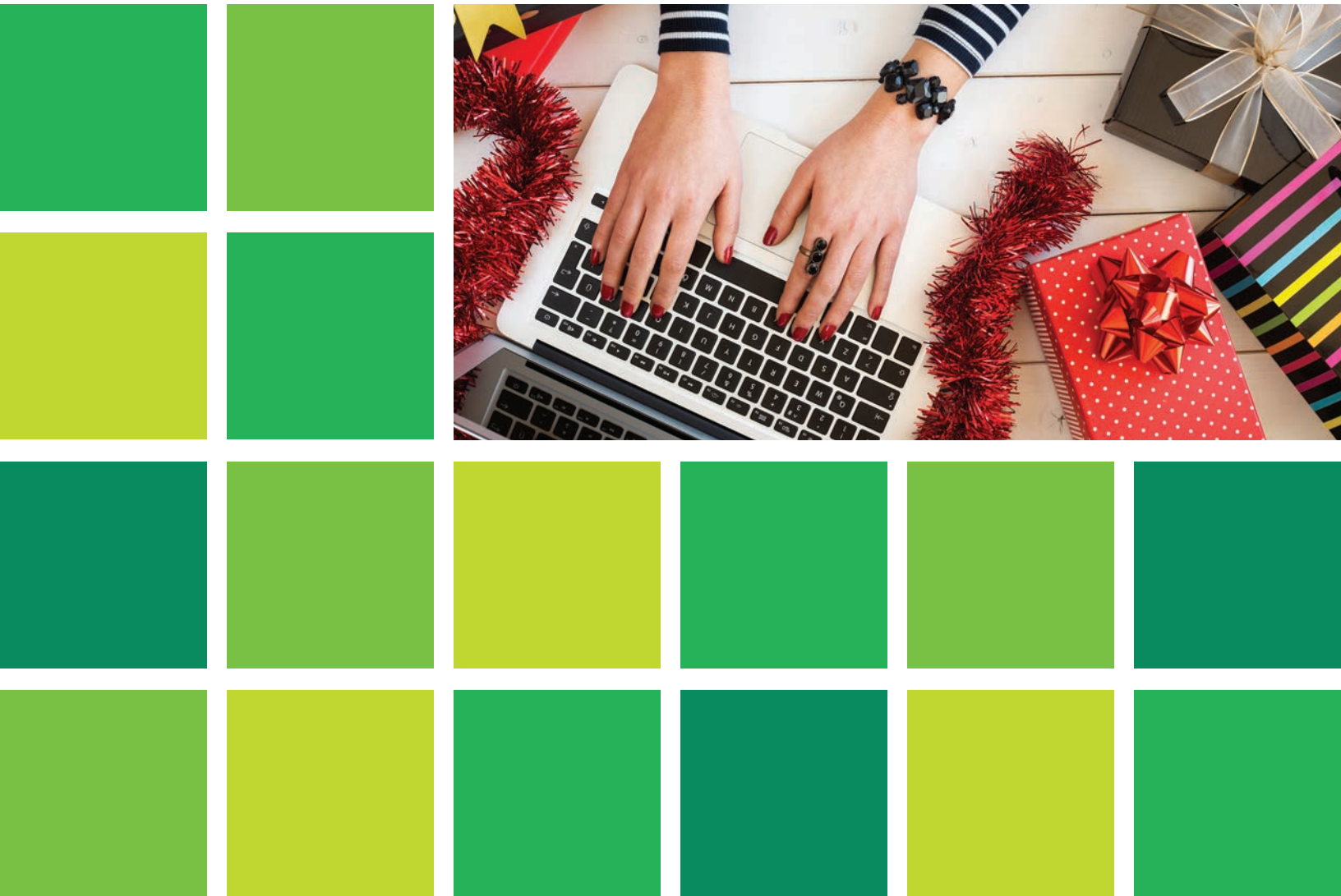
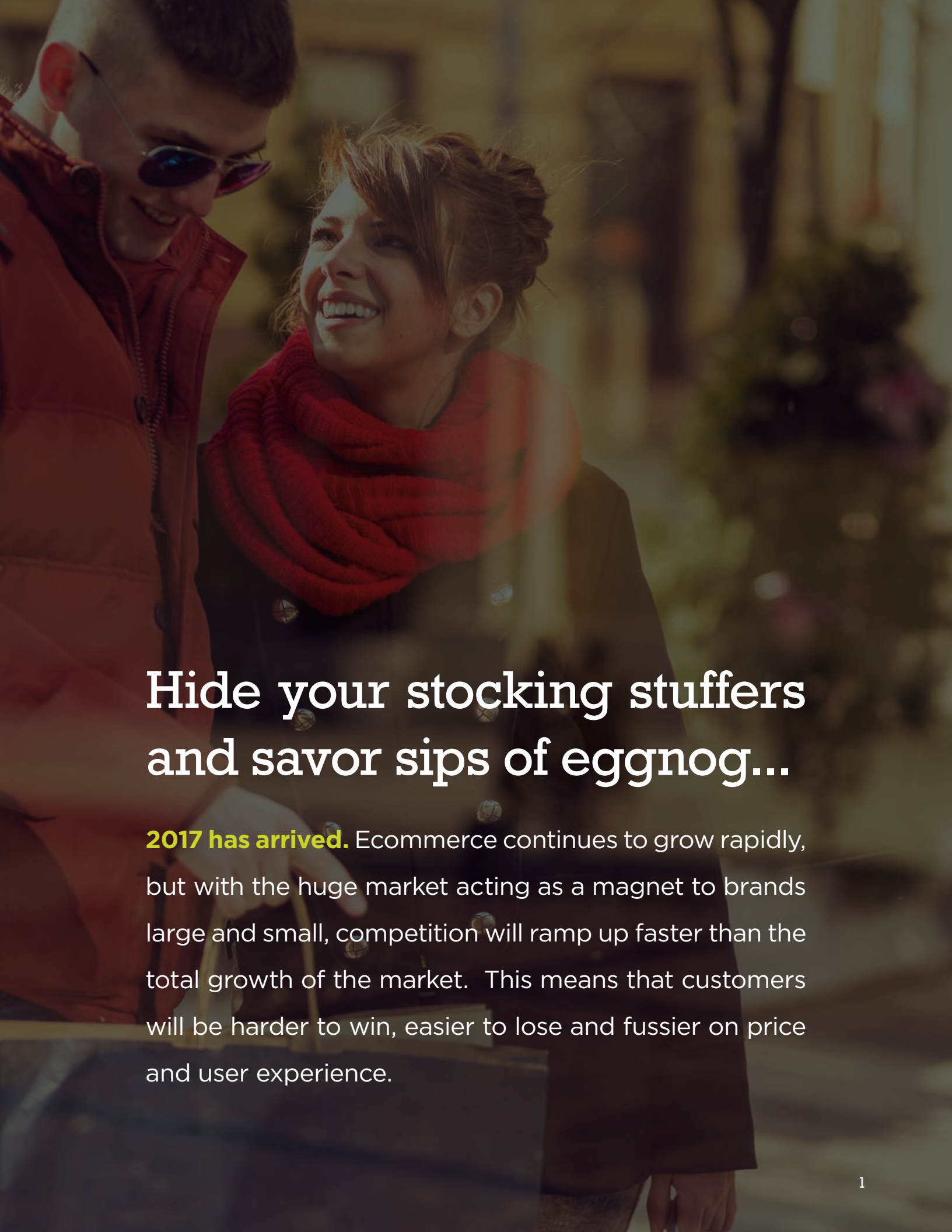




Back to the Future of **The Evolution of E-Commerce**



A photograph of a young man and woman smiling and looking at each other. The man is wearing sunglasses and a red jacket, and the woman is wearing a red scarf and a dark coat. They appear to be in a festive or outdoor setting.

Hide your stocking stuffers and savor sips of eggnog...

2017 has arrived. Ecommerce continues to grow rapidly, but with the huge market acting as a magnet to brands large and small, competition will ramp up faster than the total growth of the market. This means that customers will be harder to win, easier to lose and fussier on price and user experience.

The Future of Retail? Look Into The Past

Have you ever heard the saying “You can’t know where you are going until you know where you’ve been?” In this eBook, we will take a look back on the high-impact trends that shaped 2016 and will likely drive 2017 forward.

2016 total retail sales across the globe are estimated at \$22.049 trillion, up 6.0% from the previous year (eMarketer2016).



Here are the important trends that took place this year that you need to know about!

Demand for Complete and Accurate Product Content

Having a great product is truly only step one of the equation. More and more companies are presenting new content regularly, and in unique and compelling ways that not only garner consumer attention, but also engage to forge an emotional connection for the consumer to the brand.



88% of consumers say that detailed product content is extremely important to their purchasing decision (Google Shopping Guide 2016).

Good product content (descriptions, feature bullets, images, videos, reviews) that helps consumers by being informative, educational, and/or inspirational will increase sales and loyalty dramatically over time. Product content is now more important than the product itself. Consumers demand to know exactly what they are buying - and the right content makes for a rich consumer experience, and ultimately makes the consumer hit ‘Buy Now’.

Multi-Channel Makes or Breaks a Business

Shoppers who interact with more than one channel spend 18% to 36% more than those who interact with a single channel (Bazaarvoice 2012). Customers expect to use all channels as though they are a single experience, requiring tight integration across those channels. Retailers have had the logistics and physical stores in place, and continue to invest in the physical store experience they are supplementing this with online channels to expand their reach.

Walmart is one such retailer that views the omni-channel shopper as its sweet spot. At its annual shareholders meeting last year, Walmart CEO, Doug McMillon addressed the importance of an omni-channel strategy (Marketing Land 2015). He said that Walmart will keep making technology top of mind when it comes to internal and external customer facing initiatives.

A woman in a white coat is holding a smartphone in her hands, looking at the screen. She is standing in a store, with a blurred background of shelves and lights. A green speech bubble is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing a quote from Walmart CEO Doug McMillon.

“I want us to stop talking about digital and physical retail as if they’re two separate things. The customer doesn’t think of it that way, and we can’t either. One customer can shop with us in so many different ways – in stores, on their phones, at homes, a pick-up point. But they just think they’re shopping at Walmart, at ASDA, at Sam’s Club.”

Recognizing this, many retailers have pushed to check off all the multichannel boxes: robust physical presence, e-commerce site, social channels, and mobile apps. All of these elements are important, but their mere existence doesn’t ensure success. Understanding the importance of integration of dynamic ecommerce capabilities across all channels and devices is crucial. It’s now clear that the big winners will be the retailers that can blend the online and offline—the digital and the physical—into one seamless, omnichannel shopping experience.

Regulatory Compliance Drives Product Transparency Initiatives

Global companies may face different challenges than their domestic-only counterparts when it comes to product data management. With the emergence of multi-channel commerce, and mobile/social engagement, international regulatory and industry initiatives exacerbate pressures on manufacturers to provide a more robust set of trusted, quality product information.

Organizations all over the world are driven by these local, federal, and global regulations to streamline their product information distribution systems for accuracy and transparency. The complexity of compliance in cross border commerce is prevalent and impacts multiple categories and industries including:



- Product Health & Safety (e.g. RoHs, MSDS)
- Food & Nutrition (SmartLabel, EU1169 & Food Safety)
- Product Traceability (UDI Device Traceability)
- Product Sustainability & Social Responsibility
- Security and Counter Terrorism
- Packaging Reduction and Risk Management

Such regulations are another compelling force for companies all around the globe to take a closer look at the digital information chain that accompanies their products as they pass along transitional and new channels to market.



Global organizations are seeing that readying product information for regulatory compliance comes with valuable by-products. As internal systems are evaluated and streamlined to achieve compliance, additional business benefits are achieved; supply chains are becoming optimized for efficiency, processes for data quality and accuracy are implemented, and e-comm initiatives are powered and supported. Product information is becoming rich, robust, accurate and readily available to customers and consumers alike, and businesses are becoming more efficient, compliant, and transparent.

Noel Geoffroy, senior vice president of morning foods marketing and innovation at Kellogg's, says: "The expectation of transparency from brands is increasing, and we believe in maintaining an open and honest conversation with consumers" (American Marketing Association 2015).

As the leading product information network, 1WorldSync offers a comprehensive solution for addressing transparent and compliant product information across your supply chain. The [**1WorldSync Transparency & Compliance solution**](#) helps global businesses to simplify and manage the process of exchanging and managing product information, certificates and documentation, across trading partner communities around the world.



Predictive Commerce Uncovers Unprecedented Insight

Retailers have finally begun to embrace predictive models and analytics in the hope of determining the intent of their customers and tracking valuable user behavior.

After 36 months, predictive intelligence influenced 34.71% of brands' total orders (Predictive Intelligence Benchmark Report 2014). With the ability for more effective marketing, happier and more engaged customers, higher profits and more controlled outgoings it's easy to see why predictive analytics have become a critical component to an ecommerce retailer.

45% of online shoppers are more likely to shop on a site that offers personalised recommendations (Invesp 2016). At times, consumers may not be able to vocalize what they like. But predictive analytics can still recommend the right products. Intelligence gained through predictive analytics helps build a culture of better decision making, where any question that is raised can be modeled using the right data inputs. Without the deep understanding of customers and their shopping patterns, retailers will be flying blind when trying to create an experience that drives conversions.

Done well, it enables online retailers to target consumers on the basis of their behaviors. Then retailers are in a great position to offer complementary and/or alternative products, search options, and brands, send targeted product promotions even when a shopper is offline. The added bonus for retailers is that they're able to keep visitors on their site longer to help drive traffic, boost sales and enhance experience.



Investing in predictive analytics is a must for retailers also looking to analyze purchasing patterns to configure pricing algorithms as well as reduce fraud.

Retailers that can harness predictive data can offer relevant, targeted promotions to individual consumers. Moreover, retailers will also be able to achieve other goals that will change the consumer experience, boost conversions, and even improve margins such as predicting the next best-selling product, preventing out-of-stock scenarios, and ensuring proper staffing at stores.



Be the Retailer That Consumers Want to See In the World

As a retailer, you have spent years honing shopping experiences for your consumers. Just when you think you knew your consumers, things have changed again. One thing is certain: today's and tomorrow's consumers have soaring expectations and demand stellar experiences.

That being said, coping and competing in this new environment of always-connected, highly informed consumers can be rewarding. 2017 unveils a unique opportunity for agile retailers looking to embrace and incorporate trends sweeping the industry in the form of higher conversions, enhanced engagement, and a loyal army of consumer advocates.

About 1WorldSync

1WorldSync is the leading multi-enterprise product information network, helping more than 25K global brands and their trading partners in 60 countries – share authentic, trusted content with customers and consumers, empowering them to make the right choices, purchases, health and lifestyle decisions.

Through its solutions, technology platform and expert services, 1WorldSync provides solutions that meet the diverse needs of its customers. To transform your product data management landscape, please visit www.1worldsync.com

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