

What the Stats Show:

Consumers Want Omnichannel

RSPA Member Cayan Conducts Survey of Retailers and Consumers



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Look at the headlines these days about the future of retail and restaurants, and you get a grim picture. Whether it's millennials being blamed for the shuttering of popular chains, the seeming futility of nearly any company resisting Amazon, the end of brick-and-mortar, or one of the other countless doom-and-gloom stories that seem to come out daily . . . you'd be forgiven for thinking there's no hope for the proliferation and evolution of these industries.

Yet this is hardly the entire story. Retailers and restaurants today have access to unprecedented technology; and those who embrace and leverage this technology stand to substantially grow their customer base and see massive success.

To learn more about the state of these industries, Cayan recently conducted a survey to learn how consumers and businesses feel about these new solutions. We found that while consumers and businesses alike are excited about the new possibilities these new solutions present, they remain far apart on the adoption of the technology.

THE GROWTH OF TECHNOLOGY

Throughout nearly every industry, businesses are using new and exciting technologies that make life easier for customers. There are countless examples. Stores are using smart mirrors, which allow customers in dressing rooms to request different sizes, colors, and more. Pay-at-the-Table, which has been used in Europe for years, is expediting restaurant payments in the United States. Mobile wallets are quickly adding great new loyalty and discount capabilities.

But it's not merely that these new technologies are available, it's that technology has become more democratic: tools previously available only to the major players of the industry are now available to smaller restaurants and retailers.

Omnichannel, also referred to as *unified commerce*, exemplifies this trend. With this technology, retailers can unify their payments, data, and customer experience across brick-and-mortar, ecommerce, and off-site sales; they can use mobile solutions to get out from behind the counter and into the aisles, even to remote pop-up shops and festivals. We've conducted surveys that again and again show that consumers not only enjoy the omnichannel experience, they actively prefer to shop at businesses that utilize it. So why would a business hesitate to enter into unified commerce?

BUSINESSES ARE LATE TO THE GAME

To find out how customers and merchants feel about omnichannel technology, we conducted a survey. We asked 500 retailers and more than 1,000 consumers for their opinions about six areas of omnichannel payments and solutions.

From our consumer data we found that:

- 70% of shoppers said that it's either important or highly important for a retailer to have both in-store and online shopping available
- 57% placed the same importance on a "buy online/return in store" option
- 39% want to be able to buy a product online and then pick it up in the store.
- Women placed an even larger premium on both buy online/pick up in store and buy online/return in store.
 - ~40% said they'd be much more likely to shop at smaller retailers if these services were offered.

From our retailer data we found that:

- 48% of businesses offer both in-store and online shopping
- 25% offer in-store returns of online orders
- 32% allow their customers to purchase an item online and then return it in the store

It's not only that businesses are missing opportunities to increase customer satisfaction—they're also losing revenue and potential customers. Today's consumers are famous for seeing no distinction between the online and offline worlds; and they want to be able to cross seamlessly between them, often called *cross-channel shopping*. Consumers shop more often at stores offering these amenities; and many surveys in the past have shown that consumers who shop across channels are more valuable to retailers.

Omnichannel technology can offer retailers and restaurants, especially SMBs, unprecedented growth and potential for substantially increasing their bottom line. But Cayan CEO Henry Helgeson says that a slow pace of change leaves these businesses vulnerable against competitors: "We are seeing an incredible amount of innovation. At one point not long ago, omnichannel seemed like a vague concept. But it's moved from a working theory to mainstream now that consumers are demanding both convenience and speed when it comes to the shopping experience. Small and midsized retailers are truly at an inflection point. Our research shows retailers are not on the same page as their customers, and leading into the holidays that's a serious problem." **C**