

“OMNI-FORCE” IS THE NEW BUZZ WORD

By Ric Anderson

In today's fast paced retail world, there is no lack of new strategies, technologies or break through ideas on how to improve business. One hears such buzz words as “Omni-Channel”, “Big Data”, “Personalization and “Mobile”. Rarely do any of these strategies address the only factor that makes them a viable solution, which is “Execution”. To be successful companies have to embrace these new thought strategies with a fresh point of view.

Every segment of the work force must be going in the same direction to achieve total success. Each element of the business has to be in sync with each other, working toward the same goals and Customer!



“**Omni-Force**” is the new strategy term coined to address this very situation. Each Work Discipline (Merchandising, Marketing, Planning & Allocation, Operations, Supply Chain, IT, E-Commerce etc.) must have the same goals and desired Customer to be reached, for complete synergy to exist. The process in which allows this strategy to work is “SARCE” – Strategy Alignment, Rewards, Communication & Execution.

Few companies truly are aligned in all work disciplines of the business. One of the largest issues preventing this success is the fact that they are rarely rewarded on the same set of parameters. Each work group is its own ivory tower which in turn defines its own success with a completely different set of standards of its peer groups. How many times have you had a conversation with someone in a senior position in Retail and they confess their frustration with their counterparts in working towards the same strategy, goal, or Customer? Companies need to gather all their Senior Executives in the same room and align their strategies. They need to find methodologies to reward each disciple toward those aligned goals, communicate the strategy up and down the company, and define everyone's responsibilities as tied to execution.

An additional issue that prevents success is that of not all entities engaging the same Customer. Many times one product category is looking at one Customer as the answer, while another category has their eye on a different Customer. Add in what Marketing, Private Brand or E-Commerce believes is the correct Customer and you have a serious problem.

Implementation of an “**Omni-Force**” strategy means that every element in the path of the product reaching the Customer is aligned to the same Customer, Goals and desired experience. It is only with this straight work line execution, that the other buzz words will be viable!

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