

Aaron's[®]
Easy. Beautiful. Affordable.®

Aaron's enhances customer focus and drives revenue growth with ServiceNow



10%

Increase in same-store revenues

75%

Decrease in call times

95%

Reduction in service fulfillment times

Industry: Retail

Location: Atlanta, Georgia

Size: 11,800 employees

For Aaron's, delivering the best customer experience is critical for customer satisfaction and sales growth

As a leading provider of retail lease-purchase solutions for furniture, consumer electronics, and appliances, Aaron's is focused on delivering the best possible experience for its customers. With more than 1,400 stores across North America, effective store operations plays a huge part in creating this great experience, which is crucial for sales revenues and customer satisfaction.

Aaron's is driving an end-to-end customer-focused transformation of its store operations

ServiceNow lies at the heart of this transformation, powering customer-facing processes ranging from growing sales revenues through to insurance claims, vendor interactions, and direct shipping. To date, Aaron's has built more than 100 ServiceNow custom applications, touching virtually every part of its organization, including store operations, sales, merchandising, finance, legal, and support.

Aaron's started by adopting ServiceNow as its platform for IT, cutting call times by 75% and fulfillment times by 95%

Like many ServiceNow customers, Aaron's started out by adopting ServiceNow as its platform for IT. At the time, the company had a legacy ticketing tool for its internal IT call center. The tool was extremely difficult to adapt to Aaron's needs, and it also lacked key reporting capabilities. And, because the tool didn't offer self-service, the company's IT call center team had to handle more than 1,500 calls a day.

Challenge

Increase customer focus and grow revenues by transforming store operations

Products

- Now Platform® App Engine
- ServiceNow® IT Service Management
- ServiceNow® IntegrationHub

Solution

Use ServiceNow custom App Engine apps to automate time-consuming store operations processes and continuously improve sales execution



“

With ServiceNow, we can get our stores back to helping customers instead of wrestling with internal processes.

Tim Alman, Manager of Enterprise Process Solutions, Aaron's

By replacing the tool with ServiceNow IT Service Management—including incident, problem, change, and a full service catalog—Aaron's empowered its associates with intuitive self-service and offloaded its IT call center. As a result, call times have fallen by 75%—freeing up time for store associates to spend with customers. And, because ServiceNow also automates many of Aaron's IT processes, fulfillment times have plummeted by more than 95%.

Aaron's stores now focus on helping customers instead of wrestling with internal processes

It was ServiceNow's reporting that delivered the biggest payoff, setting Aaron's on the journey to enterprise-wide transformation. Tim Alman, Manager of Enterprise Process Solutions at Aaron's, explains, "By analyzing our call history, we quickly identified areas that were generating a lot of calls. These were actually business process issues, although IT was involved."

Tim talks about one example—raising deferment caps. When a customer is struggling to make a lease payment due to a delayed paycheck or other issue, stores can work with the customer to defer the payment. However, each store has a cap on how much it can defer. If it exceeds this cap, it needs to make a special request for the cap to be raised. These requests come into IT, which then gets approvals from the appropriate business owners and updates the store server with the raised deferment cap.

Tim says, "The whole process was manual, starting with the initial call to IT. It took three days and a stack of work. So, we added the request into our ServiceNow service catalog, automated the approval process, and even automatically updated the store server. Now, the whole process takes minutes instead of days. At this point, we realized that ServiceNow is a powerful system for change—not just within IT, but across the business. And it really got the attention of store operations. With ServiceNow, we can get our stores back to helping customers instead of wrestling with internal processes."

Since introducing its ServiceNow Rev It Up app, Aaron's has increased same-store sales deliveries by 10%

After that, success followed success. One shining example is Rev It Up, a ServiceNow app that has contributed to an impressive 10% increase in same-store sales deliveries. And, despite the complexity of the app, Aaron's was able to develop and launch it in just four weeks. Rolling it out across 1,400 stores took just another five weeks, thanks to the dedication of Aaron's store operations team and the ease-of-use of the app itself.

According to Tim, "Our same-store sales were essentially flat. Our business leaders knew they needed to improve sales execution. I'm proud to say they came to the ServiceNow team to help them do that. Together we defined and built Rev It Up. In addition to a comprehensive database of sales best practices and product information, the app also includes sales associate self-assessments – think of this as a win-loss for each customer engagement. Managers can put in their observations as well and review these with store staff. And, because we've also integrated store data from our business analytics system, it isn't just a subjective discussion—it's backed up with hard sales data."

ServiceNow helps Aaron's take care of its customers during the COVID-19 pandemic

Another example is Aaron's Club Claims app, which allows Aaron's Club members to submit insurance claims if leased items are damaged or stolen, or if they lose their source of income. Aaron's uses ServiceNow to connect



customers directly with the insurance underwriter, reducing the number of rejected claims by capturing accurate, complete claim information. The app also allows Aaron's to track claims throughout the entire approval process.

According to Tim, "You can imagine how important that's been during the pandemic—we've seen claims go up from 200 to 2,000 a week. We've even been able to enhance the app, adding integrations to DocuSign and Decision Logic. It's allowed us to quickly take care of our customers during this trying period."

Aaron's expanded its use of ServiceNow into areas such as HR and merchandising

Aaron's isn't just using ServiceNow to optimize store operations. Tim says, "Once we started in store operations, the good news spread to adjacent areas. For example, we use ServiceNow to manage direct shipping requests. We bypass our distribution centers and ship directly to the store from manufacturers. This allows us to reduce shipping costs and inventory carrying costs."

Another example is vendor interactions, with ServiceNow handling communications between stores and vendors—for instance, when an item arrives damaged. The merchandising team has full visibility of these interactions and is able to step in at any time to resolve issues.

By building apps using Now Platform App Engine, Aaron's delivers business value faster

Could Aaron's have accomplished these impressive results without the Now Platform App Engine? According to Tim, "We wouldn't have gotten there as quickly or built the momentum we have. It's everything: the speed of training, how quickly we can build components with our business leaders, the reuse we get across apps, the shared data and integrations, and of course the platform capabilities and tools. That helps us be incredibly agile—we can pivot with our business owners to solve new problems. We can add value to the business very quickly."

ServiceNow momentum continues to build within Aaron's, both within IT and across its business

What's next for Aaron's? There's no letup in the momentum. For example, the company is currently planning to move its intranet site onto ServiceNow, streamlining and unifying employee communications. It also plans to replace several homegrown systems, reducing costs and eliminating technical debt. And it continues to grow ServiceNow as its platform for IT.

Tim sums it up by saying, "I'm proud of what our ServiceNow team has accomplished so far. We work with our business leaders to drive topline revenues, lower costs, and create a great experience for our customers. But there's so much more we can do. That's what keeps the team excited."