



Will Online dominate Retail after COVID?

You have heard the expression “I need some retail therapy.” Right now, approaching the end of lockdown, is that how you feel?

After a long lockdown with the city shops disappearing entirely or wrapped in moth balls with windows blanked off or showing empty shelves, are you longing to be able to walk inside and browse about again?

Retail is not just about going to the shop to buy something. Good retail is an art form. A store with fascinating products to sell, presented in a way that makes you feel good. To find the right colour, to see a texture that you like, to be in awe of the way the store is decorated, to fossick around to find products on sale or those that you did not know about. There is the practical aspect of trying on clothes, shoes, glasses and the like or just picking up an item to assess exactly what it is like. These pleasures and necessities mean that retail stores have an important role to play that cannot fully be replaced by the online store.

In the 1800's people would buy products from a paper catalogue, much like internet shopping today. When the concept of the large department store was born, people delighted in what they considered to be a wonderful shopping adventure. This was a revolution that was all about the experience. Going to a store was not just about spending money. Stores had the function of showing the shopper what was possible. They became places of great creativity. The opportunity to discover new products.

There is talk around that COVID will have the effect of killing off the retail stores. We need retail stores and particularly we need those that have gone into moth balls to re-emerge better than ever. Those that have shut down for good can offer opportunity for new owners, new products, new ideas to re-vitalise our city.

Online shopping is wonderful and convenient for repeat and known items. Online is here to stay but that does not mean that retail is dead. Far from it.

Snap, Send, Solve App

Residents are familiar with this app. A means to let authorities know if they spot an issue like graffiti, illegal parking, dumped rubbish, trip hazards, faulty sprinklers, vandalism and more.

The app has recently been upgraded to give residents the ability to give authorities feedback on whether an issue has been resolved and how satisfied they were with the result. This feedback provides authorities with insight into the satisfaction of residents and areas that could be improved. After all, both the council and residents want to make our city the best place to live and work that it can be.

However, what is the City of Melbourne doing? It is not one of the app's valued supporters! If nearby Councils like Stonnington and Port Phillip as well as City West Water can pay the subscription, surely the City of Melbourne should?

Next Zoom Meeting – Outdoor Dining – COVID Safe

As is our custom, the Residents 3000 Forum event on the first Thursday of every month, is scheduled for the 5th of November. This event is addressing the proposed “Outdoor Dining” initiatives to help revive



the city. Imagine, sophisticated city with outdoor eating in small, but elegant spaces that are designed to be COVID Safe. Look it is already happening with a floating coffee shop on the river!

In this meeting, we will have two speakers from the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation (VCGRL), two Council representatives and one police officer from the liquor regulation east city branch. Given the great success of our recent “Meet the Lord Mayoral Candidates” meeting, where over 225 people attended online, we are looking forward to seeing many residents participating in this upcoming event.

It is part of our charter to help residents be informed about developments in their city. This time we examine the Council’s plans concerning how the outdoor dining initiative is to be implemented. We are quite sure that residents will be interested to know about safety, hygiene, music and opening times in the context that being COVID safe is easier in outdoor settings rather than congregating in confined spaces.

Details of the event will be posted on our web site at www.residents3000.com.au and our Facebook and Instagram sites.



Caption: Retail dead now. Residents can help shops revive.



Caption: Floating Coffee to supplement daily exercising.