



Retail Business Services President Roger Wheeler Provides Keynote Address at SEED Live Event

September 17, 2021

Yesterday, Retail Business Services, along with Venture Café, Peapod Digital Labs and Ahold Delhaize USA



Supply Chain Services, hosted the third annual SEED Live event. The SEED Immersion Program is a 10-week program that gives five start-ups the opportunity to work with mentors to increase their retail industry IQ and build critical relationships with Ahold Delhaize USA companies.

Roger Wheeler, President of Retail Business Services, was the keynote speaker at the event. He spoke on innovation in the retail industry and the rapid growth in e-commerce.

"The pace at which the e-commerce and the online growth has occurred has really been phenomenal, and it's continuing," he said.

"Everyone's moving rapidly to try to secure the digital relationship with customers, because that's truly the currency of the future."

Roger spoke on how Retail Business Services is approaching this trend, through its omnichannel Connected Customer Strategy, and how the trend is moving away from mass marketing to one-on-one personal relationships with customers based on their needs, based on their own definition of value. While there is a growing trend in e-commerce, which is projected to be 20% of business in 3-4 years, that still leaves 80% of business in brick-and-mortar stores, making the omnichannel strategy imperative.

"It's the ability to navigate the customer across the different channels, whether they're shopping in-store, pick-up or delivery, and whichever way they're moving through that, they're getting a consistent experience in how they're navigating and interacting with the brand," said Roger.

Customers are not only looking for an omnichannel experience, but a convenient and easy one. They are also looking for healthy and sustainable options. Retail Business Services addresses these customer trends through its various functions.

Roger also reviewed predictions for retail innovation, which includes immediate solutions, automation, proven efficient concepts and innovation for associates.

In a Q&A, Roger shared that the current challenge the company is facing is supply chain, which is struggling end-to-end due to the pandemic. He also shared that in 2022, he is most looking forward to continuing to evolve the omnichannel, expand click & collect locations and solving the problem of fulfilling speed – moving from next-day delivery to same-day delivery to two-hour delivery.

Following Roger's keynote speech, the SEED Live event included a panel on the future of grocery retail, where VP of Retail Innovation Center of Excellence at Retail Business Services Heather Paquette was a panelist, and two speaker presentations. The event ended with a pitch competition, where each start-up got to pitch to a panel of retail and venture capital experts, who determined which one had the most viable technology and would be the recipient of the \$25,000 grand prize.