



salesforce



*Essential Guides*

# CREATING CONNECTED CHANNELS

How consumer goods companies can drive  
customer success through agile and connected channels



# CONTENTS

- 03**    **CHAPTER 1**    You're operating in a landscape of change and uncertainty
- 04**    **CHAPTER 2**    Put data to work for innovation and collaboration
- 05**    **CHAPTER 3**    **How to create a connected and agile channel**
  - #1 Free your data to inform your people, partners, and promotions
  - #2 Enable fresh flexibility for existing systems
  - #3 Drive performance and profitability in your partnerships
  - #4 Unleash the opportunities of a connected future
  - #5 Bridge gaps between geographies and communities
- 11**    **CHAPTER 4**    **Connect and create flexible channels to support your success**
- 13**    **CHAPTER 5**    **Reimagine your future with Salesforce**



## CHAPTER 1

# YOU'RE OPERATING IN A LANDSCAPE OF CHANGE AND UNCERTAINTY

You're working hard to grow your business in an increasingly global business environment while simultaneously adapting the way you go to market to a digital future. It's a time of huge change in which business and economic uncertainty abounds. Consumer goods companies operate in a global landscape of unpredictable labour markets, rising supply chain costs, and the possibility of new import and export challenges. You have already responded by cutting costs and driving efficiencies. This has sustained you so far, but in order to continue to grow your business and pursue your global ambitions, you must become more agile, more adaptive to change, and leverage every advantage that the digital world can offer.

In addition to market pressures, your customers are also changing. Customer diversity is rising, and new opportunities are emerging in new geographies. Customers are increasingly connected, highly mobile, buying in new digital ways across a growing number of points of sale, and are seemingly insatiable in their demand for new products. You are finding new ways to sell to them but, even if you are exploring direct-to-consumer (DTC) models, a critical mass of your business will always rely on your network of distributors and retailers. Their own models are being disrupted by technology and customer change. In a world changing this quickly, finding a way to face these challenges head on is the key to maximising future opportunities for shared success.

**CUSTOMERS ARE INCREASINGLY CONNECTED**

**HIGHLY MOBILE, BUYING IN NEW DIGITAL WAYS ACROSS A GROWING NUMBER OF POINTS OF SALE**



## CHAPTER 2

# PUT DATA TO WORK FOR INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION

Succeeding in this changing marketplace means finding a solution that grows both your own and your channel partners' businesses jointly. Growth requires building a deeper and more personal understanding of customers in order to innovate around their changing needs. But it also requires finding new ways to collaborate with your channels around that intelligence, so that you can innovate together. The opportunity to gain deeper insights into your ecosystem is greater than ever in an increasingly connected world.

Today's powerful digital cloud platforms can help you create collaborative, flexible, and transparent interactions with your channel partners. By sustaining and growing those relationships, you can optimise efficiency

and profitability for your business. You will be exploring the world of digital merchandising together. It will take more than just transforming accessibility of information, and will extend to how you share that information with partners and create and grow channel relationships. It can energise and smooth how partners deliver service and care to your customers, and enable relationship managers to help partners perform at peak efficiency.

## TODAY'S POWERFUL DIGITAL CLOUD PLATFORMS

### CAN HELP YOU CREATE COLLABORATIVE, FLEXIBLE, AND TRANSPARENT INTERACTIONS WITH YOUR CHANNEL PARTNERS



## CHAPTER 3

# HOW TO CREATE A CONNECTED AND AGILE CHANNEL

New ideas and platforms will be essential if you are to put data to work to ensure the most effective distribution and sales of your goods. You need to reduce complexity, increase visibility, and make smart choices to enable the distribution agility you will need in the future. Establishing two-way dialogues and information flow from the channel will help critical decision-making about markets and NPD for different geographies. Establishing this kind of agility is well within your company's reach, but finding the place to start isn't always so easy.

In the next few pages we will explore the new essentials of managing consumer goods channels in ways that leverage all the advantages of digital innovation.

## TRAILBLAZERS IN CONSUMER GOODS ARE THOSE WHO:

- Throw off the shackles of legacy IT and databases to unlock information and insights across their organisations, and leverage those insights in the channel.
- Reduce complexity by connecting people and channels, and provide every stakeholder with the tools to succeed.
- Create the flexibility to balance new DTC models and critical existing channel partnerships to gain maximum benefit from both.



# #1 FREE YOUR DATA TO INFORM YOUR PEOPLE, PARTNERS, AND PROMOTIONS

---

## CHALLENGE

Fresh data flows in daily from internal and external sources – but it flows into disconnected systems and can often arrive too late to be useful. Demand for analytics is rising, yet these tools usually only add to the reams of valuable data locked up within legacy databases and disconnected systems of record that comprise your legacy IT systems. Because of this, sales reps will inevitably bother prospects and customers with irrelevant or out-of-date offers and information. The impact and ROI of trade promotion can be difficult to see, and sales data from the channel is often out-dated. Because the channel is so important to your business, taking steps to boost information flow and visibility between your company and your ecosystem of channel partners should be considered mission-critical.

Connected systems make more data readily available to more people, in more places. They help you engage better with retailers, create frictionless experiences for customers, and empower employees with all the information they need, putting it at their fingertips so they can do their jobs and deliver the best experiences possible to all external stakeholders. Providing your customers with better systems of engagement brings sales and consumer data closer, improves transparency, and makes analysis possible. Having clear ROI from your marketing spend means a stronger and more accurate basis for pricing and promotion decisions.

## STEPS TO SUCCESS

- Gain all the power of your information from internal and external sources by unlocking back-office systems and connecting data. Then, deliver it in real-time to enable faster, smarter analysis and decision-making.
- Connected systems deliver greater visibility and reporting of every stage – from consumer sales back through partner order capture, product distribution, inventory, manufacturing, and raw materials ordering.

## #2 ENABLE FRESH FLEXIBILITY FOR EXISTING SYSTEMS

---

### CHALLENGE

Transforming your business for the digital future, and empowering distribution channels through digital technology, is something with which you may not have much experience. You know how to build a new manufacturing centre. You have processes for new product development. But shaking up systems and revolutionising platforms for better distribution management isn't something that comes with a ready-made playbook.

Cloud technology brings you the power to configure, not create. Unlike ERP and other system-of-record changes of the past, now you can access solutions that are tailor-made for the consumer goods industry and customise these solutions to your needs without spending enormous amounts of time, money, or IT resources. The result? Build operational agility with cloud technology and unshackle your company from the limitations of aging, complex, disconnected legacy systems.

### STEPS TO SUCCESS

- Fully-informed sales teams with access to a 360-degree view of key account and contact information have the information they need to avoid embarrassing customer mishaps.
- Faster, more personalised customer service, where a customer need only communicate an issue once for it to be fully visible to service and relationship owners.
- Field sales teams armed with powerful apps that enable them to access information, easily roll out trade promotions, take orders, communicate service issues, and more.



# #3 DRIVE PERFORMANCE AND PROFITABILITY IN YOUR PARTNERSHIPS

## CHALLENGE

Achieving maximum profit from volume sales is dependent on the ability to move goods to market efficiently via mass distribution, retail, or out-of-home outlets. Optimising your business, maximising margins, and building dependable channels, means sustaining even stronger partnerships that add value at every step.

Empowering field sales reps and creating platforms that deliver great experiences at every partner touchpoint helps to build frictionless, transparent, and profitable relationships. Highly effective trade promotions backed up by seamless and integrated retail execution will drive up volumes and maximise margins for all.

## STEPS TO SUCCESS

- Transparent and usable consumer data via platforms that connect you to partner performance, enabling better visibility and providing tools for analysis and reporting.
- Easier forward-planning and continuous improvement via real-time partner collaboration to gain visibility into your highest-performing activities and drive performance.
- Better sales forecasting based on real-time sales data enables greater accuracy and more informed promotion targeting, leading to better inventory management, less wastage, and lower operational costs for your business.





## #4 UNLEASH THE OPPORTUNITIES OF A CONNECTED FUTURE

---

### CHALLENGE

To unleash all the opportunities of digital, the benefits and value you gain must also be shared with your channel ecosystem partners – that way, they are much more likely to adopt these new tools. To secure maximum value from the opportunity that new technology brings, you need a more connected IT approach that will support future innovation around the IoT, digital in-store activation and merchandising, and digital promotions.

It's more than embracing mobility and the cloud. Connected IoT products, artificial intelligence (AI), computer vision, and AI-driven predictive analytics could revolutionise how employees work, super-charge distribution networks, and empower retailers with new sales and loyalty tools to drive more revenue and create happier customers.

### STEPS TO SUCCESS

- Rather than replacing your legacy IT systems, add agile layers on top to help you connect data, accelerate processes, empower people, and ready your business to integrate with cutting-edge technologies.
- Optimise trade promotion and marketing spend with real-time performance data that enables more effective planning, scheduling, and POS production.

# #5 BRIDGE GAPS BETWEEN GEOGRAPHIES AND COMMUNITIES

## CHALLENGE

Complex consumer goods businesses often have a diverse and distributed workforce. Today more than ever, a divide is emerging between older workers and an increasingly prevalent Millennial workforce. In addition, office-based employees and field teams can often have unequal access to information – and field teams usually get the short end of the stick. They often lack the tools they need to help them build account relationships or sell effectively, relying solely on their mobile devices.

Powerful mobile technology, app-based interfaces, and self-service tools not only enable everyone to contribute no matter where they are, but help bridge the divide between communities – meaning that everyone benefits.

## STEPS TO SUCCESS

- Develop mobile apps for field sales teams to make them more productive, enable more effective retail execution, and build better relationships.
- Provision self-service tools for partners to place orders, log issues, order POS material, or even contribute requests and ideas for new merchandising support.
- Ensure that your Millennial employee base has modern technology tools that allow them to do their jobs from their mobile devices or laptops.



## CHAPTER 4

# CONNECT AND CREATE FLEXIBLE CHANNELS TO SUPPORT YOUR SUCCESS

Salesforce capabilities for connected channels deliver a single integrated cloud platform that is fast, secure, and scalable to meet the needs of any size consumer goods organisation. It enables you to connect information and unify processes across every facet of your channel management.

The cloud enables you to create and configure platforms that enable the flow of information, incentivise collaboration, and help you make faster and more informed decisions.

The Salesforce Customer Success Platform for consumer goods creates layers of engagement that connect existing and siloed systems, enabling you to create communities of interest and build robust, transparent, and mutually beneficial channel relationships. Together, you and your channel partners can engage and sell more effectively with retailers around the world.

**Explore the capabilities that Salesforce can deliver to help you create connected channel success.**

*“Only **30%** of consumer goods companies report using digital technologies to drive perfect order and delivery programs with retail partners.”*

**Forrester Consulting**  
on behalf of Accenture, 2014

### **Transform relationships with key account management**

Key account management solutions, including trade promotion management, trade analytics, and integrated business planning

*Improve relationships with retailers, collaborate, and share information easily with a B2B platform you can shape to meet your needs or use with custom apps built for partners. Empower your account managers with trade promotion management and optimisation tools, joint business planning tools, and smart data discovery tools. Everything is integrated via the Salesforce platform to give a 360-degree view of the customer, enabling field sales visit reports and other critical insights.*

### **Help field reps be more productive with field sales management**

Field sales management and retail execution solutions enable visit optimisation, retail auditing, POS segmentation and analytics, and ordering and payment systems.

*Mobile and tablet-based online and offline applications give field reps the tools they need*

*to plan or manage productive sales visits – including effortless access to product information, merchandising tools, trade promotions, and more. Reps can even explore partner sales performance, gaining insights to energise selling and activation.*

### **Promote partner success through distributor engagement**

Distributor engagement tools for data exchange (sell-in/sell-out), collaboration, and customer apps to enable things like self-service ordering and much, much more.

*Share data and insights with key partners at every point in the route-to-market, delivering transparency that enhances trust and communication as well as enables collaborative process improvement. Empower partners to move faster and sell more effectively with self-service.*

### **Give customers enhanced support with service excellence**

Service excellence capabilities for customer service, including customer portal and telesales.

*Maintain retailer advocacy in between field sales*

*visits with a B2B retailer portal using B2C loyalty mechanisms such as points in exchange for adopting particular promotions, ordering new SKUs, and other desired actions. Provide best-in-class dashboards to provide telesales teams with all the customer information they need, such as previous orders, product recommendations, and service case histories.*

### **Integrate new data sources with connected assets**

Connected assets management solutions, including equipment dispensing, connected merchandising, connected vending machines, and connected screens.

*The power of the Salesforce platform is that it comes with the many innovations and capabilities delivered by our partner ecosystem via AppExchange. One powerful capability is connected asset management (CAM) tools to support your field service teams and enable them to manage merchandising assets such as vending machines, fridges, and more – all through seamless integration of machine data from connected assets of all kinds.*

## CHAPTER 5

# REIMAGINE YOUR FUTURE WITH SALESFORCE

Salesforce solutions for connected channels are just part of the value it delivers for consumer goods customers. Discover more about our approach to connecting consumers, channels, operations and employees by reading the other consumer goods guides in this series available from Salesforce.

We are known for innovation, and we are bringing our customers the power of artificial intelligence with Salesforce Einstein, which powers the world's smartest CRM across the Salesforce platform. Consumer goods customers will soon be able to automate, analyze, and make decisions using predictive

technologies in their sales, service, marketing, commerce, analytics, and community activities, driving even greater future customer success.

The Salesforce platform is used by ISV and solution partners worldwide, including several strategic partners. Accenture is rebuilding its consumer goods solution on the Salesforce platform to create the Accenture Cloud for Consumer Goods. It will enable clients to create a single, powerful system of engagement for their sales and trade marketing processes, with solutions for retail execution and trade promotion management accessible via the Salesforce platform.

*“The most critical priority for consumer goods companies is drive agility both in their business and operating models if they wish to grow and meet ever-changing consumer needs.”*

**Kaustubh Rajnish**  
Accenture Strategy, Consumer Goods

**DISCOVER HOW SALESFORCE**  
**— COULD HELP YOU CREATE —**  
**CONNECTED CHANNELS SUCCESS**

**CONTACT THE CONSUMER GOODS TEAM TODAY**  
**OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE**  
[WWW.SALESFORCE.COM/CONSUMER-GOODS](http://WWW.SALESFORCE.COM/CONSUMER-GOODS)

