



# Scaling in-store merchandising excellence through a high-touch partnership

How Sky Retail UK matured its merchandising strategy to support rapid store growth

# A new era of Sky Retail UK

As an industry-leading media and telecommunications company, Sky Retail UK (Sky) is known for its integrated entertainment and connectivity solutions. Sky operates across several European markets, with headquarters in the UK, offering premium content via pay television, broadband, mobile, and streaming services.

Since 2017, Sky has worked hard to grow its product range — with a key evolution occurring in 2020, when the company introduced inline retail spaces to what had historically been a mid mall estate.

## The mission?

To create additional in-store shopping environments where more customers not only shop a wider range of products, but discover the joy of a better experience.

Sky turned to Optimum Retailing to help deliver on that promise, with the goal of boosting its merchandising maturity to help shape the company's next era.



# Bold store ambitions, lagging legacy technologies

As Sky launched 15 new inline stores across the UK – bringing its total estate up to 100 total locations – store teams had to juggle more products, more campaigns, and more frequent updates. Sky's existing merchandising strategies and software struggled to keep up with this surge in operational complexity.

The need for a more sophisticated approach to planogramming, field communications, employee engagement, and governance was impossible to ignore:

- **Operational breakdowns:** The manual nature of PowerPoint planograms and email communications couldn't keep up with Sky's growing merchandising complexity, increasing the risk of execution delays and inaccuracies.
- **Oversight issues:** Internal silos limited HQ's visibility into execution and merchandising compliance across locations.
- **Growth + localization barriers:** Expanded product diversity and the introduction of inline stores created a more complicated estate, which demanded a scalable, automated solution that worked at both the brand and store level.
- **Resource + partner limitations:** Expensive enterprise vendors couldn't meet Sky's current needs, much less evolve with them in the future.



## The Solution

# Introducing Sky VM

Sky needed more than new software. It needed a new technology partner that understood where Sky was in its merchandising journey and could guide forward planning with confidence.

To address these needs, Optimum Retailing and Sky worked together to launch Sky VM, a unified platform that transformed how Sky communicates, executes, and governs retail merchandising.

The solution helped solve Sky's biggest merchandising growing pains across HQ and stores teams. With custom planograms available for each store location, Optimum Retailing and Sky evolved the company's outdated processes with minimal overhauls or disruptions.



## High-touch partnership model

For Sky and Optimum Retailing, partnership goes beyond technology. It's about the people and teams that make in-store experiences possible every day.

Starting with 15 stores, Sky and Optimum Retailing moved fast to get Sky VM operational. Sky's team also needed tailored guidance to ensure everyone – from HQ to store teams – was set up for success. This cross-functional support bridged merchandising, operations, and marketing teams, many of whom had never used an enterprise-level merchandising platform before:

- **HQ team support:** Optimum Retailing offered an initial proof of concept at no cost so Sky's HQ team could experience the platform's value firsthand. Implementation was built around the principle that successful store experiences require multiple departments and teams to collaborate, all aligned around HQ's shared plan.
- **Store team support:** From day one, Optimum Retailing provided hands-on training to the store teams ultimately responsible for executing merchandising, empowering them to easily execute HQ's plans and contribute to performance improvements.

Across HQ and stores, Optimum Retailing's hands-on partnership included an embedded UK team member to provide consistent, day-to-day support in person. This high-touch approach sped up onboarding and activation, maximized the trial's success, and gave Sky the confidence to extend Sky VM across the rest of its entire UK retail estate within a year.



"We were referred to Optimum Retailing by our sister company in the U.S., Xfinity. Other partners we'd talked to were too expensive or not the right fit for the size of our growing store estate. But it didn't take long after our first call with the Optimum Retailing team to trust that they were committed to working with us – not just supporting our merchandising teams, but all employees involved in creating in-store experiences for our customers."

John Magill,  
European Head of Store Design & Merchandising, Sky Retail UK

## Scaled implementation

As Sky VM scaled, results multiplied. Seamless workflows enabled Sky to execute more campaigns with the same set of resources, reducing manual workloads and accelerating speed-to-market for new product launches.

What once took Sky days is now executed, governed, and analyzed in near real time, keeping merchandising execution consistent across the entire network.

As Sky's needs evolved, so did the partnership. Optimum Retailing built new capabilities tailored to Sky's scale and growth trajectory. Deeper capabilities like integration with sales heatmapping and footfall analysis unlocked major insights into how products were converting based on customer shopping patterns by store location.

"I expected to feel behind the curve on merchandising excellence considering how early on Sky was in our store journey. However, once we were onboarded with Optimum Retailing, it was amazing how quickly we replaced our legacy operations with more intelligent and scalable merchandising efforts. Now we can deliver beyond expectations and are helping lead the way with what in-store merchandising looks like on the high street, and in telecoms more broadly."

John Magill



## Advanced operational impact

With digital planograms, centralized communication, and real-time reporting, Sky gained the tools to improve its entire retail footprint.

Sky streamlined governance, compliance, and fulfillment processes by automating connections between its new merchandising system and warehouse operations. Execution visibility became real time. What used to require manual coordination across PowerPoints and email chains is now orchestrated through a centralized platform and set of merchandising guidelines – available on all Sky store staff tablets.

What's more, given the inherent complexities of telecoms, Sky was able to gain these efficiencies without jeopardizing existing set-ups, like contractual obligations with key strategic partnerships (e.g., Apple and Samsung).

**The result:** a scalable, connected, and insight-driven retail operation built to support Sky's continued growth, as its product range increased by 225% since 2020.

"Our journey towards merchandising maturity has been pivotal in making Sky Retail commercially successful. Whether it's communicating an upcoming campaign, ordering missing or damaged merchandising elements, or streamlining store-level reporting, our teams now have the agility and intelligence to ensure compliance and execution every day. This means our customers get the joy of a better experience no matter where they shop."


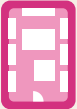


John Magill



# Partnership built for the next stage of retail innovation

Optimum Retailing offered Sky something different in a sea of expensive enterprise vendors: a partnership grounded in flexibility, trust, and a shared commitment to success.

Together, the two companies transformed a manual merchandising approach into an integrated, automated system. Sky's retail spaces now consistently meet and exceed competitor benchmarks, with key business outcomes like:

	<b>27-point improvement</b> in campaign execution (from 70% to 97%)
	<b>100%</b> planogram accuracy
	<b>75% reduction</b> in ticket resolution time
	<b>Higher</b> store team engagement



With even more AI-powered capabilities like real-time store insights, reporting modules, and push notifications to be integrated into Sky VM, Sky and Optimum Retailing's partnership is just getting started.

Want to see what's possible for your in-store retail network? [Contact us](#) to learn how Optimum Retailing can help you scale smarter.

