

New IDC TechBrief Highlights Visibility Platforms for Experiential Retail

Platforms that connect, instrument, and improve retail execution and resource utilization are critical enabler to "best" consumer engagement

FRAMINGHAM, Mass., May 3, 2018 – The future of retail became clear in 2017; it isn't a destination, it is in fact a journey and that means adaptability, scalability, and experimentation are core tenets of viable platforms for the future and a priority in 2018. Retail organizations must orchestrate "best" engagement scenarios for consumers while optimizing productivity of assets, inventory, and employees so that growth and profitability can be maintained. A critical enabler of "best" consumer engagement scenarios and efficient and productive use of assets, inventory, and employees are the visibility platforms that will enable business processes to connect, instrument, and improve retail execution and resource utilization. A new IDC TechBrief, *Visibility Solutions for the Retail Enterprise* (Doc #US42404918), describes the technology, technology benefits, adoption patterns, metrics, risks, and key vendors offering this technology, including Check Point Software, Fujitsu (GLOBE Ranger), Impinj, PTC, RFID Global Systems Visi-Trac, Smartrac Smart Cosmos, SML RFID, and Tyco Retail Solutions.

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Visibility is being enabled in experiential retail to connect the dots between people and things, infusing retail processes and assets with intelligence that ultimately improves consumer experience. Objectives of initiatives tend to target improved productivity of assets, inventory, and people, as well as directly engaging the consumer in convenient, fast, and trustworthy interactions and checkout processes. Examples include inventory management, returns management, task management, and loss prevention processes that will enable retail business to improve profitability, inventory availability and visibility, and ultimately, customer experience.

Highlights of the new report include:

- 60% of retailers report having a visibility platform in place; however, adoption rates are more commonly in the range of 15-30% in the key use case areas.
- 80% of organizations have budget allocated for visibility, and almost half of the funding is business led with IT involvement.

- The highest-ranking reason to invest in visibility is internal business productivity, Efficiency enables enterprise and store operations to allow better experiences for customers.
- One of the top 2 reasons to invest in visibility: 26.9% of retailers cite savings to human and other asset usage requirements, including head count, inventory, energy/fuel, and systems maintenance.
- Retail organizations are adopting IoT platforms — more than 60% of retailers report that they already have a platform in place, and 85% report that they will have a platform in place within 18 months.

According to [Leslie Hand](#), vice president, IDC Retail Insights, "The risk of not implementing visibility platforms in retail is high. Retailers consider visibility a strategic ingredient toward digitally transforming the consumer experience, making sure that inventory is in the right place at the right time, and that consumer and employee processes are as productive, efficient, and seamless as possible. Luckily, projects can be selected to maximize ROI in the short term, providing the groundwork for continuing cascading benefits with each use case applied. At a time when the ability to execute efficiently to manage basic operational processes and to assist consumers to find and buy products more efficiently literally makes or breaks consumer relationships, retailers cannot afford to wait any longer to deploy visibility solutions."

For additional information about this report or to arrange a one-on-one briefing with Leslie Hand, please contact Sarah Murray at 781-378-2674 or sarah@attunecommunications.com. Reports are available to qualified members of the media. For information on purchasing reports, contact insights@idc.com ; reporters should email sarah@attunecommunications.com.

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For more information contact:

Shannon Smith
ssmith@idc.com

508-935-4148

Sarah Murray

sarah@attunecomunications.com

781-378-2674