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NEW VIRTUAL STOREFRONT PLATFORM OFFERS FREE ACCESS TO RETAILERS DURING COVID-19

 RETAIL

Users of Streetify can visit virtual storefronts and create personal "high streets," while retailers can connect via advertisements and other messaging

Spotted: If shoppers can't visit the high street, why not bring the high street to shoppers? That is the idea behind Streetify, an e-commerce platform that launched in late March, just in time to help businesses respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

With shoppers forced to stay at home, Streetify is hoping its website and free app will help connect consumers with local stores, to help keep them afloat. It is also providing retailers free access to the platform for one year in the U.K., U.S., Canada, India and Australia.

Users of the app and website can actually choose the street they wish to visit and can scroll left or right to "walk" up and down. They are shown virtual storefronts and can click on any store to enter its Streetify website. Once inside the "store", consumers can see all of the special offers, deals and promotions that have been gathered from top deal sites such as Groupon and Rakuten. Business owners can also put messages in their virtual storefront windows, announcing deals, delivery options, in-stock goods and more.

Shoppers can also use the app to create their own, personal "high streets," where they choose their favourite shops. Their streets can be shared on social media, and shoppers can even follow famous celebrities, who can share their code to followers, allowing them to shop at the Streetify version of their favourite store. To enhance the realism of the system, Streetify uses geo-referencing to turn

on shop lights at night, and if it's raining on the street in the real world, it will also rain in the Streetify version.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, shopping was being transformed by innovative new apps and ideas. Some novel e-commerce strategies recently covered by Springwise include [AI stylists](#) who can recommend clothing based on personal preferences and a Chinese platform that [live-streams influencers](#) to boost sales.

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Website: streetify.com

Contact: streetify.com/settings/contact

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Takeaway:

While Streetify was in the works long before the coronavirus hit, the pandemic has added new urgency for shops to find ways to keep customers buying when they can't get out. In addition to providing the app free to consumers, all store and restaurant advertising on the app is free to businesses throughout 2020. Even before COVID-19, traffic to brick-and-mortar stores was on the decline. However, Streetify may be able to help businesses develop new markets, stay agile and keep afloat.