

Case Study: American Home

Reimagining World-Class Shopping Experiences in New Mexico Market

American Home Furniture & Mattress opened the doors to their newest showroom on February 16, 2024 – a venture beyond a typical store opening. It was a reimagining of the American Home customer experience through market research and store tours to dissect the needs of a modern consumer. From a technology perspective, the goal was to infuse it effortlessly throughout the path to purchase.

The leadership team that joined us for this conversation included owner, Kenton Van Harten, Director of Digital Revenue, Curtis Wingenbach, and Vice President of Merchandising, Elaine Roy. American Home's leaders share this exciting new venture and how STORIS technology played a crucial role in removing friction in their refined shopping journey.



Authenticity in Rebranding

Reinventing an established retail brand, especially one that has served its market since 1936, takes intention. Owner Kenton Van Harten spearheaded the initiative and allowed his team's imagination to guide the way. He said, "We treated this new store as a start-up, embracing change to meet the needs of today's consumer."

Trust is critical between retailers and consumers. This attention to detail delivers authenticity. American Home's goal is to recreate furniture shopping experiences in New Mexico. They left no stone unturned in its rebranding, from the showroom design and ambiance of the music playing to its eCommerce website design, tag lines, and logo.

Roy said, "We took big chances on our new merchandise assortment, but we were well-researched to make choices that reflect what customers truly want."

American Home's new flagship showroom features soaring ceiling heights and vertical displays to maximize space and inspire shoppers. The design showcases many new products while retaining an open concept. There was also thoughtful planning to consider the customers' physical path to purchase as they travel through the showroom.



Trust in Partners to Take on Big Initiatives

American Home's leadership team challenged themselves to identify each friction point in their customer journey and find creative solutions. That's where technology and their long-term STORIS partnership came into play.

Wingenbach said, "STORIS' support has been amazing through this ambitious venture. The strategic technology guidance allowed us to deliver a cohesive customer experience."

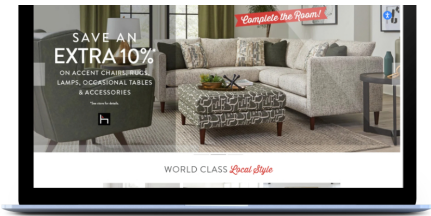
The Customer Journey Begins Online

American Home leverages STORIS' technology from their showrooms and warehouses to their website. The transformation began online to drive traffic to their new showroom. They partnered with STORIS'



eCommerce team to mirror the in-store design on their eSTORIS website. Americanhome.com reflects the flagship's local style and customer-centric service offering right from the homepage.

Wingenbach, who leads their eCommerce initiative, said, "The website must entice the customer to enter our new showroom, which is why coordination was imperative." This makes the continuity of product data shared online, from pricing and availability to where samples are on display, fundamental to American Home's cross-channel success.



The Transition to the Showroom

American Home's customers come into the store highly educated and request to see specific products, but financing is often the first step.

Customers want to know their financed "open-to-buy" before they start shopping. STORIS' Consumer Facing Application has been a game-changer for American Home. Wingenbach noted, "Our customers scan a QR code to fill out our credit app on their own device using STORIS' CFA. The customer can handle this private aspect of the shopping experience independently of a salesperson, which is more comfortable due to the sensitive financial information."

Using STORIS' Finance Queue in tandem with the CFA, American Home leverages primary, secondary, and tertiary lender partners to secure financing for as many customers as possible. The integrated application and approval process is pleasant for their customers and starts the shopping journey on the right foot.



Retail Technology Seamlessly Woven into Path to Purchase

At the Heart of It All Is Inventory

Inventory management is the bedrock of STORIS and the lifeblood of a retail company. Wingenbach said, "Trust in STORIS' solid inventory control allows us to take on strategic projects confidently. From receiving inventory to determining floor samples to fulfilling orders, we have inventory integrity with STORIS." Further, STORIS' analytical reporting allows American Home to analyze high-turning inventory and inventory aging to support decision-making when bringing new collections into the showroom.

American Home has a creative approach to increasing average order values. Roy noted, "We're using kiosks to cross-promote related categories, such as top-of-bed in our mattress department. We may not have floor space for a vast linen assortment, but space is infinite online. Kiosks showcase an endless aisle of options." Customers can easily add a comforter and sheets to their existing mattress order. Instead of shopping elsewhere, American Home keeps the upsell in-house. They do this without adding friction to the checkout process, and the product ships directly to the customer's home.

Strategic Space Utilization



A key theme in the store design is the smart utilization of space. Digital price tags launched in the new flagship store. Customers are empowered with information that takes up no space at all! Scanning a QR Code on a digital price tag allows them to access website content such as in-depth product details, reviews, and lifestyle videos. Wingenbach said transitioning from physical to digital tags was a big undertaking, but having the support of STORIS to take on challenges gets projects over the finish line.

The digital kiosks are another way to tell multiple product stories from a small footprint. They use video content from manufacturers to showcase intangibles such as quality construction and materials that support decision-making. Storytelling is also a natural icebreaker for starting a conversation between sales associates and customers.

American Home creatively uses its website to drive store traffic and digital content to engage the in-store shopper making the experience about the brand, not channel silos.



Now that the flagship store is open, the foundation has been laid for American Home's next technology initiative, mobilizing their salesforce with STORIS NextGen CXM & Mobile POS. Their team is excited about this next initiative. Wingenbach noted, "Using technology wherever you are with the customer streamlines the path to purchase. You don't have to leave their side."

Van Harten stated, "All consumers want is ease when shopping for furniture. As leaders, it is our job to identify and resolve points of friction. If we can eliminate even five-minute intervals of friction here and there, we'll deliver a shopping experience customers will tell their friends about."



A Partnership for the Ages

American Home has been a partner of STORIS since 1997. Van Harten said, "It's a mutual commitment and trust that allows the partnership to thrive through retail and technology's natural evolutions. I appreciate STORIS' dedication to the home furnishings industry and that the software meets our needs without customization."

Wingenbach concluded, "STORIS evolves their solutions and has grown with American Home's needs. The continuity of engineering keeps the solution constantly moving forward. When American Home is ready to take on our next initiative, STORIS has the solutions for us on the shelf, ready when we are, and it makes it easy to implement them into our existing technology flow." He noted that open communication between STORIS and its retailers allows the technology to meet retailers' needs seamlessly. "Our Client Relations Advocate is eager to hear what we have to say and takes it to heart. The company listens to its retailers on the ground floor and delivers solutions."

American Home isn't slowing down. Stay tuned for more exciting ventures launching soon!



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