

## City Furniture Taps IBM for iOS Enterprise Apps to Deliver Personalized In-Showroom Journey

Family owned and operated retailer deploys multiple IBM MobileFirst for iOS apps for iPad Pro

Cuts shopping time by half, grows average purchase order per customer by five percent

TARAMAC, Fla. and ARMONK, N.Y., May 23, 2017 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- City Furniture, South Florida's leading furniture providers, and IBM (NYSE: [IBM](#)) today announced that City Furniture has launched three [MobileFirst for iOS apps](#) for iPad Pro - Sales Assist, Payment, and Finance--to get in-store shoppers the products they want faster. City Furniture is rolling out the apps to 400 store associates across 15 City Furniture showrooms, and 12 Ashley Furniture HomeStore showrooms, in south Florida. These apps will equip associates with insights to deliver a more efficient, personalized shopping experience for customers.

Today's customer expects the best of both worlds--online shopping convenience with in-store personalized services. This requires retailers to make a fundamental change to transform their businesses models with less emphasis on transactions to focusing more on customer relationships and engagement.

When customers used to have questions or wanted to look at different styles of furniture, City Furniture store associates had to record that information manually and spent a great deal of time walking around the showroom to find desired products; more, invoices would be created using a deskbound system. This time-consuming process was apt to delay or diminish the sales opportunity. With mobility in the showroom, City Furniture store associates have real-time access to the more than 8,000 SKUs complete with images, product information, colors, styles, and unique customer profiles at their fingertips. This can significantly reduces the time it takes to close a sale.

"City Furniture's roots are to provide top-notch customer service and convenience to Floridians looking to make furniture purchases, so mobility was a logical next step for us," said Keith Koenig, President, City Furniture. "By developing these customized apps in collaboration with IBM and Apple, employees have the right tools to personalize recommendations, make payments, and schedule delivery all from the showroom floor. Equipped with the right information, a store associate can ensure a smooth, continuous path to purchase without leaving a customer's side and they often come into our stores asking for the store associate by name."

City Furniture worked closely with IBM to create native apps, built using Swift, that are specifically customized to support the needs of its store associates. The three iOS apps work together, integrated with City Furniture's commerce solutions, to give store associates quick access to relevant real-time data while

## assisting customers:

- Sales Assist, rebranded by City Furniture as "ASAP" (Accelerating Sale Associates' Performance), is one of more than 100 pre-built MobileFirst for iOS apps. This provides visibility to the 8,000 City Furniture SKUs. It also uses analytics to enable associates to make personalized recommendations, offer related products that go well with prior purchases, remember favorites, choose delivery preferences, and traditional retail payment preferences at checkout of "pay now", "pay later", or "lease to own"--all based on a unique customer profile to create an invoice.
- Payments is a leading edge payment application allowing an employee to complete the transaction of the invoice from the iPad on the spot using cash, credit, check, or tap to pay payments quickly.
- Finance enables a customer to apply for traditional retail financing through a City Furniture or Ashley Furniture Consumer Finance Account to pay an invoice.

"Today's savvy consumer is doing product research before even stepping foot inside a store, driving retailers to bring the same excitement, engagement, and interactive technologies into their stores," said Laurence Haziot, IBM's Global Managing Director and General Manager for the Consumer Industry. "Armed with iOS apps, City Furniture associates can now immediately tap into the right relevant product and customer data in near real time, without disrupting customer engagement, to bring the highest level of personalization and service to shoppers while in the physical store for a more interactive, efficient shopping experience. "

When compared with the old system, sales associates using these apps resulted in:

- Growing the average purchase order per customer over five percent per customer with Sales Assist
- Increased average in-home warranty service by more than 18 percent, and average stain protection service by over 17 percent with Sales Assist
- Reduced average discounts, which cuts into profits and sales associates meeting their monthly sales goals and quotas, by almost 60 percent
- Cuts the time in half that it takes for a customer to select the product, choose services and delivery, then make a payment or apply for credit
- Since customers can now see photos of products in their cart before they pay, they can visually confirm the accuracy of their order, resulting in

City Furniture is using Bluemix, IBM's cloud platform, to link these new applications with the company's existing applications and data, enabling a high-performance, scalable and flexible hybrid cloud environment. IBM plans to evolve the apps with City Furniture to further connect with the retailer's existing CRM system and analytics so store associates can more easily follow up with direct marketing for prospective customers based on data from prior purchases and interactions.

#### *About IBM*

For more information, visit <http://www.ibm.com/services/gbs>.

For more information regarding IBM MobileFirst for iOS apps and services please visit

<https://www.ibm.com/mobile/mobilefirst-for-ios/> or [www.apple.com/business/mobile-enterprise-apps/](http://www.apple.com/business/mobile-enterprise-apps/).

#### *About City Furniture*

Ranked among Furniture Today magazine's Top 100 U.S. Furniture Stores, City Furniture leads the industry in its trading area by providing shoppers with an outstanding array of styles and choices at great values. Key product categories include furniture, mattresses, and home accessories. The company has 15 City Furniture stores in its network, which stretches from Miami through Vero Beach in southeast Florida, as well as Naples and Fort Myers on the state's west coast. Also, as a premier Ashley HomeStore licensee in southeast and southwest Florida, City Furniture owns and operates 12 Ashley HomeStore locations. For information visit [www.cityfurniture.com](http://www.cityfurniture.com).

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## **About IBM**

For more information, visit <http://www.ibm.com/services/gbs>.

For more information regarding IBM MobileFirst for iOS apps and services please visit

<https://www.ibm.com/mobile/mobilefirst-for-ios/> or [www.apple.com/business/mobile-enterprise-apps/](http://www.apple.com/business/mobile-enterprise-apps/).

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