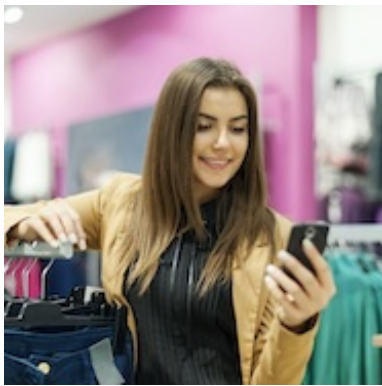


RESEARCH

Lack of WiFi on selling floor is a serious concern: report

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Mobile shopper

By [Brielle Jaekel](#)

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Retailers are missing out on opportunities to connect mobile with bricks-and-mortar by leaving out WiFi within store locations, with less than 50 percent having wireless Internet available on the selling floor, according to a report from RSR.

With data usage on the forefront of mobile users minds, consumers are always searching for wireless Internet to keep from running up their plans. Retailers looking to bring consumers into stores should be making these services available to bridge the gap between bricks-and-mortar and mobile.

“Retailers are currently most interested in empowering employees and casual customers will technology,” said Paula Rosenblum, analyst at [RSR Research](#). “However, in our view, the lack of WiFi on the selling floor is a serious concern.

“How can it be that retailers are more likely to have WiFi for their customers than for their own workforce,” she said.

WiFi importance

The constant search for WiFi is something numerous smartphone owners know well.

Retailers that introduce the technology into their stores can increase brand sentiment, but also possibility for new sales opportunities.

Mobile offers an array of unique marketing and sales tactics within store locations, due to its untethered capabilities. Consumers are bringing their phones with them while shopping, and retailers can connect through these devices.

However, a substantial amount of retailers are not making public WiFi available, which is a misstep in the commerce industry. Many companies believe that merging technology with in-store experience can be overly complicated and create unnecessary issues.

The ability to drive sales and customers connections through mobile has great potential. Only 37 percent of retailers have implemented technology such as WiFi, Beacons or video tracking of customers within stores.

Mobile employees

Out of the retailers polled, only 17 percent claimed to have introduced a mobile point of sales system, which can offer employees more freedom to assist customers and complete sales. However, many retailers are focusing on employees-facing tactics to drive sales and customer connection.

The better an experience a customer has with employees the more likely they will be to continue shopping at that retailer. The less complicated technology is for employees, the better it is for shopping experiences.

For instance, Target's stores expressed an accurate example of how mobile could assist employees when a new store associate was able to use her mobile device when searching for a product for a customer. This creates a positive experience for the shopper, and makes life much simpler for the employees removing excess amount of time for new employees to learn locations.

However, without the introduction of WiFi these efforts could fall flat for retailers, running up data and causing weak service signals.

"Honestly, we can not keep telling them get WiFi," Ms. Rosenblum said. "But that is the best thing they could do.

"And given the fundamental lack of training for in-store employees, the simpler the tech interfaces the better," she said.

Final take

Brielle Jaekel is editorial assistant at Mobile Marketer

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