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Top 5 Retail Trends Shaping the Future of Commerce

Trends Forecasted to Dominate the Retail Sector in 2025

1. Resale Marketplaces: Seamlessly Integrating Circular Commerce

2. Subconscious Commerce: Anticipating Customer Needs in Real-Time

3. Sustainability and Eco-Friendly Practices: Aligning with Eco-Conscious Consumerism

4. Leveraging Unified Commerce: Delivering Immersive, Seamless Experiences

5. AI and Machine Learning: Revolutionising Demand Forecasting and Inventory Optimisation

1 Resale Marketplaces: Seamlessly Integrating Circular Commerce

As the resale economy continues to thrive, customers are increasingly drawn to the convenience, affordability and sustainability of second-hand shopping. In 2025, the resale market is expected to grow 11 times faster than traditional retail, with 85% of customers expressing interest in sustainable options.

However, customers are looking for a connected experience when shopping a brand's new and second-hand product offerings. Disparate platforms and inconsistent service between primary and resale marketplaces create friction, eroding trust and reducing repeat business.

Retail's Shortfall

Retailers have been slow to fully integrate resale platforms with their traditional retail operations, leading to fragmented customer experiences. For growing retailers, this means they need to evaluate their current infrastructure and find ways to incorporate resale channels without creating operational silos. This helps them proactively capture market share and appeal to environmentally conscious consumers.

Inventory, pricing and customer service systems across channels are typically misaligned, resulting in missed opportunities and dissatisfaction. This lack of integration also complicates customer loyalty, making it harder to offer a unified value proposition.

82%
reduction in a garment's overall carbon footprint can be achieved through reselling

The RealReal

The RealReal is a leader in the luxury resale market, partnering with the likes of Stella McCartney, Burberry and Gucci, offering a highly integrated platform that allows customers and brands to buy and sell pre-owned luxury goods seamlessly. By providing authentication services, real-time pricing and a seamless experience across physical stores and its online platform, The RealReal ensures customers have a consistent and trusted experience regardless of where they shop.

To stay competitive in 2025 and beyond, retailers must embrace solutions that allow for the seamless integration of resale marketplaces with their broader operations. Look for systems that can centralise data, synchronise inventory levels and offer unified customer service across all touchpoints. Resale marketplaces are more than a side business—they are an extension of your brand.

Seamless integration with resale platforms not only reduces operational complexity but also expands a retailer's product offering without significant additional overhead. This enhances customer satisfaction and drives repeat business. Brands like Zalando have embraced this by rolling out care and repair services to extend product life and drive customer loyalty.

Key Questions to Ask Yourself:

✓ Are we effectively integrating our new and second-hand product offerings into a single customer experience?

✓ Do we have a unified inventory and customer data system that covers both primary and resale sales channels?

✓ How seamless is our return and exchange process across both new and resale markets?

2 Subconscious Commerce: Predicting Customer Needs in Real-Time

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Subconscious commerce, driven by AI and predictive analytics, is becoming the norm as customers expect brands to anticipate their needs before they even vocalise them. Consumers expect hyper-personalised experiences that deliver product suggestions, dynamic pricing and tailored content based on their behaviour and preferences.

When retailers fail to predict customer needs, deliver irrelevant recommendations or poorly timed offers, customers not only become disengaged but lose trust in the brand, opting for competitors that better understand and cater to their expectations.

Retail's Shortfall

Many retailers still operate with siloed data across systems, preventing the real-time insights needed to power subconscious commerce. Without a unified platform that integrates sales, inventory and customer interaction data, predictive models are underutilised, resulting in missed opportunities to engage customers at the right time with the right offer.

This lack of integration hinders growth and scalability for retailers, making it challenging to adapt quickly to changing market demands and effectively leverage new revenue streams.

In a competitive market, where consumer expectations evolve rapidly, retailers must adopt integrated solutions to transform operations, seize opportunities and deliver personalised experiences that drive loyalty and growth.

95%
of consumers make purchasing decisions subconsciously

STARBUCKS

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Starbucks has mastered subconscious commerce through its mobile app, which uses machine learning and AI to personalise offers, suggest products based on previous purchases and optimise loyalty rewards in real-time. This approach engages customers at the right moment with relevant suggestions, leading to higher engagement, customer satisfaction and increased revenue.

According to McKinsey, companies generate 40% more revenue from personalisation. By centralising data across systems, businesses can harness AI to create predictive models that enhance the shopping experience with hyper-personalisation.

This enables real-time insights enabling tailored experiences that not only anticipate but also satisfy customer needs.

AI-driven systems that power subconscious commerce have been shown to increase sales and operational efficiency significantly too. Retailers using AI for personalisation, such as Amazon, report higher sales; AI-powered recommendations accounted for 15% of sales during Amazon Prime's Big Deal Day in 2023. This level of personalisation not only improves conversion rates but also boosts customer loyalty, ultimately increasing ROI.
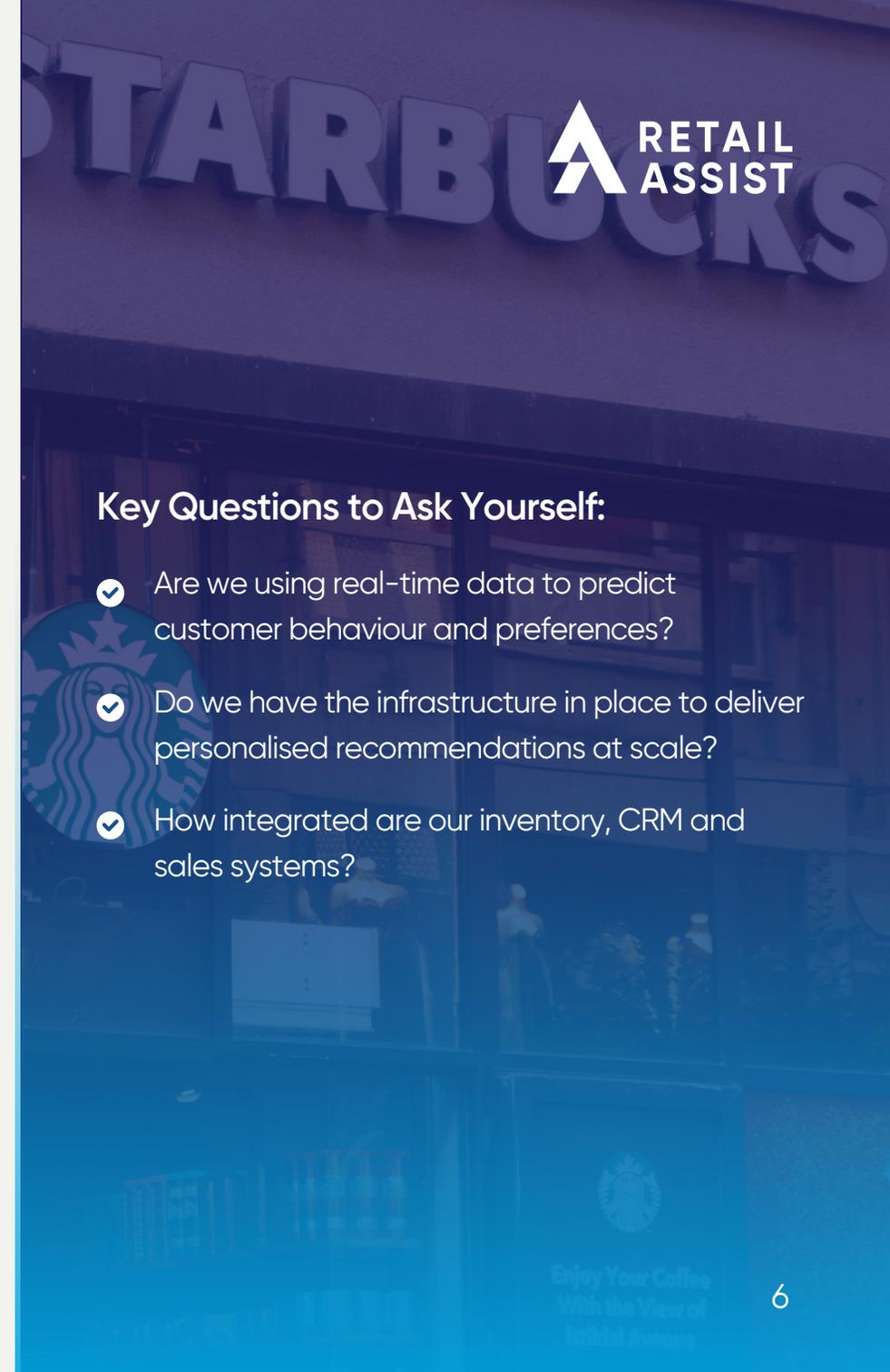
Key Questions to Ask Yourself:

- ✓ Are we using real-time data to predict customer behaviour and preferences?

- ✓ Do we have the infrastructure in place to deliver personalised recommendations at scale?

- ✓ How integrated are our inventory, CRM and sales systems?

3 Sustainability Practices: Aligning with Eco-Conscious Consumerism

Sustainability has moved from a niche concern to a mainstream priority for shoppers. 77% of consumers expect retailers to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability by adopting eco-friendly practices throughout the supply chain.

However, customers are frustrated when brands fail to offer transparency or provide inconsistent efforts—such as promoting sustainable products while operating unsustainable processes or using excessive packaging. Inconsistencies like this risk eroding trust and driving consumers to more transparent competitors, ultimately affecting brand loyalty and long-term growth potential.

Retail's Shortfall

Retailers are under pressure to adopt sustainable practices, but many struggle with tracking and optimising their environmental impact. Siloed systems make it difficult to handle carbon emissions, monitor the ethical sourcing of materials and ensure sustainable logistics. Without integrated systems, brands risk greenwashing, where sustainability claims are not backed by real actions.

By demonstrating a genuine commitment to sustainability, retailers can tap into a market that values ethical practices, leading to enhanced reputation and market growth. Sustainable products have

also seen a 5.6x higher sales growth compared to those without environmental claims. By leveraging technology to optimise resource use, reduce waste and ensure compliance with environmental regulations, retailers can attract eco-conscious consumers and drive profitability in a socially responsible way.

77%
of consumers want brands to adopt sustainable practices

patagonia®

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Patagonia sets the standard for eco-conscious retail practice. The company integrates sustainability into every aspect of its operations, from using recycled materials to offering repair services that extend the life of products. By making its supply chain transparent and using technology systems to track environmental impact, Patagonia delivers on its sustainability promises, building trust and loyalty with eco-conscious consumers.

Patagonia has partnered with organisations like Fair Trade USA and systems like Higg Index, to measure the environmental and social impact of its products throughout the supply chain. Patagonia also uses internal tools to track the lifecycle of its

products through the Worn Wear Programme, which encourages customers to buy used products or repair their items instead of buying new ones. This aligns with Patagonia's broader commitment to reducing waste and lowering its carbon footprint.

Patagonia continues to integrate these technologies and others to further its sustainability agenda. Their commitment to transparency through real-time tracking systems and sustainability tools helps foster consumer trust and loyalty, while enabling them to continually refine their practices for greater environmental responsibility.

Key Questions to Ask Yourself:

- ✔ Have we got full transparency across our supply chain?

- ✔ How transparent are we with our supply chain practices?

- ✔ Are we genuinely integrating sustainability into our operations, or are we at risk of greenwashing?

4 Unified Commerce: Delivering Immersive, Seamless Experiences

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73% of consumers use multiple channels during their shopping journey. As customers move fluidly between online, mobile and physical store environments, they expect a unified shopping experience. Any inconsistency between these channels—whether it's discrepancies in pricing, inventory, or customer service—creates frustration and leads to brand dissatisfaction.

Shoppers have a growing demand for fully immersive retail experiences that blur the lines between digital and physical, with seamless transitions and consistent engagement.

Retail's Shortfall

47% of retailers say there are simply too many channels for them to effectively deliver the best sales experience. A survey by Periscope shows that retailers identified lack of customer analytics across channels (67%), poor data quality (45%) and inability to identify customers across shopping trips (45%) as the top three challenges in their omnichannel strategy.

Many retailers still operate with siloed systems, preventing a truly unified commerce experience. Disconnected inventory and order management systems lead to inefficiencies, which in turn create inconsistent customer experiences. Retailers struggle to integrate these channels into a single, cohesive journey for customers.

73%
of consumers use multiple channels during their shopping journey

Nike has leveraged unified commerce to create a fully integrated customer experience through the Nike app, offering in-app reservations, real-time inventory checks and personalised recommendations. Customers can reserve products online and pick them up in-store, enhanced by digital lockers, interactive displays and QR code scanning for product details.

Additionally, Nike's membership program offers exclusive rewards both online and offline, significantly boosting customer engagement and cementing Nike's leadership in innovative retail. This seamless approach has set Nike apart in delivering an immersive, unified experience. Investing in systems that integrate all aspects of your business are essential for delivering a unified commerce experience. Ensure your solutions provide real-time data across all channels, enabling consistent customer engagement, accurate inventory tracking and streamlined order fulfilment.

By removing silos and creating a cohesive shopping journey, you can increase customer satisfaction and maximise sales across platforms.

Key Questions to Ask Yourself:

- Are we providing a consistent experience across all touchpoints?

- Is our inventory and customer data synchronised across online, in-store and mobile channels?

- How well do our systems communicate with one another to ensure real-time, accurate information?

AI and ML: Revolutionising Demand Forecasting and Inventory Optimisation

39% of consumers have abandoned in-store purchases because of out-of-stock items, driving them to shop with competitors instead. This significantly impacts the customer experience and satisfaction, with a particular impact on younger shoppers. A survey by Business Wire revealed that 75% of millennials and 53% of Gen X shoppers admitted to leaving stores and purchasing the product online due to stock shortages. Customers expect retailers to have the right products available at the right time, both online and in-store. When products are out of stock, customers lose confidence in the brand's ability to meet their needs.

Retailers who fail to predict demand accurately often resort to excessive markdowns, which signal poor inventory planning, or they carry excess inventory that clutters shelves and detracts from the customer experience.

Retail's Shortfall

Many retailers still rely on outdated or fragmented systems that cannot process real-time data effectively. Without accurate demand forecasting and efficient inventory management, retailers are left with too much stock, tying up valuable capital in excess inventory, or face frequent stockouts, losing sales and disappointing customers. This leads to operational inefficiencies and wasted resources impacting profitability. The inability to manage inventory can limit a retailer's agility in responding to market demands, impacting competitiveness and long-term success.

39%
of consumers abandon in-store purchases because of out-of-stock items

ZARA

Zara has been at the forefront of using AI and machine learning to optimise demand forecasting and inventory management. The fast-fashion retailer uses machine learning algorithms to analyse real-time sales data and predict which products will sell out quickly and which will not. This enables Zara to produce and distribute popular items in small batches, reducing waste, minimising overstock and keeping their product offerings fresh.

Zara's AI-driven inventory optimisation allows the retailer to restock products within days, creating a more agile supply chain and delivering on customer expectations.

Retailers that integrate AI-driven demand forecasting into their operation can significantly reduce costs associated with stockouts and overstocking.

Studies show that retailers using AI to drive demand forecasting and inventory management see an average 20-50% improvement in forecast accuracy, resulting in increased sales, reduced markdowns and lower carrying costs. This optimisation not only improves profitability but also enhances customer satisfaction, as products are available when and where they are needed.

Key Questions to Ask Yourself:

- ✓ Are we using real-time data and AI-driven insights to forecast demand accurately across all sales channels?

- ✓ Do we have visibility into inventory levels at every touchpoint, allowing us to optimise stock management?

- ✓ How automated and responsive are our inventory replenishment systems when it comes to changes in demand?

Embrace Trends, Seize the Opportunity

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Retailers can thrive in a competitive landscape by focusing on customer needs, building trust and streamlining operations. Here's how the right ERP partner can gain you a competitive edge:

Unlock Scalability and Growth

- Consistent pricing enhances transparency and minimises price sensitivity, strengthening brand reputation
- Meeting customer needs fosters loyalty, boosting the customer experience
- Seamless, connected platforms enhance the customer journey

Build Brand Trust and Loyalty

- Personalised experiences keep customers engaged and loyal
- Transparent supply chains boost consumer confidence and trust
- Consistency across channels ensures positive brand interactions
- Authentic sustainability practices strengthen credibility and trustworthiness

Streamline Operations

- Integrated systems enable rapid responses to market changes and trends
- Optimised inventory levels ensure availability, enhancing customer satisfaction
- Smart stock management reduces costs and improves operational efficiency

Turn Trends into a Competitive Advantage

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- Integrate resale marketplaces with existing systems
- Leverage AI for personalised shopping experiences
- Adopt transparent sustainability practices
- Implement unified commerce strategies
- Invest in advanced inventory management systems

By leveraging emerging technologies, growing retailers can streamline operations, enhance customer loyalty and grow their brand confidently.

50%
of organisations recouped the cost of their ERP implementation within three years

Merret Pro
Built by Retailers, For Retailers

Merret Pro is a scalable ERP solution for retailers, designed to help them grow and streamline their retail management operations. It empowers retailers to integrate their physical and digital channels across the entire supply chain.

95%

of businesses say they improved some or all of their business processes after ERP implementation

How Merret Helps Growing Retailers?

- Provides a single view of stock across all channels
- Seamlessly integrates with industry-leading marketplaces
- Uses intelligent algorithms to ensure stock is logically and cost-effectively sourced
- Gives accurate visibility across the supply chain, ensuring products are in the right place at the right time
- Supports seamless omnichannel operations

Our Customers Reported

99.95% Stocktake Accuracy

+100m Potential Product Creations

30% Increase in Warehouse Efficiency in One Year

Connect With Us

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Kickstart your growth today!

Schedule a call

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