

HOW SMART IS YOUR RETAIL?

How to effectively modernize
the customer experience.





Retail is not what it used to be.

Technology has changed the expectations of both customers and employees.

Customers, accustomed to having user-friendly technology at their fingertips, expect a more personal experience when engaging with a business. Employees expect the systems they use to keep up with the pace of change they see in their personal devices. In retail today, it can cost more to stay still than it does to become smart.

But how smart is your retail? And are there other ways that you could be contributing to your customers' and employees' overall experience? We've outlined some ways businesses are already improving their customer experience, and ways Zones can help your business implement some of those same solutions.





Improving the customer experience.



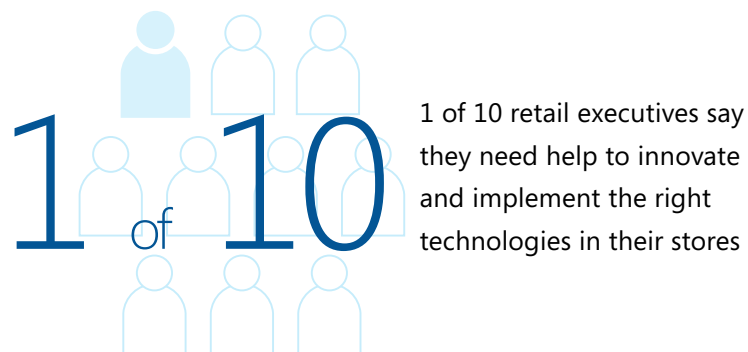
How is smart retail improving the customer experience?

Thankfully, it doesn't take too much convincing. Business leaders are aware of the increasing demand for convenience and personalization. A full 96% of retail executives believe that providing personalized and convenient experiences builds customer loyalty, and 95% of retailers are either implementing or considering technology to improve the customer experience.



Improving the customer experience.

How is smart retail improving the customer experience?





Improving the customer experience.

Although there are distinct solutions on offer, when asked what they were prioritizing, retail executives placed the most emphasis on technologies allowing their customers to personalize their engagement.

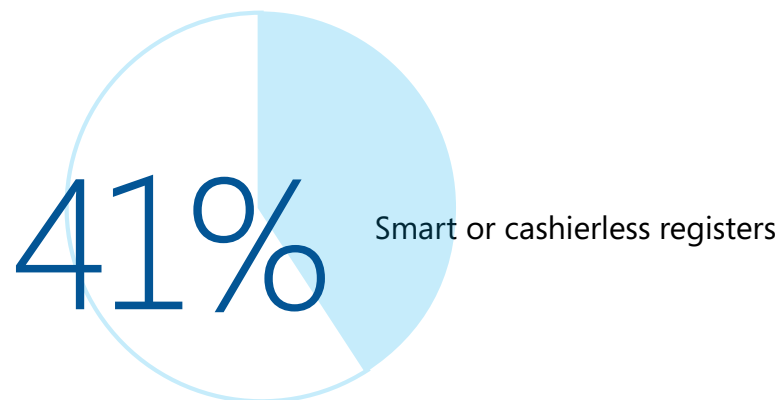
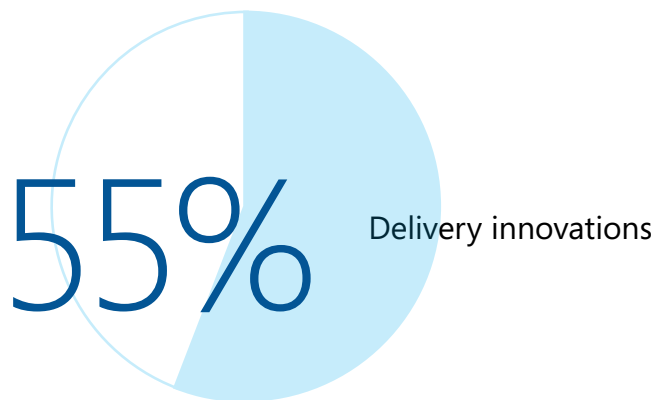
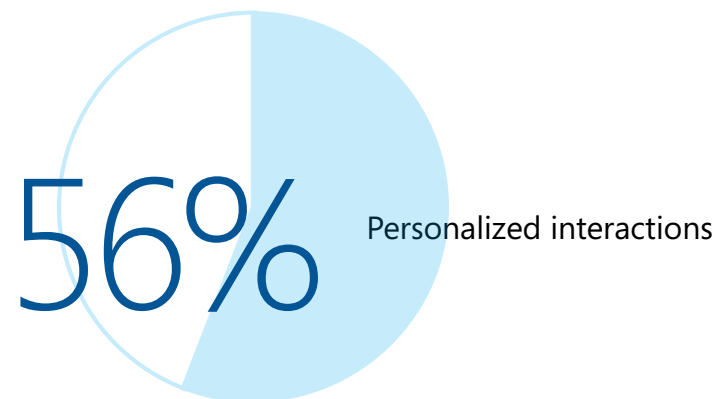
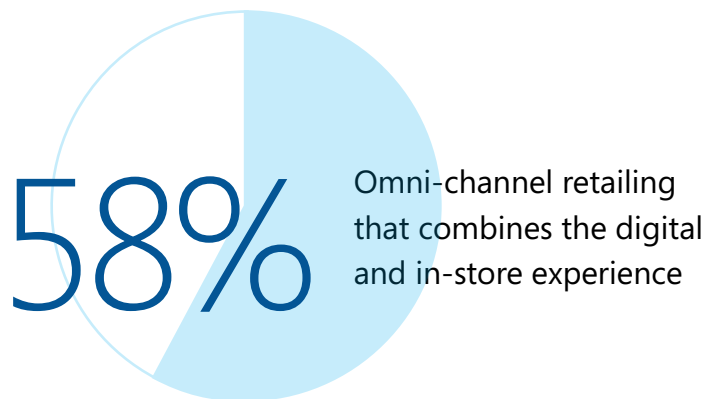
When asked about their technology investments to improve customer experiences, survey participants list the following as their priorities in improving the customer experience:

- Omni-channel retailing that combines the digital and in-store experience
- Personalized interactions
- Delivery innovations
- Smart or cashierless registers
- Kiosks
- In-store experiences
- Smart shopping carts



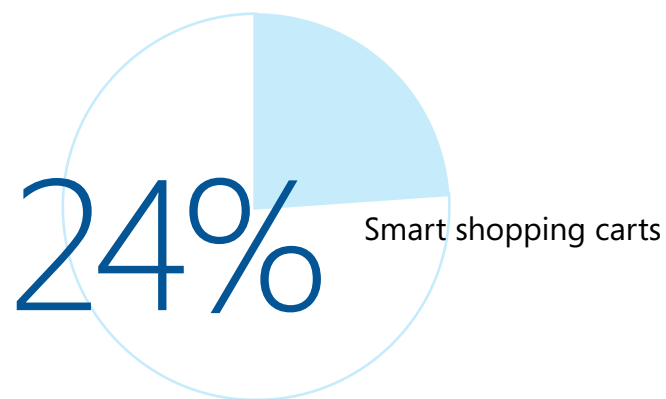
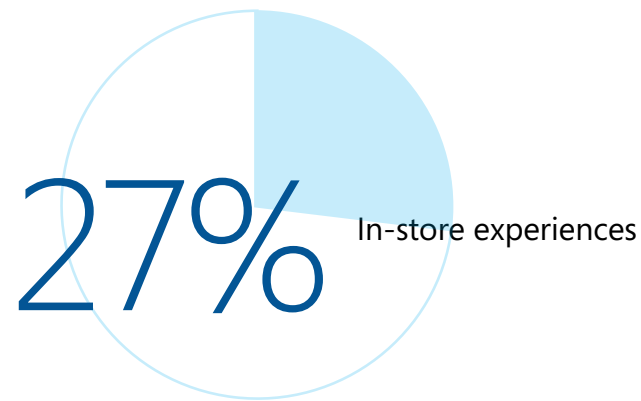
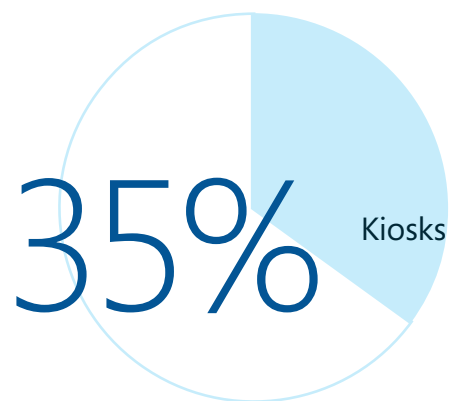


Improving the customer experience.





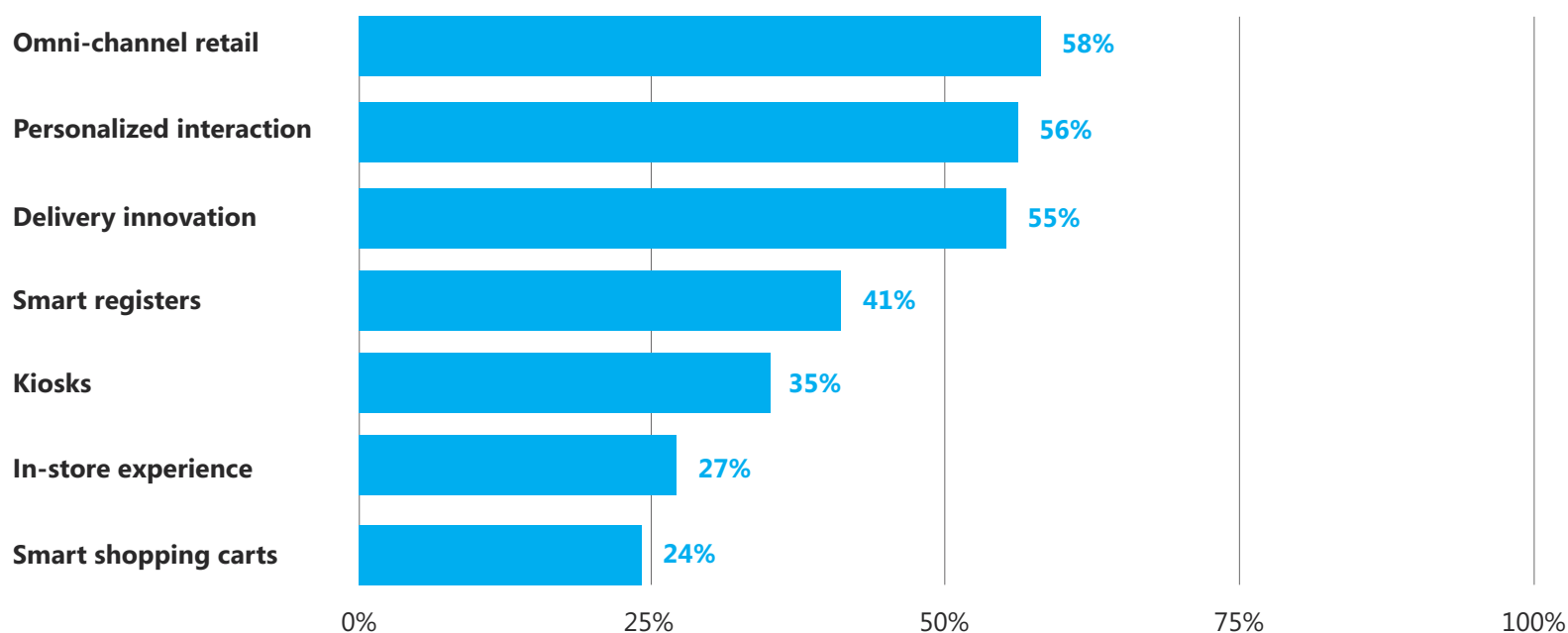
Improving the customer experience.





Improving the customer experience.

Priorities in technology investments for improving the customer experience.



Smart retail solutions.

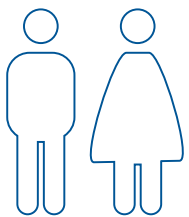


What are the available solutions for creating a smart retail environment?

Even if you're convinced of the value in improving the customer experience, how do you determine the right technology for your company? What are the solutions available, and which ones are best for your business model? Zones works with you to craft a solution based on your individual business' strengths utilizing some or all of the solutions below.

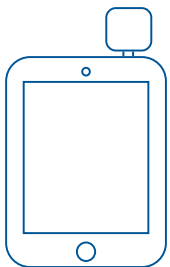


Types of solutions.



Smart dressing rooms.

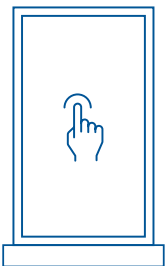
- These advanced fitting rooms are designed to revolutionize the in-store shopping experience by making it easier for consumers to try on clothes. For example, consumers can adjust the lighting in their individual room, they can view specific garments in different sizes and colors, and they can even browse through recommendations based on what they are trying on.
- Bar code scanning in dressing rooms captures product info such as color, size, and availability.
- Also, with AR mirrors, you can try on different outfits in virtual locations. A camera at the top of the mirror tracks the user's body, and then a screen behind the reflective panel works with projects to illuminate the picture.



Advanced/Mobile POS.

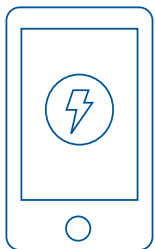
- With advanced/mobile POS solutions, you can offer the easiest in-store checkout procedures in the world. Customers are not required to wait in a line at a cash register. Instead, the employee will come to you and bring the portable device with them. Not only does this allow full access to the capability of the IOS interface, but all required POS hardware, including a scanner and card swipe, is built into the plastic case that surrounds the iPod touch. This POS system also means there is no POS designated area. Instead, the customer can complete a transaction from anywhere in the store.

Types of solutions.



Digital signage.

- Digital signage helps greet shoppers as soon as they step in the door. In fact, this effect can be extended outside retail premises via exterior LED signage, bringing in more customers who may have just passed by. Digital signage sets the mood and enhances the shopping experience. Well-executed digital signage creates revenue potential by keeping shoppers in the store longer. Digital signage allows you to adapt offerings continuously. There are no delays when setting prices, listing features, or changing any of the content regardless of the number of screens in a location or the distance between locations. Create an interactive customer experience using TV screens in your stores.



Charge carts.

- Many retailers are opting to use tablets and mobile phones for streamlined checkout. Charging and storing dozens of high-value devices such as tablets in a limited space is a big headache and an even bigger security risk. Charging stations and carts have a locking steel enclosure that helps put an end to cable sprawl and missing assets by providing a location where multiple devices can be charged, synced, stored, and secured.

Types of solutions.



Managed Wi-Fi.

- Offering free Wi-Fi to customers adds value to your customers and gives them a reason to stay longer in your place of business, potentially spending more money. As many as 62 percent of businesses pointed out that the customers spend more time in their facility or shop if Wi-Fi access is offered. Around 50 percent of customers spend more money as well.
- Traffic heatmaps can support business decisions such as merchandising, staff assignment, and optimization of store floorplan.



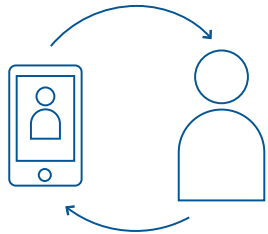
Implementing smart retail.



Implementing smart retail solutions can be a heavy lift. From research and cost analysis to purchase and installation to training and ongoing support, there are many hurdles to clear in order to get a new retail solution working seamlessly. Working with Zones helps simplify all of that.

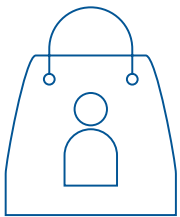
Zones coordinates and streamlines with multiple vendors and store locations across the country. We can also offer significant cost savings and improved operational efficiencies. We work with vendors such as Apple® and Cisco to design the best smart retail solutions to meet your business needs. And we offer ongoing remote and onsite support to ensure your store locations are operational.

Retail industry trends.



Connected shoppers.

- Successful retailers are providing engaging, integrated experiences to shoppers – no matter whether they purchase online, or in a store. Customers move seamlessly between online and in-store shopping experiences, and choose retailers who can best support these transitions. For example, online retailer Amazon purchased Whole Foods, an American multinational supermarket chain, to connect with more shoppers in store. With more opportunities to connect with shoppers, retailers need technology to make the customer experience seamless.



Personalization.

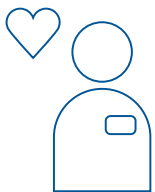
- Savvy retailers are using customer data to provide a customized shopping experience. More customers are looking for personalized shopping experiences offered by merchandisers like Untuckit and Indochino. At Untuckit, shoppers can visit an inventory-free showroom to get fitted, drink scotch (or water), and choose styles – with all this information saved to the customer's personal profile.

Retail industry trends.



Rise of self-service.

- Retailers are adding innovations like scan-and-go technology, mobile payments, and augmented reality (AR) to help customers help themselves. Grocery stores and home improvement retailers like Home Depot offer scan-and-go stations to speed purchases and let associates focus on helping customers. iPad® devices and AR apps in cosmetics stores let shoppers explore new looks on their own without the need to actually try on the makeup.



Employee retention and turnover.

- The top retailers are retaining employees longer than others and they're using technology to do it. Retail turnover translates to lost productivity and increased costs. Top retailers like Apple, Sephora, and Tiffany use training and enablement technology solutions to help employees build knowledge and improve skills, and to make them feel valued.



Common existing practices.

Separate customer profiles for online and in-store.

- This isn't a unified solution, so customers can't buy online and pick up in-store, or use gift cards across channels. And having multiple histories for a single customer makes it difficult to deliver personalized service.

Separate reporting tools to generate reports.

- Merging data between multiple tools increases the risk of error. And in many cases, important data may not be able to be integrated at all.

Multiple fixed-POS systems.

- This process removes the ability to alleviate long checkout lines by eliminating a sales associate's ability to process payments away from the main checkout area.





Why Apple in retail?

With hundreds of retail points of sale around the world serving more than a million customers each day, Apple has unique insight into how to succeed in the retail industry. Your customers can benefit from Apple's insight into optimizing processes, creating amazing customer experiences, and developing engaged and informed employees .

Apple products, services, and solutions are the perfect fit for the retail industry. Retail professionals are highly mobile and Apple devices are built for a mobile environment. iOS and iPadOS® apps are designed to be powerful, engaging, and simple to use, so critical information is just a tap away. This is just one of the reasons why Apple devices, iOS, and iPadOS are so readily adopted by retail workers. When employees can deliver a great customer experience, other benefits often quickly follow – employee satisfaction increases, and productivity increases as well .





Why Apple in retail?

1. Ease of use – Retailers need easy-to-use solutions that require minimal training so teams can stay productive in busy work environments. Many employees already use Apple products or are familiar with their functionality, so onboarding new hires and training existing teams is inherently intuitive.

2. Cohesive hardware ecosystem – Apple is the best choice for retailers looking to simplify their hardware and software environment. If a retailer is considering the use of wearables, phones, tablets, personal computers, and digital signage, Apple offers compelling software and hardware options across all form factors .

3. Powerful hardware – Apple products are full of powerful technologies that allow for both amazing performance and security. On-device machine learning and the world's largest AR platform are

just two examples. And with cutting-edge cameras, microphones, GPS, and motion sensors, retail workflows can be streamlined by autogenerating data from these sensors and applying them to real-world scenarios.

4. Robust partner ecosystem - An increasing number of global strategic partners, industry-specific mobility partners, and accessory partners all contribute to Apple being the best choice for enterprises, especially retailers.

5. Comprehensive consumer services - All retailers are looking to elevate the customer experience. Apple offers many customer friendly services, including Apple Pay®, Apple Music® for Business, and Business Chat.



Solutions from Apple.



Apple products are intuitive and easy to use, which means they're also easy for your business to support. And the familiar iPhone® and iPad interfaces allow sales associates to use familiar actions like swiping, scrolling, and tapping to complete transactions anywhere they are in the sales cycle, wherever they are in the store. In addition, adapting to new procedures is quicker than ever before.

And Apple products have low support costs and high residual value, providing a lower total cost of ownership. So when customers choose Apple they're making a powerful investment all around.

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Solutions from Apple.



Optimize processes.

- Mobile-centric in-store solutions built for iPad, iPhone, and iPod touch offer an extremely light POS footprint.
- Full-POS capability on a mobile device can be used for line busting, upselling, checking inventory, or assisted selling from anywhere.
- Manage all orders placed online and in store for a true omnichannel experience.

Create an amazing customer experience.

- Provide exceptional customer service, especially in high-traffic stores or during busy times or seasons.
- A universal customer hub can capture and share customer data across all channels.
- Customer history and data can be easily viewed by associates.

Develop informed and engaged employees.

- Dashboard offerings provide real-time visual representations of data, which can be customized to suit specific business needs.



Why Zones?

Zones holds strategic partnerships with top-tier technology brands to enable scalability, security, and efficiency in IT deployments for our clients, utilizing the highest levels of technical certifications from key partners, including Cisco Gold and others. Zones has been named to the prestigious 2018 CRN Managed Services Provider 500 list as a member of the Elite 150, and we are also an eleven-time recipient of the Microsoft Excellence in Operations award. As a certified Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), we've proven our ability to support many of the world's largest and most demanding corporations in more than 80 countries around the globe.

We ensure all our technology services arrive in a bundled, plug-and-play format for any branch location. We provide and manage point-of-sales devices, wireless access points in the ceiling, racks, switches, laptops and servers for the back-office racks, digital signage, intelligent vending, smart lockers, and kiosks. Zones provides solution installation, testing, launch, and ongoing support for the location post launch, keeping the technology running and enabling our clients to focus on their business. In addition, for locations that are being refreshed, Zones has the ability to remove and process older or broken equipment while working with only R2 and e-Steward certified recycling companies. This ensures safe, legal, and environment friendly disposal of e-waste while enabling remarketing, refurbishment, and restocking services.

Zones brings order, visibility, and efficiency to what is inherently a chaotic process for our clients, regardless of the store/branch size or number of locations.

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