



Images of Mifitto, courtesy of Elo.

An Interactive Movement

We have seen great evolution in stores over recent months with technology being incorporated throughout store design. Will this trend continue and what will the stores of the future look like?

We live in a digital age, where connectivity is key and shoppers are demanding. With online shopping changing our buying habits and expectations, the high street has had to evolve and quickly to meet changing demand.

With many shoppers using the high street to experience a product in the 'flesh' and then purchasing it online at a cheaper price, retail stores have had to evolve to offer consumers something extra to part with their cash. This usually comes in the form of an experience; a destination shoppers can go to learn, interact, engage and immerse themselves in their chosen brand or product.

Maarten Bias, VP General

Manager, Elo says "The future of shopping is set to thrive and adapt over the next few years with the stores of the future holding technology at their core.

In the near future we'll see the transformation of the bricks and mortar store into a fully functioning and interactive 'destination' rather than a static, transactional location. By creating a destination for consumers this store of the future will give customers the opportunity to become fully immersed in a rich, interactive shopping experience that, using technology, blends the best of online, in store."

He goes on to say "We expect the stores of the future to have in store screens 'touch' enabled with complete ability to be interactive

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so customers can use them to log in and look for and order products or check if items of clothing are available in their size. Eventually all clothes rails will have interactive screens showing the sizes and the amount available on the rack itself. It will also let you know if there are any more sizes in the stock room."

Payment systems will also be important in the stores of the future; offering the latest in payment technology that will entice the tech-savvy shoppers to come and investigate. Many shoppers want the ease of online ordering whilst visiting a bricks and mortar store which includes a smooth and simple checkout process without the need to queue.



Image courtesy of Detego.

“Stores are becoming more like visitors’ temples where not all colours or sizes of an item are overloading the shelves, only example items are shown.”

Uwe Hennig, CEO, Detego.



Nigel Hyslop, President and Managing Director UK at Global Payments comments

“For some time now, the divide between ‘face-to-face’ and ‘online’ customers has been disappearing as retailers develop increasingly sophisticated in store technology that is directly connected with their online offering. This trend shows no signs of slowing, with new tablet and mobile Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS) technology solutions coming to market every month. An example of this is Mastercard’s ‘smart ring’, a device that customers can wear on their wrist which connects to their smartphone and stores their bank details. This enables customers to pay for items with a simple tap at a card terminal located somewhere

in the store, which means there wouldn’t be a need for a traditional till.”

Technology will be at the heart of the interactive store, with many platforms to engage the shopper however they wish to purchase and browse. Uwe Hennig, CEO of Detego comments “Technology like RFID enables the retailer to interact with customers like they are used to on brands’ websites, offering services like ‘magic mirrors’ which identify the clients’ clothes and offer accessories to match. Stores are becoming more like visitors’ temples where not all colours or sizes of an item are overloading the shelves, only example items are shown. Instead, with location-based technology-enabled stores using RFID on all items, retailers can fulfil clients’ requests immediately and create a unique and personalised shopping experience. Customer experience is extremely important.

In store real time analytics providing actionable insights are enabling retailers to create an innovative and perfect shopping experience that the consumer will never forget and will thank with more sales. The store of the future will be connected and intelligent and customer centric above all.”

To make these changes many retailers are spending on their stores, to create the digital experience that the consumer longs for. This spending will see the increase in data collected from consumers which in turn will create a better shopping experience.

Scott Brothers, Vice President, Business Development at Oncam explains “Within the next four years retailers are set to spend \$2.5 billion (nearly four times more than in 2015) on IoT which will be geared up to increase customer satisfaction, retention and experience. With this significant

amount of investment, it is evident that retailers value the data and business insight that the technology can provide."

He goes on to say "Although some customers may see this technology as a threat to their personal data, accepting these changes will completely revolutionise how they view and interact with retail brands. IoT adds numerous benefits to consumers' shopping experience and it isn't too farfetched to imagine a world where live data from IoT touch points like Oyster card readings, gym check-ins or phone locations, enables delivery drivers from retailers to show and predict exactly where a customer will be at different times of day enabling them to adjust their delivery times to suit the customer's needs."

With all this technology and retailers' creative thinking to entice us on to the high street, I can't wait to see what they come up with next.

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Images courtesy of Oncam.



Vend By-Walski Shoreditch, London

Store owner, Franck Bywalski, is an extreme sports film producer by trade, and had the brainwave three years ago of setting up an 'urban surf' store in the middle of London. As such, he went ahead and set up the concept store in Shoreditch, selling surf brand clothing and equipment, surrounded by TV screens showing the extreme sports films that he's helped produce. Needless to say, the shop has been a great success, and has helped to bring together a community of urban surf junkies who often come to the shop to watch screenings of Franck's latest films.

Franck has used technology to help run the store around his lifestyle. Franck still remains an active extreme sports film producer, so spends much of his time travelling. With the help of the EPOS system Vend that they use in store, Franck is able to log in from wherever he is and monitor the store's performance, and make critical management decisions. The system also allows him to monitor individual stock performance, which is critical to maximising the profitability of each of his lines stocked.

Marlene Jordaan-Hart, Store Manager, By-Walski comments "As a concept surf store in Shoreditch, we knew from the start that we'd really need to do something different with our in store customer experience to make the 'urban surf' idea work. A key part of the store's culture and passion comes from the surf films that our Founder, Franck Bywalski, produces, and we figured they'd be the perfect way to carry our customers from the streets of London to some far away sunny shoreline. We even host movie nights at the back of the shop to help build a community of people in and around our store who are interested in surfing.

We designed our store with a technology-driven approach, which is also reflected in how we ask our customers to pay for their goods. Rather than old-fashioned tills, we opted for slick iPads which run on EPOS software from Vend so payments can be taken easily anywhere in the shop. This software also lets our CEO run the business more effectively as he has instant access to sales records, stock inventory and forecasting from anywhere.

Our customer feedback so far has been fantastic. You wouldn't necessarily associate surfing with in-store tech, but it's been helping us operate at a really high level and be seen by our customers as a forward-thinking, innovative retailer."

www.vendhq.com



Images of By-Walski, courtesy of Vend.

