

New shopper journey

In today's multi-channel world, retailers must communicate with shoppers at various touchpoints. They're getting creative with new apps, social media and sensory stimulation to engage customers before, during and after a purchase.

In his book, 'New customer journey', Christiaan Rikkers, CEO of JosDeVries – an international strategy agency specializing in retail design and branding – refers to the Google concept of the 'zero moment of truth'. The period that precedes the purchase in store.

"Retailers have always communicated with you before you even enter the store," says Rikkers. "In the parking lot, just as much as the restaurant and checkout area. Then we had the arrival of the internet. So before entering the market place, we orientate ourselves at home. And now, with mobile, this continues while we're on the road."

Christiaan Rikkers CEO of retailer JosDeVries explores "How to turn innovation and creativity into results" in this presentation. Part of the Philips Lighting SmartRetail thought leadership series >

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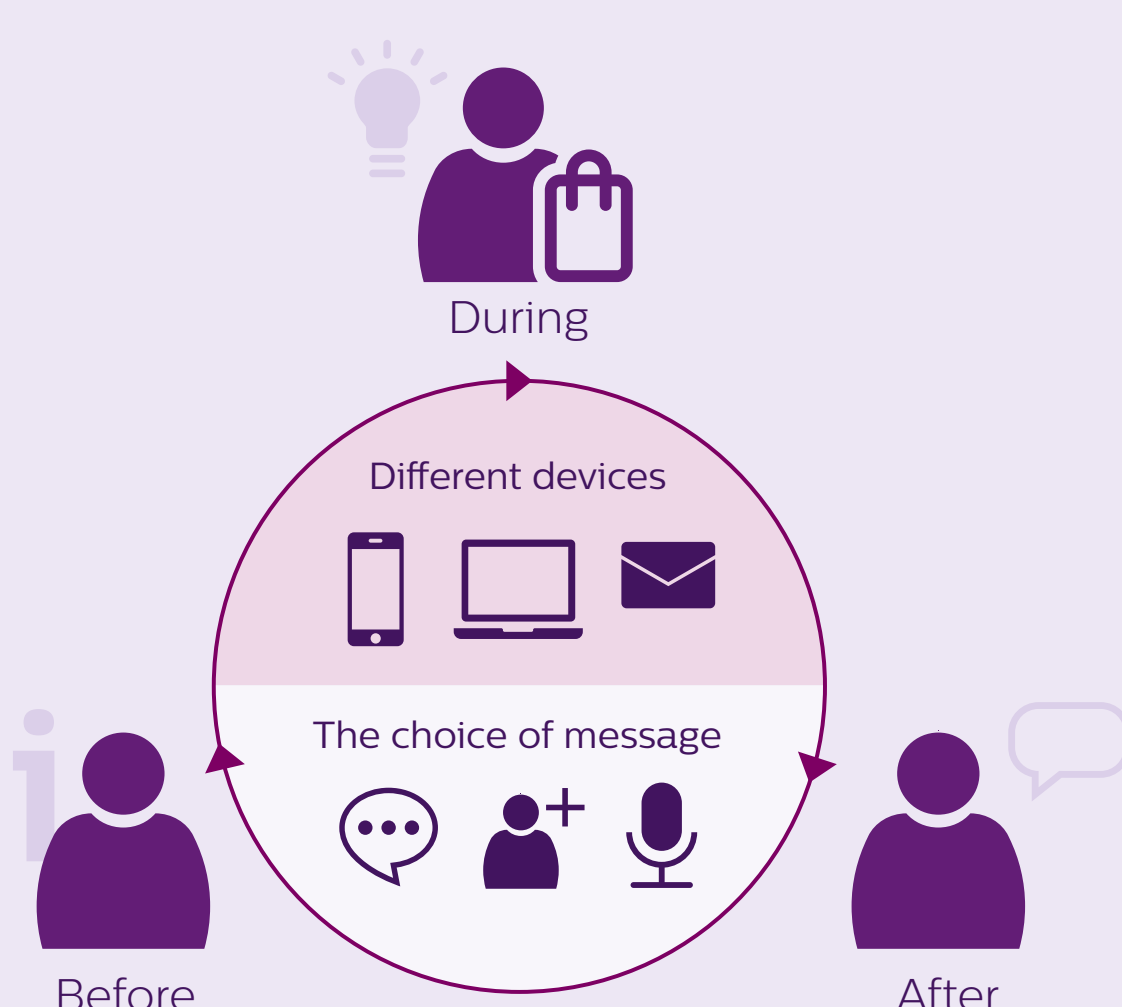
How to turn innovation and creativity into results

Communicating before during and after purchase

Rikkers believes the future of retail centers is around a collection of different touchpoints. And with touchpoints before, during and after the purchase, retailers are facing a myriad of challenges. The process is made even more complex because it's three dimensional.

"As a retailer, you have to consider how customers use different devices – mobile, desktop and in-store – and the kind of messages they communicate."

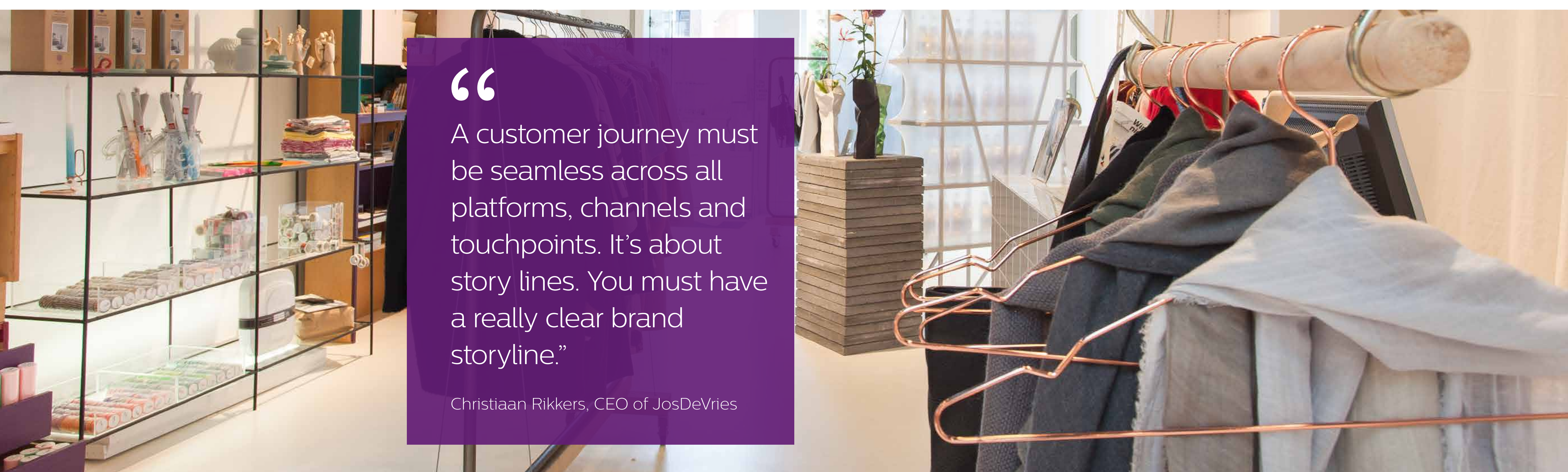
So how should retailers respond? "You can simplify," says Rikkers. "By which I mean better navigation and more information. But the other part is to make everything more experiential. To create inspiration or create background. Simplification on the one hand, enrichment on the other."



Shaking up retail

In his book Rikkers talks about the possibility of 'continuous customer stimulation' via social media platforms, where consumers share experiences and insights. These online networks are also ideal platforms for retailers to reward loyalty and gather data, while respecting shoppers' privacy.

Rikkers points out that the customer journey must be seamless across all platforms, channels and touchpoints. He uses the analogy of a magazine editorial team pulling together to create the overall experience: "It's about story lines. You must have a really clear brand storyline. But when you have an in-store department, a marketing department, an IT department etc, it's hard for the bigger retailers to bring everything together as one story. These departments should sit together to create the whole customer journey."



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Christiaan Rikkers, CEO of JosDeVries

Sensory stimulation

The sensory experience is becoming increasingly important for retailers targeting customers who see shopping as a recreational activity.

In its Retail Report 2016, UK retail giant John Lewis says it designs its stores to stimulate the senses and give customers the opportunity to see, feel, smell, listen and even taste products before they buy: "As well as helping customers decide what is right for them, this sensory journey is designed to increase the pleasure of a trip to the shops, in keeping with today's 'experience economy' – the increasing value placed on meaningful, personal experiences."



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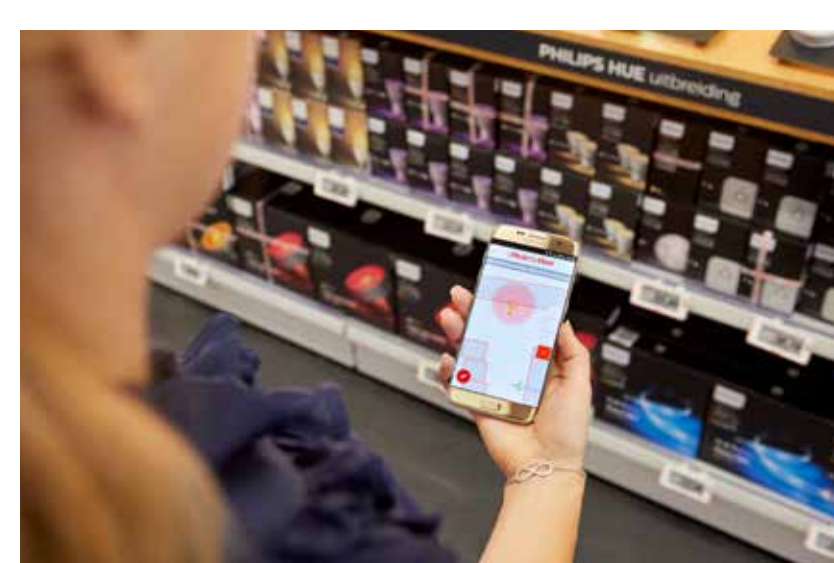
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