

Consumer convenience a competitive advantage in a connected world

 By [Jonathan Hurvitz](#)

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There was time, not terribly long ago, when, if you wanted to purchase a product, you would have to physically visit a store in order to do so. Similarly, if one were looking to recruit the services of a plumber, it would involve looking up a number in a printed directory before calling, and researching a subject would mean visiting a library or archive to find the information.



Jonathan Hurvitz, CEO of Teljoy

Then the internet changed it all, and brought access and convenience to the forefront of everything.

Complexity, consumers and convenience

Today, convenience is at the heart of what consumers expect from the products and services they use. We want things when we want them – and we mostly want it facilitated through our mobile phones and delivered to our homes pronto!

Various factors, including rising internet penetration, faster-paced lifestyles and challenging working hours, have “added layers of complexity to consumers’ lives,” as per this Nielsen report titled [The Quest for Convenience](#). The report posits that, because consumers are so stretched (and stressed), we are constantly seeking solutions to simplify various aspects of our lives.

So pervasive is this need for convenience that this [2020 Deloitte report](#) talks about convenience as the “new battleground”, and points out that Covid-19 has further accelerated the convenience-first trend. In fact, consumers are increasingly reporting spending more for the sake of convenience.

Contactless shopping, on-demand fulfillment and inventory availability are understood as among the most coveted convenience factors. The rise in mobile payment solutions, delivery app downloads and buy-online-pick-up-in-store facilities that more retailers are offering only serves to support this claim.



One size doesn't fit all

Disruptive technologies have made convenience possible at a scale once unimaginable. But brands need to caution against simply adopting technologies for the sake of it and ensure the more mundane work of truly understanding the consumer's needs is not overlooked.

Deloitte Consulting LLP's principal of retail and consumer products, Bobby Stephans, says, "Retailers should be dramatically more granular in their understanding and operations," and while thinking globally, should still act locally.

Furthermore, convenience needs to take the experience of the user into account. Money, time and effort – and the costs of each – form part of that experience. Brands that are able to engage with each factor are the most likely to develop the most relevant convenient solutions for their audience.

Access for convenience

In our own business, convenience has always been central to our offering. Rent-to-own as a business model is about making products – in the case of Teljoy, appliances, consumer electronics and furniture – conveniently accessible through a flexible model.

In fact, the rental economy more broadly posits that it is more efficient to rent the items that we need in our daily lives, as opposed to owning them outright. With rental, the burden of fixing or replacing the item is on the provider and not on the consumer.

The consumer continues to enjoy access to the product, without the risk and responsibility that comes with ownership. It's the ultimate minimalist way of life - eliminating 'distractions' to allow yourself the time and energy to focus on what matters most to you. Convenience, through access.

Money matters

The Deloitte report mentioned above also found that "more than half of consumers reported their willingness to spend more to get what they need". Beyond its potential for building brand equity and customer loyalty, the financial benefits for a business of prioritising consumer convenience is clear.

Jonathan Hurvitz is the CEO at Teljoy.

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