UR financial and strategic analysis of 100 retailers from 11 retail subsectors demonstrates how recent customer experience trends—including an individualized, increasingly digitized, and complexified shopping experience led by the buyer rather than the seller—are compounding a margin crisis that was already playing out before the pandemic. Welcome to the era of consumer-to-business.

How should retailers adapt?

Here are three steps retailers can take to embrace it.
1. **Remove friction.** Make shopping easier by offering various purchasing formats, such as text, livestream, social media, and web as well as fulfillment options like “buy online, pick up in store.”

2. **Redefine service.** Treat consumers like merchants in their own right: Offer more thorough product descriptions. Expand return options, potentially including other retail partners.

3. **Organize your operations by customer segment.** Create a designated customer management team for each segment, charged with owning that segment’s data and smoothing their experience across touch points.

For more of Deloitte’s insights on the consumer-to-business model, read *The retail profitability paradox* published by MIT Sloan Management Review.
The future of retail is in consumers’ hands

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About the Deloitte Center for Industry Insights

The Deloitte Center for Industry Insights provides premiere insights based on primary research on the most prevalent issues facing the consumer business and manufacturing industries—ranging from aerospace to retail—to help your business run effectively and achieve superior business results.

Technology is changing rapidly, and so are consumers, radically altering how companies do business. The Deloitte Consumer Industry Center delivers insights that help leaders in the automotive, consumer products, retail, transportation, hospitality, and services sectors better understand their business environment and where it's heading. Read recent publications and learn more about the center on Deloitte.com.