When Anine Bing designed the stores for her namesake brand, she wanted them to look and feel like her living room. The eight-year-old label now has 15 stores and counting, each with the same candles and rugs as those in her Los Angeles home. And they are all powered by the same device that helped propel the former model and blogger’s aesthetic into popularity: the iPhone.

Anine Bing is one of a handful of direct-to-consumer brands to use NewStore, a platform that lets brands run stores on iPhones, meaning customer profiles, shopping histories, transactions and order placements all take place on the device. Crucially, it lets associates sell any of the brand’s inventory, regardless of location. In the case of Anine Bing, it helps stores coordinate simultaneous weekly product drops; while drops are a fixture of the Instagram era, they introduce significant complexity when deployed IRL.

“Omnichannel” has become a buzzword, but the end goal is to merge the best of all worlds: personal, one-on-one relationships; access to the world’s inventory; instantaneous fulfilment and convenience throughout. At Anine Bing, for example, 11 per cent of store transactions are “endless aisle”, meaning the store sold something that wasn’t physically in the store. For all of NewStore brand clients, which include Ganni and Diane von Furstenberg, 5 per cent of online orders are fulfilled from stores.

This week, I wrote about the tools brands are using to provide and scale one-to-one shopping advice for online customers. A lot of these conversations are through text message and social media, while some brands are adding on video consults. And some customers, I’m told, even prefer something truly rare: a phone call.

MAGHAN MCDOWELL, INNOVATION EDITOR