<https://api2cart.com/ecommerce/developing-point-sale-system-challenges-growth/>

A point of sale system traditionally is associated with the hefty cash-register machine used in retail at the checkout. Many e-Сommerce buyers, however, don’t suspect that they are able to pay for their items online thanks to a POS system as well - or, to be more exact, POS software. Checkout is the final step of the funnel, after so many efforts to bring a visitor to the store and lead towards converting into a customer. Therefore, it is crucial that the paying experience is flawless and nothing hinders store owners to receive their financial reward.

Along with the evolution of retail, the point of sale systems are rapidly developing too. While their hardware part is no longer indispensable (ecommerce is the vivid example), the software, on the contrary, has to be more and more sophisticated to comply with the growing demands of both e-merchants and those running brick-and-mortar stores. Their functionality has significantly grown during the recent years, and became more versatile to accommodate the requirements of each business. Let’s delve deeper into the issue:

1. **Collecting payments and keeping track of sales** -- this is POS systems’ key role, but they are no longer limited to it.
2. **Inventory management** -- it has become another crucial function, as it significantly eases the life of merchants and saves their time. Instead of conducting manual inventory counts, they can rely on the point of sale system to automatically update the stock levels according to the items sold.
3. **Reporting** -- POS software integration into accounting allows using its data to track the revenue, manage taxes etc.
4. **Gathering and managing customer information** -- it helps with loyalty programs and is crucial in building trust with the buyers.

Clearly, a system like this is a must-have for merchants willing to focus on growing their business rather than dealing with paperwork. Moreover, the versatility of businesses calls for customized solutions and therefore building a business that can satisfy the customers’ demands in POS systems is a promising.

At present, a ready point of sale product seldom gets directly from the manufacturer/developer to the end user. Distributors and value added resellers (VARs) are in most cases mediators in the process, communicating the customers’ needs to the developers and then bundling the package for the buyer that exactly corresponds to their needs.

If you decide on building or refining your POS solution, don’t be deceived by the idea that since your task is only creating the product, it is going to be easy. You’ve got to be aware of the key tendencies on the market as well as typical challenges you are about to face. This will not only make your product maximally competitive, but also help to catch VARs’ attention and thus get new clients.

So, let’s now get to the gist and discuss the points that require your special consideration.

**POS developer? Take the challenge!**

Multichannel sales have become a trend nowadays, as well as the combination of online and offline sales “under one roof” that is quickly gaining popularity. Many merchants who run regular retail stores eventually come to the decision to go online, too, and choose their point of sale solution with this perspective in mind. This sets certain requirements to this software, that are up to its developers to implement and figure out how to do it in the most efficient way.

* 1. **Multiple OSs support.** The era of cash registers as the only hardware solution for POS systems is over. Merchants want less pricey and more flexible way of using this such systems - on their PCs, laptops or even tablets. Therefore, the software has to be created with Windows, Linux, MacOS, Android, iOS support to extend the circle of potential clients by adjusting to their software preferences.
  2. **Real-time inventory updates.** Many solutions batch and update inventory based on the sold items only once a day, which is totally acceptable when running one store. But in case of multichannel sales inventory updates in real time are of primary importance. Otherwise a merchant may end up selling an item which has already been sold, but the inventory counts haven’t been updated, which can lead to confusion and certain issues.
  3. **Inventory synchronisation across different channels**. Imagine a store owner who started out selling on Amazon, and now extended the presence to Ebay plus an online a brick-and-mortar store. Without proper synchronization feature, entering new items into the system can turn into a continuous nightmare, as it would require doing the same job for each of the sales channels. Clearly, the preference would be given to software that handles this task by automatically syncing items across all channels and saving time and sanity of the person in charge of this.
  4. **Multiple payment methods support.** Credit/debit cards and cash only are past century already. To be competitive, your solution needs to be oriented at ecommerce sphere with maximum online payment methods supported along with gift, chip cards, reward points etc.
* **Creating and managing customer database.**POS systems that gather customer details and record them aren’t a novelty. But advanced abilities like creating their profiles with as many details as possible, import/export features, loyalty program, a single customer database for all sales channels will definitely catch the attention of even very demanding customers.
* **Multiple integrations support.**Your clients may be not sure about where exactly they will be selling tomorrow, but they want to know you’ve got them covered with your POS solution. Whether it be several ecommerce platforms, different online marketplaces or useful add-ons - the more possibilities to connect to them you provide, the more flourishing your business will be.

This last challenge can prove to be the toughest one. The thing is, getting inside a shopping cart or marketplace to retrieve the necessary information - products, orders, prices, customers etc is a sort of a puzzle. Moreover, each new integration means the need to figure out how to find your way around the system you intend to connect to.

**Implementing many integrations at once - a reality**

In view of what has been said above, adding each new integration seems a lengthy and troublesome process. For instance, if you would like your POS system to integrate with a popular shopping cart, you would need to find a good developer specializing on it, and get ready to wait and pay a good price for the work. Moreover, maintenance further on will be on you as well (so make sure you are on good terms with the developer).

However, there is another, easier and faster way of handling the POS integration issue. API2Cart offers integration with 30+ most widely used shopping carts, including Magento, PrestaShop, WooCommerce, OpenCart, Bigcommerce, Shopify etc. Basically, you will only need to integrate with API2Cart, which in its turn provides access to different ecommerce platforms databases via its unified API.