

PRESS RELEASE

## The human touch – store staff at heart of CX in 2020, new RetailEXPO research reveals

\*\*\*\*\*

Tech enabled colleagues the crucial element in driving conversion and loyalty  
72% of shoppers say lack of knowledgeable staff biggest in-store irritation

\*\*\*\*\*

**23 January, 2020 – Richmond, London** – Customer service obsessed shoppers want more face time with staff who can offer a combination of social and functional skills alongside product expertise, the latest report from [RetailEXPO](#) has revealed, at a time when record numbers of customer facing UK retail jobs have been axed.

Original research of 2,000 UK consumers in the [2020 Vision: how retail's continued transformation will look in 2020 and beyond](#) from RetailEXPO revealed that over 64% of UK consumers say highly skilled store staff that deliver better service and in-depth product information make them more likely to visit a retail store with 75% of consumers saying good customer service encourages them to spend more.

The fallout from negative staff interactions can be devastating for businesses with 64% of UK consumers saying bad customer experience would stop them from shopping with those retailers again. With figures from the [Centre for Retail Research](#) showing more than 78,000 retail jobs were lost in the UK in 2019 as retailers try to cut costs, it is increasingly clear retailers need to use technology to liberate customer-facing staff.

By enlisting technology to seamlessly execute tasks such as wayfinding, payment and sharing product information, retailers' free up employees to add real social value during in-store interactions. This adoption of tech should be mirrored back-of-house to digitise, automate and increase accuracy for time-intensive repeatable tasks such as merchandising, promotions and pricing.

And, with 64% of shoppers saying they would shop elsewhere if a retailer didn't provide an engaging shopping environment, this, **RetailEXPO** suggests, highlights the importance of providing enhanced customer experiences in-store to drive sales and improve performance.

Easing in-store friction by providing functional guidance such as showing shoppers where to find products (51%) and taking payments at the till (42%) was key for UK customers when it came to the value store staff add to the shopping experience. However, the social aspect of shopping is also crucial with 42% of shoppers prioritising genuinely friendly interactions with staff who were happy to engage in conversation rather than just focusing on making a sale. Two thirds (60%) say they want staff to show genuine passion for the products or services the retailer offers and use their expertise to make recommendations.

As some retailers introduce robots for some shelf-edge and customer service tasks, the indication is technology isn't taking over yet rather that customers want a blend of human interaction enhanced by technology. 50% of shoppers want store staff to have access to additional information online via mobile or wearable tech, with staff lacking access to digital catalogues cited as a major irritation by 20% of younger shoppers (18-24).

Matt Bradley, Chairman at the **RetailEXPO** Advisory Board, said: "At a time when shoppers can buy almost anything online, the service offered by in-store staff is a key differentiator driving customer loyalty and increasing average order value. It's clear that retail businesses who optimise their workforce by using technology to allow them to spend more time on the store floor with customers will enhance customer experience and therefore customer lifetime value. In 2020 delivering customer experiences that are deeply personal and distinctly human is more important than ever."

For more insights and key takeaways for retailers looking to capitalise on the opportunity that new retail presents in 2020 and beyond, visitors can sign up online for their [free pass on the RetailEXPO website](#) and download the full report here: <http://bit.ly/RetailEXPO2020VisionReport>

-ENDS-

For further information about **RetailEXPO**, Reed's leading European retail trade show, please contact the Fieldworks PR team:

Sarah Cole / Rhená Bunwaree

[RetailExpoPR@fieldworksmarketing.co.uk](mailto:RetailExpoPR@fieldworksmarketing.co.uk) / 01892 784 500

#### **Notes to editors:**

Research of 2,000 UK adults, conducted by OnePoll on behalf of Reed Exhibitions' **RetailEXPO** between 15 – 18 November 2019

#### **About RetailEXPO**

**RetailEXPO** is Europe's leading event for retail solutions, designed for retail, brand and hospitality professionals looking to enhance great customer experiences, increase operational effectiveness and drive better outcomes for their business through retail technology and digital innovation.

Bringing together leaders of the retail industry, the event features an interactive exhibition floor with hundreds of cutting-edge suppliers, accompanied by a market-leading conference programme, and a host of networking opportunities - all helping to provide the right insight, inspiration and solutions to today's retail issues.

This annual industry showcase takes place at the end of April at London's Olympia. The 2020 edition will be its 10<sup>th</sup>.

[www.retailexpo.com](http://www.retailexpo.com)

#### **About Reed Exhibitions**

Reed Exhibitions is the world's leading events business, enhancing the power of face to face through data and digital tools at over 500 events a year, in more than 30 countries, attracting more than 7m participants.

We help match customers with the right solution. Our events enable customers to learn about a market, source products and complete transactions, generating billions of dollars of revenues for the economic development of local markets and national economies around the world.

[www.reedexpo.com](http://www.reedexpo.com)