customer Relationship Management or CRM systems) can be used in combination with predictive analytics, to help you offer buyers what they want, when they want it, however they choose to buy.

Smart, connected data has an important part to play within your business too. From synchronised information updated in real-time between your shop floor (or kitchen), online store, orders and despatch – it's now possible to get the complete picture of your business at the touch of a button.

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# Trend watch in retail



## **The rise of the anywhere and everywhere customer**

Online, offline, mobile and in store – they might still be separate considerations for you, but your customers increasingly expect a seamless experience; from initial research through to post-purchase support, and then a review of their experience with you.

**Almost one in four Australians research online before purchasing in store. (Source: Google)**



## **In store experience matters more than ever**

Your physical retail presence, and the experience you offer shoppers when they walk through your doors, is a significant driver of repeat business.

Customers expect great service (like in store WiFi) and the convenience of joined-up services, like click-and-collect.

**65% of Australian customers use a digital device before shopping, and 31% while shopping. (Source: Deloitte)**

## **Shop secure**

Data privacy is a major concern for consumers.



Mitigating the risks of theft and fraud cost businesses – but investing in the right technology can ultimately save money, and protect your brand.

**Globally, small businesses are the target of over one-third of attacks. (Source: Symantec Corporation)**



### **The customer as advocate**

Poor service, stock shortages, delays, disappointment – all reasons for your shoppers to not only go elsewhere, but amplify their complaints via social media or review sites.

Get it right and your shoppers will sing your praises, recommending your services to their friends via social networks and valuable peer-to-peer review sites.

**In Australia, online reviews and recommendations from within someone's social media circle is second only to recommendations from friends, family and acquaintances, in influencing purchasing decisions. (Source: Deloitte)**



### **More ways to pay**

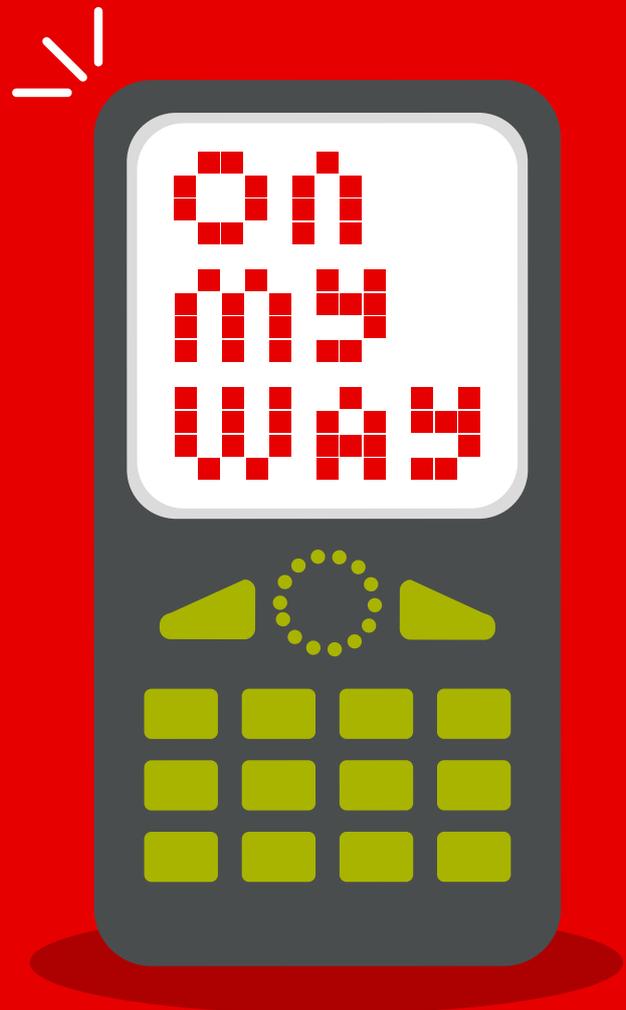
Want to remove barriers preventing valuable repeat business? Or stop shoppers leaving empty-handed? Then broaden the ways customers can pay.

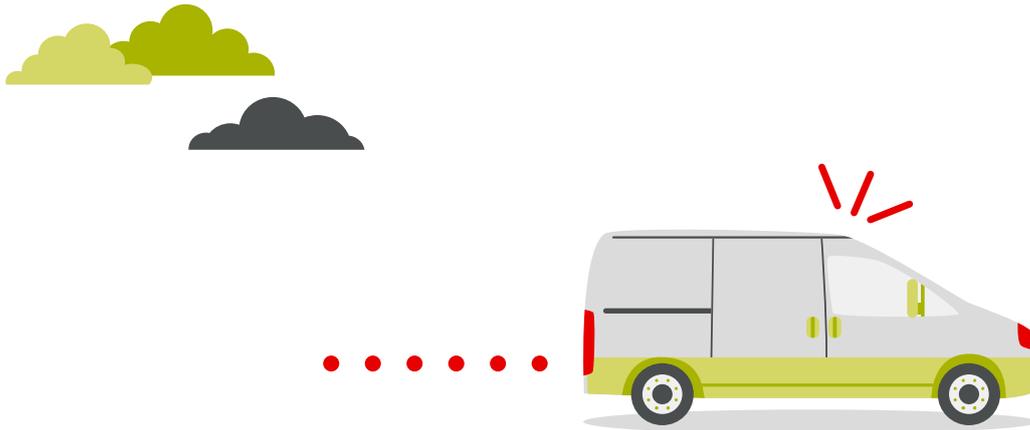
Innovation around mobile payments, including mobile wallets (like Android Pay®) and mobile point-of-sale systems (such as the Square Contactless + Chip Reader), help customers part with their cash more readily.

**More than half of payments currently made in Australia are cashless. Nearly four in five Australian smartphone users believe that payment via their phones will soon be the norm. (Source: Westpac)**

# The opportunities for your business

Technology is changing the way you can connect with your customers. Harness the tools and strategies you need to meet fast-changing customer expectations, and you can grow your business to make the most of new opportunities.



**1****New tech opens new markets****How do you get closer to customers, delivering the service they want, when they want it?**

Jack's food truck is a popular entrant in food festivals across Australia, but sustaining crowds can be difficult at certain times of day. He decides to post his location and images of his gourmet burgers to his social accounts, letting fans know where he is and today's special menu items. Jack stays connected with Vodafone – our best ever 4G network now reaches over 22 million Australians. To find out where we have 4G, visit [vodafone.com.au/coverage](http://vodafone.com.au/coverage)

**2****Getting to know your customer****How do you choose and use the right technology to deliver a joined-up customer experience?**

Jo lists her coffee shop on a popular food and drink app, and has made every menu item available to purchase. Customers simply select what they're after, and can leave notes if they have any special dietary or brewing requirements. By using location services, customers can get turn-by-turn directions to her coffee shop. Because customers pay through the app, Jo can turn her focus to making great-tasting coffees, instead of taking orders and processing payment.

**3****Help shoppers buy with confidence****How to position yourself to take advantage of new opportunities?**

Trent and Carla are planning their wedding. They spot a great selection of unusual wedding rings by a designer named Blake, on a popular photo sharing site. Using Carla's smartphone on the go, they click through to read great reviews from happy couples on Blake's website. He responds quickly to their enquiry email, and when the couple visit his workshop, Blake uses a tablet to help them visualise and personalise their wedding rings. They choose a beautiful matching pair for their big day.

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# 1

## New tech opens new markets

Some things haven't changed. The timeless, unchanging marker of excellence in retail is still delivering a positive, rewarding experience for your customers.

Exceptional service and lasting customer relationships – that's the retail sweet spot. And technology can be a real enabler in helping you hit that spot. Here are four considerations to help you get closer:

### **Be a local business (wherever you are)**

Customers value local, preferably without compromising on world-class service. Using the latest search and location-based advertising (like Google AdWords™) will make sure that you're on their radar.

Cloud technology means that retailers without a physical store can compete globally, whilst identifying strongly as a 'local' brand.

**Tip: Work taking you overseas? Vodafone's \$5 Roaming lets you use your phone like you would at home for just \$5 extra per day in over 50 countries. Available on selected plans for a maximum of 90 days per calendar year. Stay connected with colleagues and customers by ensuring they can reach the right person.**

### **Talk to your customers (listen too)**

Browsing, buying, complaining or recommending your brand; what's certain is that today's digital-savvy consumers are going to talk about you. See what they're saying, and implement useful feedback.

Take the opportunity to make it a two-way conversation. 'Social shopping' is one trend that is only going to get bigger.

**Tip: Get active on social media – with special promotions for your fans and followers, and fast, personal responses for any disgruntled shoppers.**

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### **Aim for a seamless shopping experience**

Ask yourself: Do your business hours correspond with when your customers want to shop? Can customers contact you readily, or expect a fast call back? Do you respond to emails quickly, and do you have a website? Can shoppers choose a range of ways to pay?

**Tip: Promote your business online and build your brand with GoDaddy®. GoDaddy Domains gets you a unique online address for your website, making it easier for potential customers to find you on the internet. GoDaddy Website Builder allows you to easily design a professional looking website, with no technical skills required. Visit [vodafone.com.au/businessapps](http://vodafone.com.au/businessapps)**

### **Make it a pleasure to do business with you**

Customer experience counts – it's not enough simply to make it easy to transact with you. Loyal customers and valuable repeat business is won through great service, as well as convenience and price.

**Tip: Targeted promotions push all the right buttons for your customers. Work out what's going to delight your shoppers – flash sales, exclusive offers or time-limited deals.**



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# 2 Get to know your customer

Delivering a great retail experience will help you do more business and hold your own in a market where customers have more choices than ever before. The best way to do that? Your people.

It's easier than ever to connect your team and suppliers and avoid customer pain points, like inventory shortages.

## Identify your 'speed bumps'

Where are the hold-ups? Improving the channels of communication between your staff and your suppliers is a sure fire route of working together more productively.

Ultimately, your goal is to cut costs and boost efficiency – so select the tools and providers that will deliver this for you.

**Tip: Choose Vodafone for your business. Work with us to build a Red or Business Flex solution that's actually right for your team – with infinite standard national Talk and TXT, and generous data inclusions all to use in Australia. Vodafone Business Customers receive priority service from an Australian-based contact centre – and when you sign up 10 or more connections, you'll get a Personal Account Manager.**

## Be more responsive

Chasing people down slows you down. Make it easy for your team to stay in touch. Video conferencing and instant messaging are examples of ways to boost your response time and cut down on internal bottlenecks.

**Tip: Enable your employees to meet from anywhere, using just a phone or the internet. G Suite includes Google Hangouts™, and Skype® for Business is included in selected Microsoft Office 365® subscriptions – collaborate face-to-face with HD video conferencing, or use voice and instant messaging. Host your team and suppliers – external participants don't even need to have a G Suite or Skype® for Business account to join your online meetings. Visit [vodafone.com.au/businessapps](http://vodafone.com.au/businessapps)**

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### Responsive retailing

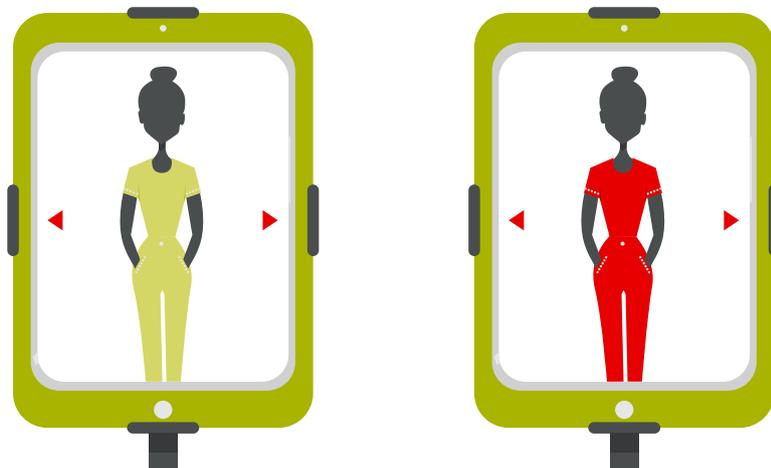
Jordie, a fashion retailer, is running a pop-up store whilst her shop is being renovated. Space is limited, there are lots of other stores clamouring for customer attention, and not all of her stock is on display. To show potential buyers the full range, her shop assistants have connected tablets. They can showcase designs, get shoppers' details into a database for relevant future offers, take card payments for home delivery, and track inventory in real-time. Throughout the day, Jordie posts about promotions to her social followers to attract a constant stream of customers.

### Get on the same page

Shared data (real-time inventory updates, order information or pricing changes) is the smart way to make the most efficient use of your resources. Selling out of blue quilt covers, but got an overstock of red? Promote the red via targeted email or social media campaigns.

Talk to your customers, check in with your vendors, host an online meeting with your suppliers, email your team or interact with targeted consumers on social media.

**Tip: Take collaboration to the next level with cloud storage. OneDrive® for Business is included in Microsoft Office 365® and G Suite comes with Google Drive™. Keep your files in one place, and access from any device. Share documents and information with staff, suppliers and customers. With granular permissions, you can decide who can access or share any file or folder. Visit [vodafone.com.au/businessapps](http://vodafone.com.au/businessapps)**



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# 3

## Help shoppers buy with confidence

Future Ready businesses are positioned to take advantage of a changing marketplace, and can harness new tools to respond quickly to customer demand.

With more choices than ever, it's hard for customers to make a confident decision. Ready retailers act quickly to help their customers understand options and buy with confidence.

### **Be able to grow your business quickly**

What happens if business really booms? Can you scale up your services and alert your suppliers instantly? Businesses in cyclical or seasonal markets also need to be able to spin up, or cut down on IT capacity too.

**Tip: Select the flexibility of cloud-based subscription services, instead of costly software packages, so you can run your business from anywhere. Vodafone offers a suite of apps designed to take the hassle out of admin, and let you focus on what you love. Explore our Ready Business Apps at [vodafone.com.au/businessapps](http://vodafone.com.au/businessapps)**

### **Improve order management and distribution**

Build a single, seamless knowledge centre of information about your products. From stock room inventory, shop floor real-time product tracking, and finally, keeping tabs on where your delivery drivers are – it's possible to get the whole picture at just the click of a button.

**Tip: Avoid disgruntled customers trying to track down their deliveries – asset tracking solutions allow you to keep track of your goods and your logistics (and reduce theft and fraud too). Vodafone enables remote monitoring by providing connectivity through Internet of Things SIMs.**

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**Are you trading safely?**

Cybercriminals are proactively targeting small businesses, because they expect minimal defence against malware, spam and ransomware. In 2015, 43% of spear-phishing attacks were targeted at small businesses. (Source: Symantec Corporation)

**Review your security and data protection**

Your customers expect a great purchase experience – but they demand highly secure transactions and data security. Ensure that you invest in robust encryption and data protection technology for your business.

You wouldn't leave your cash register open or your shop door unlocked – make sure that you're not inadvertently acting riskily online either.

**Tip: Help protect your sensitive business and customer information with Norton™ Small Business, a comprehensive security solution for your business. Norton Small Business helps guard your PCs, Macs®, smartphones and tablets with patented and award-winning protection – packages are available to protect 5, 10 or 20 devices. Visit [vodafone.com.au/businessapps](http://vodafone.com.au/businessapps)**



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Symantec Corporation, 2016. Internet Security Threat Report – Volume 21, April 2016.

# What next?

Vodafone is one of the world's largest retailers. We've been thinking a lot about the new opportunities that can make Australian retailers Future Ready, and how businesses like yours can adapt and grow. Have we got you thinking too?

If you'd like more insight into how you can build your business in the brave new world of retail, then check out our [Ready Business retail action plan](https://vodafone.com.au/retailers) on [vodafone.com.au/retailers](https://vodafone.com.au/retailers). It's a checklist of the steps that can help you to ensure that your business is Ready for whatever the future brings.

**Want to talk? Call one of our dedicated Business Specialists on 1300 111 111, to find out how Vodafone can help your business become Ready.**

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