



TOUGH CUSTOMERS

What shoppers really want – and what they
really don't – from their in-store experience



OVERVIEW

You can't provide the best possible shopping experience and truly live up to the promise of customer-focused service without first finding out what your customers actually want.

We're passionate about transforming the in-store experience with technology, so we commissioned online research specialists OnePoll to find out from 2,000 UK shoppers exactly where that transformation should begin.

Their responses were enlightening, and gave a clear indication of what they expect from their in-store experience as well as their major bugbears and obstacles on the path to purchase.

For full details of how OnePoll conducts its surveys, visit www.onePoll.com

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- **38% of those surveyed said they would only wait three minutes** for a shop assistant to come back to them before leaving the shop
- **A dismissive attitude (53%) and lack of product knowledge (37%)** are shoppers' top issues with sales staff
- **43% feel that in-store shopping is failing to keep pace** with the online experience, with 39% of the opinion that sales staff do not have enough knowledge to provide a good customer service
- **47% said that they have left a shop** and bought from a competitor due to unsatisfactory service
- **34% would like retailers to equip sales staff with tablets** so that they can answer any queries instantly
- **30% said they would share their online data browsing history**, purchases, wishlists etc if they receive discounts and giveaways in return

WHAT'S BUGGING SHOPPERS ABOUT THE SALES PROCESS?

Gone in 180 seconds...

There's a time limit on how long shoppers are prepared to wait for shop assistants to come back to them with information.



said that they would only wait for 3 minutes before leaving



Most patient – those aged 55+ – 40% are prepared to wait up to 5 minutes



Least patient – those aged 18 to 24 – 8% will wait no longer than 30 seconds

Speaking to sales staff

Shoppers will actively avoid approaching sales staff if they feel alienated by how they look or behave.

Top 3 reasons for avoiding sales staff:



Talking to other staff on the shop floor – 25%



They tend to know less than the customer – 12%



They look scruffy – 11%

Points of interest

While statistically less relevant than the key results listed above, the survey shone a light on some interesting opinions.



A relatively large 5% of 25-34 year olds would avoid talking to a female sales assistant about a technical product



20% of those aged 18-24 said that they would avoid a member of staff if they found them attractive



10% of those aged 25-34 would not approach a sales assistant if they appeared to be five years or more younger than them

Key irritations about shop floor service

Those surveyed were very forthcoming about what annoys them. By a clear margin, a dismissive attitude came out as the top issue, followed by lack of product knowledge.

Top 3 annoyances about sales staff



Dismissive attitude



Lack of product knowledge



Talking on the shop floor

Points of interest

Again, marginal responses threw out some enlightening results:



Those aged 25-34 were most annoyed by inappropriate work clothes, with 11% expressing irritation at staff wearing trainers, short skirts, untucked shirts etc



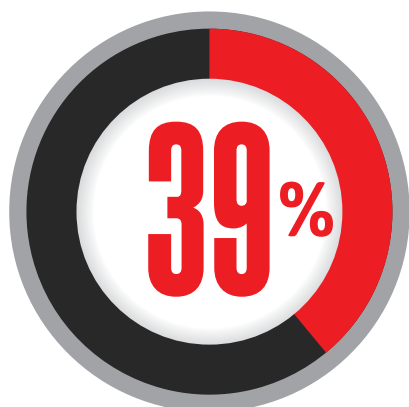
25% of 18-24 year olds were annoyed by sales staff assuming they couldn't afford items



30% of those aged 55+ were most irritated by sales staff chewing gum while serving them, while 18% of this age group were annoyed by being called 'love', 'babe' or 'hun'.

Customers are often more clued-up than sales staff

At a time when shoppers have product research and purchasing power at their fingertips, it's not surprising that those surveyed felt that they sometimes knew more than the sales staff who were supposed to be helping them.



39% believe that sales staff do not have enough knowledge about stock, sizing, products etc to provide good customer service



43% feel that, with online shopping becoming increasingly sophisticated and efficient, in-store shopping is failing to keep up with the times

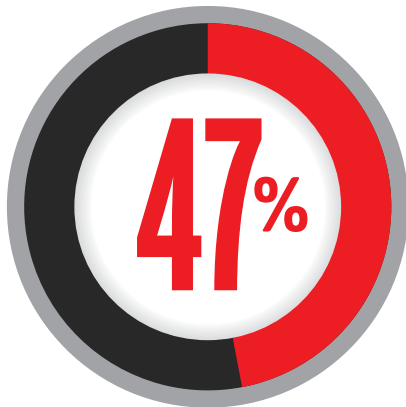


20% think it is easier to find out what they need to know on their smartphone rather than asking a sales assistant

The end result – shoppers vote with their feet and their wallets

The consequences of providing customer service which doesn't live up to customers' expectations is that they choose to go elsewhere to spend their money.

Top 3 actions on receiving poor service



Left the shop and bought the same item from a competitor



Left the shop and bought the same item online



Didn't buy the item at all

What will make shoppers want to visit brick-and-mortar stores?

Bringing the benefits of online in-store

The results show that there are a number of ways in which retailers can enhance the in-store experience to bring it level with online.



believe that sales staff should be equipped with tablets so that they can answer customers' questions on the spot



would like retailers to provide devices in-store which would allow them to browse the entire product range



would be happy to share their online data (browsing history, purchases, wishlists etc) in return for discounts and giveaways

A return to more traditional customer service

While technology facilitates the speed and efficiency of service, it sometimes comes at the expense of a more personalised, tailored approach.



state that they have never been flattered by a salesperson; however



of those aged 18-24 have bought something after being told that the shape, colour or style looks good on them

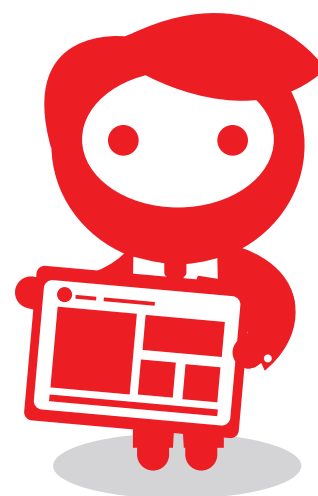
THE VIEW FROM THE SHOP FLOOR – IMPERIAL COLLEGE

To support the UK Shopper Satisfaction Study, Red Ant partnered with Imperial College to better understand retailers' opinions on the growing use of employee-facing mobile technology on the shop floor. Based on interviews with corporate executives from 17 high street retail brands, decision makers from across the business spectrum are curious about mobile solutions but there is still a cautiousness that stems from a lack of education – examples include 'vague knowledge of the functionalities' and 'how such systems could add value to their business'.

UK high street retailers acknowledge that the implementation of mobile is a cultural shift for businesses, as well as a technological one, but claim it's a small step towards a future-ready strategy. One leading women's underwear retailer, and early adopter of employee-facing mobile technology, reported staff initially using their tablets as a 'shield' and highlighted the importance of an 'in-depth on-boarding program'. Retailers that have embraced in-store mobile technology show significant success, with a well-known consumer electronics brand stating 'It engages customers, enabling a much better demonstration of what a product is capable of doing and the functionality of a product ... standing beside somebody and sharing something on an iPad, I think ... the quality of contact is much higher'.

If you'd like to get another perspective and find out how sales staff feel about working in retail, take a look at our 'Stories from the Shop Floor' report.

When it comes to the fundamentals of good customer service – product knowledge, training, the use of technology – their opinions have a lot in common with those expressed by the shoppers in this survey.



WHAT IT ALL MEANS IN PRACTICAL TERMS

These research results clearly demonstrate that UK shoppers have a few simple but vitally important requirements:

- They want shop assistants to look and act like professionals and:
 - Know more than them about the products they're selling
 - Be attentive and courteous
 - Be swift and sensitive to their needs
- They want the in-store experience to be as good as the online experience:
 - Technology in-store giving access to all stock, product details, ordering, delivery options etc
 - Staff equipped with tablets/mobile devices which give them all the information they need
 - No barriers to finding out about products and making purchases, wherever they choose to shop

And it is equally clear that if in-store service doesn't meet their expectations, shoppers will take their custom elsewhere – most of them in a matter of minutes.

ABOUT RED ANT – TECHNOLOGY FOR SMARTER RETAILERS

Red Ant partners with retailers to deliver smarter ways to engage with customers through connected mobile experiences. Our connected experience platform RetailOS joins up all your devices and touch points to deliver a seamless shopping experience. RetailOS fully integrates with your existing technology and data sources for an enhanced customer experience to drive engagement and loyalty.

Connected retail experiences

Delivering a seamless shopping experience across mobile, tablet, kiosk, wearables and in-store displays

Personalised customer loyalty

Engaging and rewarding to make every customer feel like a VIP whilst capturing valuable shopper insight

Smarter customer service

Empowering employees with valuable customer insights and knowledge with our cognitive sales advisor and trainer

Founded in 1999, Red Ant has been part of the evolution of digital and consistently at the forefront of innovation and technology change with our strategic partners including IBM, Samsung, and Hybris. In 2014 Red Ant won the IBM Watson Mobile Developer Challenge, and is currently the only company in Europe using the unique capabilities of IBM Watson to develop next-generation retail apps.

Red Ant – Working. Smarter. Together.

About RetailOS

RetailOS is the complete enterprise mobility suite for retail that converges your existing systems into a single, easy-to-use touchpoint.

Our four connected solutions build on this innovative platform to help employees sell smarter, communicate better, and manage more efficiently across mobile, tablet and desktop. Modular and future-proof, our managed service delivers results quickly, scales with your business, and minimises change.

Service Plus – increase loyalty and make every customer feel like a VIP

Sell Smart – transform your sales process with the power of cognitive computing

Store Front – never miss a sale again with in-store eCommerce

App Commerce – mobile commerce apps for truly seamless multichannel

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If you would like to talk further about
retail technology, please give us a call on

0845 459 3333

e: info@redant.com

www.redant.com