



Clarity

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See Exactly What's Happening with Your Retail Consumables

Clarity is the second pillar in the 7 Cs of Retail Consumables because Control alone is not enough. To manage consumables effectively, Retailers need clear, accessible insight that supports better decisions across operations, procurement, finance and sustainability.

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to achieve more with less

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Introduction

Retailers generate vast amounts of operational data every day, yet when it comes to consumables, many are still operating with limited visibility. Spend is spread across stores, departments, products and suppliers, making it difficult to answer even basic questions:

- What are we using?
- Where?
- At what cost?
- And why?



When operational consumables lack Clarity

Across UK retail estates, operational consumables are often purchased frequently and by multiple teams. This makes them easy to overlook and difficult to analyse for meaningful insight.

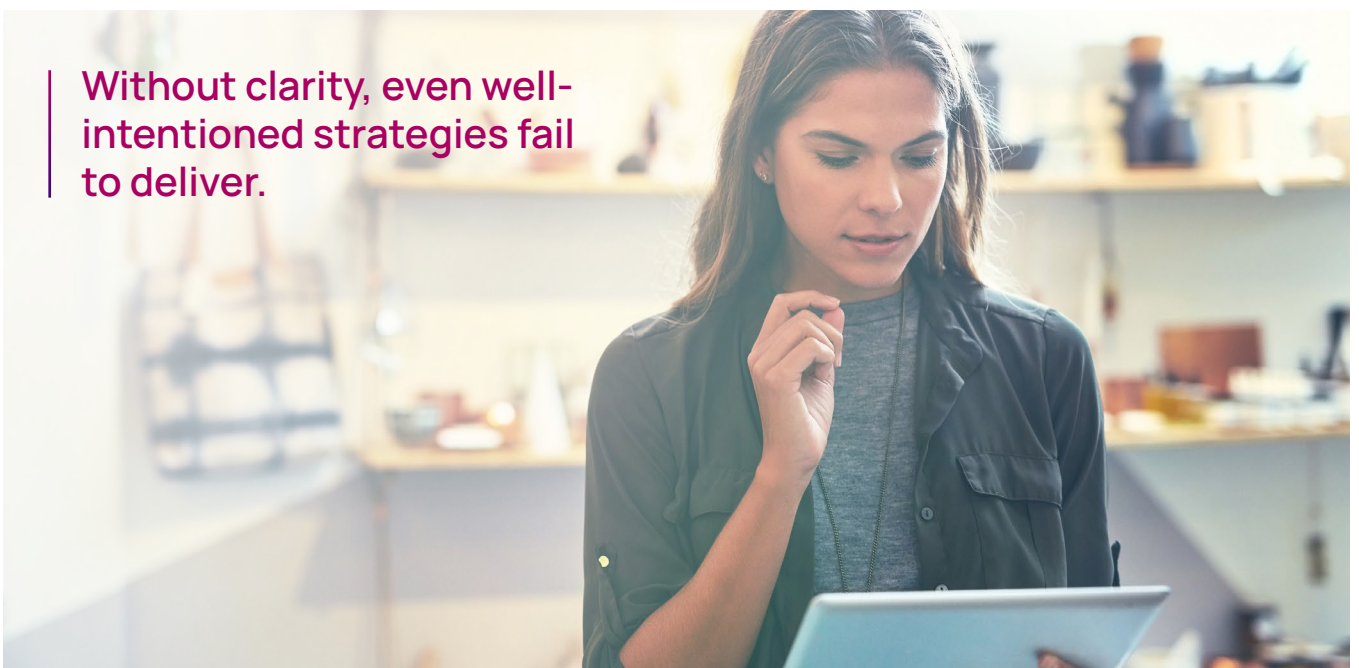
Common challenges include:

- Limited visibility of total consumables spend
- Difficulty comparing similar products or ranges
- Inconsistent reporting across stores or regions
- Manual processes that obscure trends and patterns
- Decisions based on assumptions rather than evidence

Without clarity, retailers are forced into reactive decision-making. Procurement teams struggle to rationalise ranges, finance teams lack confidence in forecasts and sustainability teams are left without the evidence needed to measure any meaningful progress.

Industry analysts such as Gartner² consistently highlight the importance of accurate, accessible data in enabling better procurement decisions, improving compliance and reducing inefficiencies across indirect spend categories.

Without clarity, even well-intentioned strategies fail to deliver.



What ‘Clarity’ really means in retail

Clarity is often mistaken for reporting. In reality, it is about understanding the bigger picture, not just the information.



In a retail consumables context, clarity means:

- Seeing what is being purchased across the business
- Understanding patterns of use over time
- Comparing products, pricing and performance
- Identifying anomalies, inefficiencies or duplication
- Making decisions based on the evidence, not gut feel

Clarity turns consumables from an operational afterthought into a way to drive process change and reduce cost. It allows retailers to move beyond “what was ordered” to understand what is really happening across multiple stores at any given time.

This shift is increasingly important in a retail environment defined by margin pressure, rising costs and growing expectations around transparency and accountability.

The cost of operating without Clarity

The impact of poor clarity is rarely immediate, but it is far reaching.

When retailers lack clear insight into consumables, the consequences often include:

- Paying different prices for similar products
- Holding excess stock in some locations while others run short
- Missed opportunities to rationalise or standardise ranges
- Difficulty identifying waste or inefficiency
- Limited evidence to support sustainability reporting

From a regulatory and responsibility perspective, Clarity is becoming essential.

The UK Government’s Resources and Waste Strategy for England² emphasises the role of data and transparency in reducing waste and improving resource efficiency. Similarly, the British Retail Consortium (BRC)³ has highlighted the need for Retailers to improve visibility across their operations to support more sustainable and efficient practices.

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How retailers can gain Clarity

Procurement platforms and bespoke portals, such as MyAcopia, are specifically designed around retail consumables management to bring clarity to a traditionally opaque area of retail operations.

Rather than relying on disconnected systems or manual reporting, these systems provide a structured, central environment where data becomes visible, comparable and useful.



It's great to see what people are spending and to be able to limit the products they can buy.

Rainbows Hospice on MyAcopia, the bespoke retail operational consumables management system



Insight at a glance

Operational consumables management platforms give retailers access to clear, consolidated insight across their consumables activity, including:

- What products are being ordered
- Volumes and frequency of orders
- Spend by product, category or location
- Trends over time

This enables teams to understand the bigger picture, not just the individual transactions.

This helps procurement teams assess value, operations and sustainability teams choose appropriate products and finance teams to understand cost drivers better.



Clarity for every retail stakeholder

Clear insight benefits every function involved in retail operations:

Retail Operations

- Better understanding of what is being used in-store
- Fewer surprises caused by inconsistent ordering
- Improved consistency across locations

Procurement

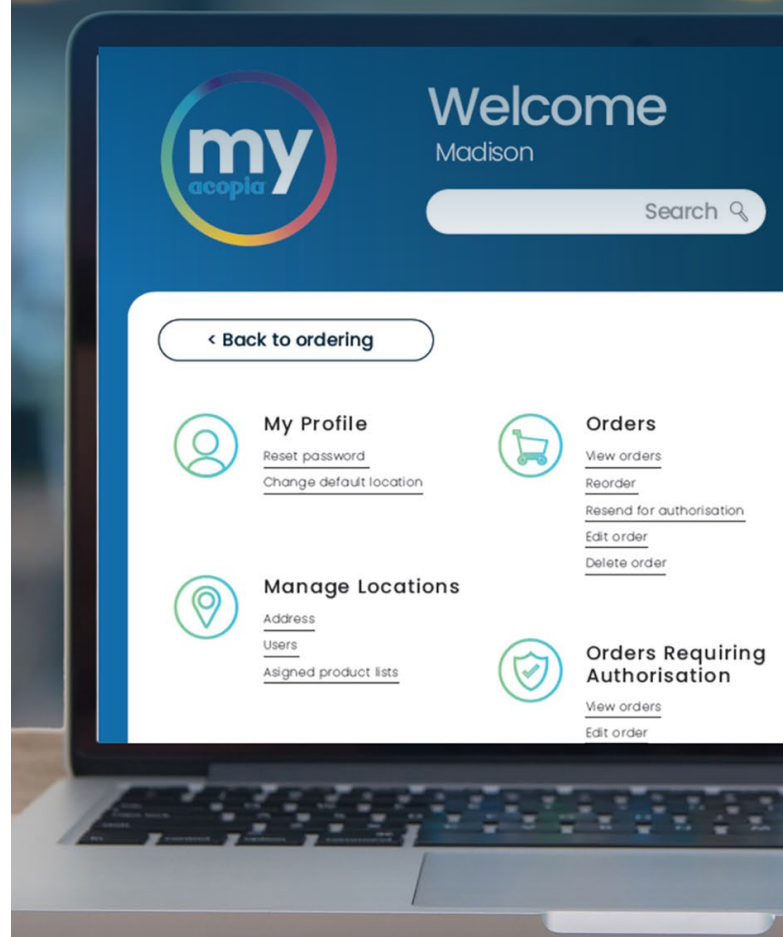
- Clear visibility of spend and usage patterns
- Easier identification of duplication or non-standard items
- Stronger foundations for supplier and product range decisions

Finance

- Improved confidence in forecasts and budgets
- Greater transparency over operational spend
- Clear audit trails to support governance

Sustainability Teams

- Data to support waste reduction initiatives
- Clearer measurement of progress against targets
- Improved reporting aligned to regulatory and industry expectations



Clarity ensures all teams are working from the same reliable information.

Clarity

The second step in the 7 Cs journey

Clarity builds directly on Control.

Once Retailers have governance and structure in place, clarity provides the insight needed to:

- Centralise consumables effectively
- Consolidate relevant, efficient product ranges
- Unlock sustainable Cost Savings
- Support more Conscious consumption
- Deliver a truly Complete consumables strategy

Without clarity, improvement efforts remain fragmented and difficult to sustain.



See Clearly, Act with Confidence

Operational consumables may seem routine, but the decisions surrounding them have real financial, operational and environmental impact.

Retailers that lack clarity are forced to rely on assumptions and incomplete information. Those that invest in clarity gain understanding, confidence and control over an often overlooked area of spend.

As Gartner has observed, organisations that improve operational clarity are better positioned to act with confidence, reduce complexity and make informed decisions at pace.

By using a shared management system, clarity turns consumables data into insight and insight into better decisions.

References used within this document

1. Gartner
What Is Data and Analytics: Everything You Need to Know
2. UK Government
Resources and Waste Strategy for England
3. British Retail Consortium (BRC)
Sustainability and the Circular Economy

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