



# Centralise

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## Bringing Your Retail Consumables Together

Centralise is the third pillar in the 7 Cs of Retail Consumables because visibility and insight only deliver value when they are brought together in one place. Centralisation turns disconnected activity into a cohesive, manageable whole.

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Empowering organisations globally  
to achieve more with less

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## Bringing Your Retail Consumables Together

Centralise is the third pillar in the 7 Cs of Retail Consumables because visibility and insight only deliver value when they are brought together in one place. Centralisation creates a single source of truth for consumables, enabling Retailers to simplify processes, reduce duplication and operate with greater confidence. Centralisation turns disconnected activity into a cohesive, manageable whole.

### Introduction

Retail operations are increasingly complex. Multi-site estates, distributed teams and tight margins mean even small inefficiencies quickly scale into increasing cost and operational risk. Yet when it comes to operational consumables, many Retailers are still working with fragmented systems, localised purchasing and limited oversight.



## When retail consumables aren't Centralised

Across retail estates, consumables are often sourced and managed in an ad hoc way. Different stores, regions or teams use different suppliers, processes and systems, sometimes out of necessity, often out of habit.

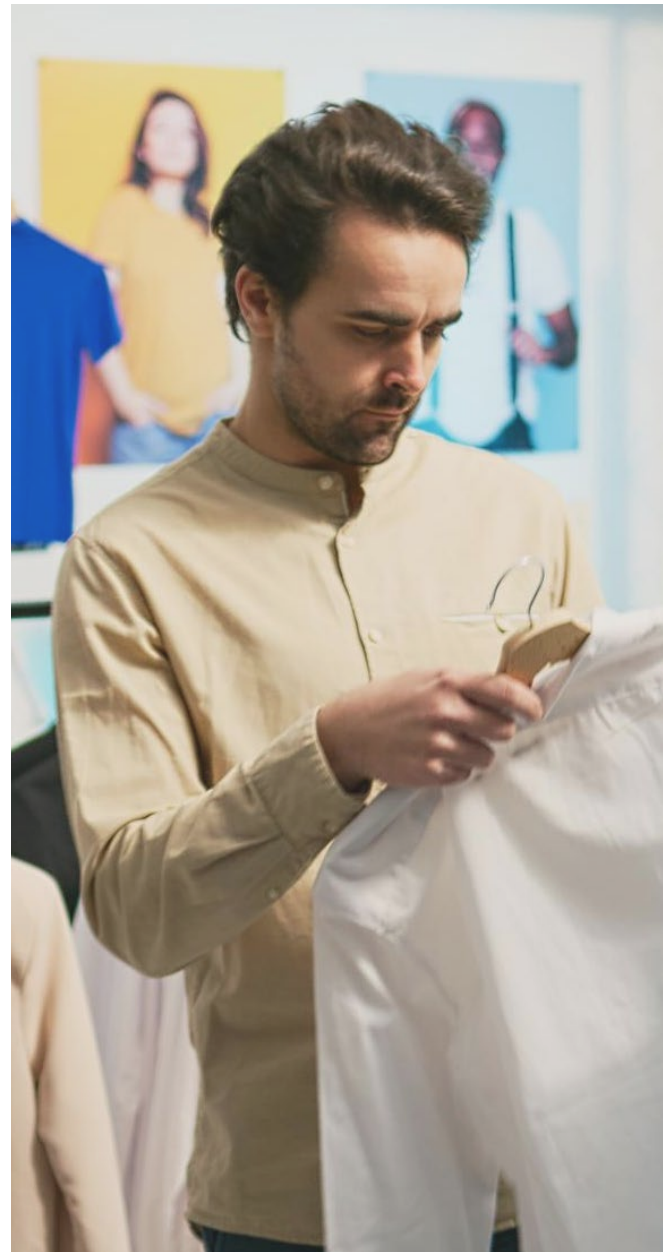
Common challenges include:

- Multiple ordering routes for similar products
- Inconsistent pricing and product availability
- Limited ability to see total demand across the estate
- Duplication of effort across teams
- Increased reliance on local, reactive purchasing

Without Centralisation, even well-controlled or well-reported consumables data remains fragmented. Teams may have all the information, but it is spread across different systems, spreadsheets and inboxes, making it difficult to use or act on.

Industry analysts such as Gartner<sup>1</sup> have consistently highlighted that organisations operating with fragmented systems struggle to turn data into insight, as information is dispersed across disconnected processes and platforms.

Research from McKinsey<sup>2</sup> has shown that fragmented operational processes increase complexity and cost, while centralised models improve efficiency and decision-making.



## What ‘Centralise’ really means in retail

Centralisation is often misunderstood as taking control away from local teams. In reality, effective centralisation is about connection, consistency and coordination.

In a retail operational consumables context, centralisation means:

- A single platform for browsing, ordering and managing consumables
- Consistent access to approved products across all locations
- One consolidated view of spend, usage and trends
- Shared data that supports decision-making across teams
- Reduced reliance on local and ad-hoc workarounds

Centralisation does not remove flexibility. Instead, it provides a structured framework that allows local teams to operate efficiently while the wider business benefits from scale, consistency and oversight.

As Retailers face growing pressure to do more with less, centralisation becomes a practical necessity rather than a theoretical ideal.



**MyAcopia really did streamline our ordering process, not only could they supply our store consumables, but they could do carrier bags and we could buy them in bulk, store for free and deliver for free.**

Mark Swinden, UK Operations Manager  
ALDO



### The hidden cost of fragmentation in retail

The cost of operating without a Centralised approach is rarely obvious, but always significant.

When consumables are managed through multiple routes and systems, Retailers often experience:

- Paying different prices for the same or similar products
- Missed opportunities to aggregate demand
- Inconsistent stock availability across stores
- Increased administrative effort
- Reduced ability to plan or forecast effectively

From a policy and sustainability perspective, fragmentation also creates barriers. The UK Government’s Resources and Waste Strategy for England <sup>3</sup> highlights the importance of consistent, transparent processes in improving resource efficiency and reducing waste. Without a central view, it becomes far harder to identify over-ordering, duplication or inefficiency.

Similarly, retail industry bodies and sustainability organisations continue to emphasise that simplification and consolidation are key enablers of more responsible consumption and waste reduction.

**Effective centralisation is about connection, consistency and coordination.**

## How to Centralise retail consumables

Retail consumables management platforms, such as MyAcopia, are designed to act as a central hub for all consumables activity.

These bespoke platforms replace fragmentation with a single, structured environment that connects teams, data and processes.

### One central platform for procuring retail consumables

Adopting a bespoke system means Retailers can centralise:

- Product browsing and selection
- Ordering processes
- Spend and usage data
- Stock visibility and tracking

This creates a consistent experience for users, whether they are based at head office or in-store, while ensuring all activity feeds into one place.

At store level, the added benefit is removing the need for local teams to find their own solutions when supplies run low.

### A single source of truth

By bringing consumables data together in one place, platforms such as MyAcopia enable Retailers to:

- Understand total demand across locations
- Identify trends and anomalies
- Support better planning and forecasting
- Make informed decisions with confidence

**Centralisation turns consumables from a series of isolated transactions into a managed category.**



## Centralisation for every retail stakeholder

Centralising operational consumables delivers value right across the organisation:

### Retail Operations

- A simpler, more consistent ordering experience
- Fewer disruptions caused by supply issues
- Reduced time spent resolving consumables problems

### Procurement

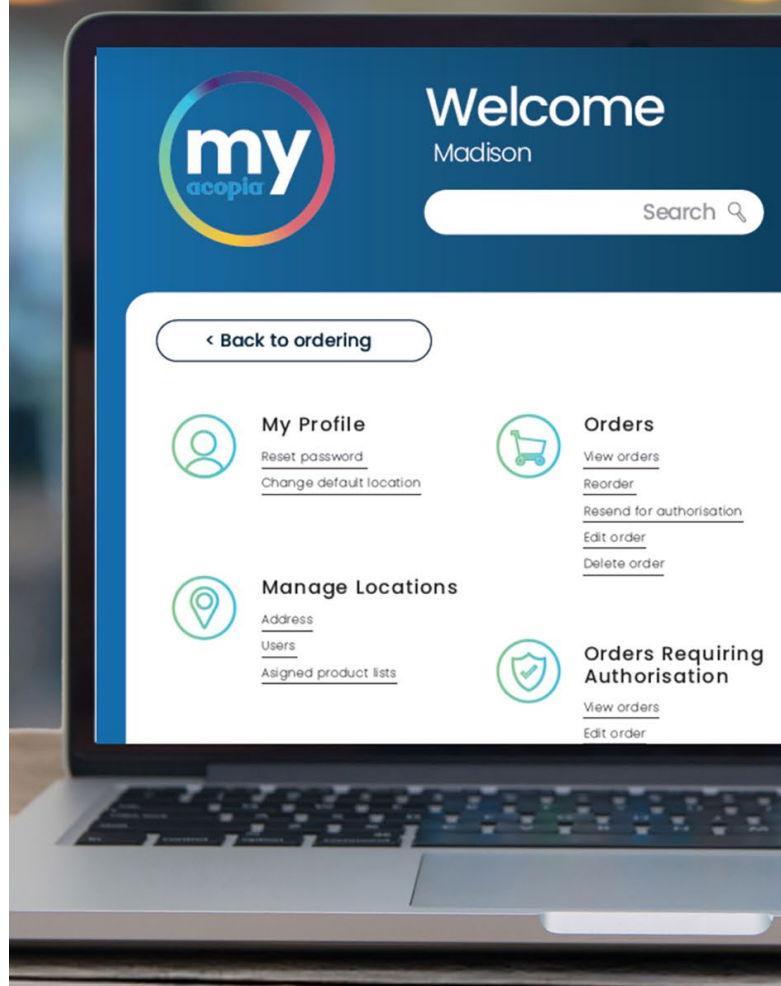
- Combined demand to support better decision-making
- Easier range management and rationalisation
- Stronger foundations for supplier relationships

### Finance

- Clear, consolidated view of consumables spend
- Improved forecasting and budget confidence
- Reduced administrative overhead

### Sustainability Teams

- Better visibility of usage and over-ordering
- Data to support waste reduction initiatives
- Stronger evidence for sustainability reporting



Centralisation ensures everyone is working from the same information, reducing friction and improving outcomes right across the business.

## **Centralise**

### The third step in the 7 Cs journey

Centralisation builds on Control and Clarity. Once Retailers have governance in place and insight into what is happening, centralisation allows them to:

- Consolidate more effective product ranges
- Unlock sustainable Cost Savings through scale
- Support more Conscious consumption
- Deliver a truly Complete approach to retail consumables

Without centralisation, improvement efforts remain siloed and difficult to sustain across a growing retail estate.



## Bringing it all together

Operational consumables may be everyday items, but managing them through fragmented systems creates unnecessary complexity.

Retailers that centralise their consumables management gain simplicity, consistency and confidence in the data. With teams working on a shared procurement platform, it reduces duplication, improves visibility and creates a stronger foundation for future efficiency and sustainability initiatives.

This shift transforms consumables from a background operational task into a managed, strategic function.

#### References used within this document

1. **Gartner**  
Data and Analytics: Turning Information into Better Decisions
2. **McKinsey & Company**  
Operations Insights on Simplification and Efficiency
3. **UK Government**  
Resources and Waste Strategy for England

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