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Essential Guide: Starting a Dark Store or Online Grocery Store -III

Highlighted four key planning areas for starting a online grocery business. Now, YRC shares four additional essential planning areas for the same topic.

PUNE, MAHARASHTRA, INDIA, June 27, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In one of the previous media communications, retail and eCommerce consulting firm, YourRetailCoach (YRC) highlighted insights on four key planning areas in [starting a dark store or online grocery store business](#) based on quick eCommerce. In continuance, YRC underscores four additional key planning areas concerning the same subject are underscored in this communiqué.
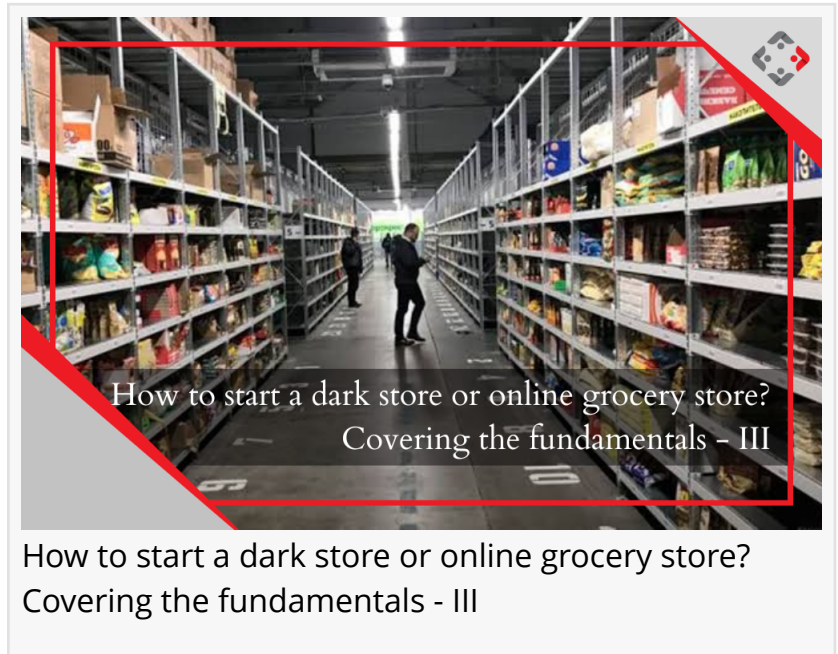
How to start a dark store or online grocery store? Covering the fundamentals - III

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>
> *Nikhil Agarwal*

　　　　　　　　　 　　　　　　　　　　

Inventory management poses multiple challenges of unique nature for dark stores or online grocery stores.

For starters, the quantum of inventory to be dealt with is humongous. Products which are not easily available in regular grocery or departmental stores have a high likelihood of being present in the stock of online grocery brands. This gives a sense of the inventory-holding capacity that reputed online grocery or dark store brands must possess.

One of the biggest challenges in quick commerce inventory management is the lack of visibility. In a regular grocery or departmental store, business owners or managers can easily keep an eye on the shelves. However, in an online grocery store, the reliance shifts to software systems. In a

software environment, visible cues are hard to catch and there is an overload of tabs and information on dashboards.

Some of the essential requirements for superior inventory management in quick commerce stores are:

·   Right strategies and planning (e.g. what inventories to keep, where to procure from, etc.)
·   Accuracy in demand forecasting, use of analytics
·   Reliable procurement planning
·   Distribution and logistics
·   Warehouse management
·   Defined processes and operations with the aid of SOPs for quick commerce grocery business
·   Use of best-fit inventory management software and other technological solutions
·   Prudent selection and onboarding of vendors and suppliers
·   QA and QC measures

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Technology is the backbone of any business in today's world. Online grocery stores or dark stores must be aware of the latest and relevant tools and technologies that are used in their line of business. Some of the relevant technologies are discussed here.

For quick commerce companies, the first important decision pertaining to technology is making a decision on one of the quick commerce platforms to be used. An eCommerce platform (read quick eCommerce, in this case) is the technology framework over which online storefronts are created and managed. This platform allows the listing of products and management of product pages and details. For customers, it offers the online storefronts for exploration, account and order management, making payments, initiating returns and refunds, giving reviews and feedback, raising complaints, etc. Different eCommerce platforms come with different features and capabilities.

Another important technology used in eCommerce is the CMS. It allows managing information on websites and smartphone applications of eCommerce brands and businesses. For example, if prices have to be updated, it can be done via CMS.

Tools like chatbots and virtual assistants are of immense utility in handling basic queries from customers. These automated tools can help bring down operational costs.

In large dark stores, the use of robotic and industrial automation solutions provides speed to quality control, order fulfilment, logistics, and other bulky and repetitive operations where human intervention is avoidable or can be minimised.

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Brands and businesses based on a quick commerce business model cannot avoid having sound omnichannel strategies. Customers of dark stores or online grocery stores come into contact with the latter at multiple online and offline touchpoints in a customer journey. For an online grocery store, these touchpoints include advertisements on search engines and social media channels, online storefronts, customer care, accessing and managing accounts, making payments, home delivery, managing returns and exchanges, etc. Throughout the customer journey, there should not be a mismatch or misalignment of information or action among these touchpoints. The customer journey must flow seamlessly irrespective of any switch of channels. For example, if an advertisement on a social media platform promises to offer a certain discount on checkout, that discount must not go away at the time of placing an order or making the payment at the time of delivery. These two parallel universes (online and offline) must stay consistent all along the customer journey.

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Digital marketing allows reaching out to a wide audience over multiple regions in a matter of minutes at a fraction of the cost of many traditional advertising mediums. Secondly, advertising content can be customised to meet the specific requirements of a given group of demographics and interests. In digital marketing, businesses can remain in control of their advertising and promotional campaigns and make any necessary adjustments on the go. This helps to keep the ROI of digital marketing investments under check. When it comes to social media, it can be also used as a platform for offering customer support services. This is in addition to routine content posting and sharing of shoppable posts. Also, a strong presence on social media is often regarded as a trait of a responsible and committed brand. [Quick eCommerce brands and businesses](#) should avoid sounding static in replies to comments.

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YourRetailCoach (YRC) is a boutique [retail and eCommerce consulting brand](#) with 10+ years in the business of providing enterprise startup and management solutions. With a scaling international footprint, YRC has served over 500 clients in 25+ verticals. In quick commerce business consulting, YRC offers planning and implementation services and solutions for quick commerce business setup and growth and expansion endeavours.

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