

POS Systems Are Getting Upgrades

Retailers are into mobile point-of-sale, but the jury is out on cashierless checkout

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Modern point-of-sale (POS) systems do more than function as glorified cash registers. They process customer transactions, but also integrate with inventory, promotions and other aspects of the shopping journey that are increasingly vital to customer experience.

According to a September 2018 [RIS News](#) survey, retail executives rated the importance of POS in delivering streamlined and frictionless functions across all channels a 7.8 on a scale of 1 to 10 and gave a 7.5 to improving the shopping experience and increasing customer engagement in store.

Consequently, there is a good deal of upgrading going on. In the next 12 months, 29% of retailers will begin a POS upgrade while 26% had upgraded in the past two to four years.

This is in line with earlier findings from [Boston Retail Partners](#) (BRP). When retailers were asked about POS priorities for 2018, omnichannel integration (56%), adding capabilities (56%) and system upgrades or replacements (54%) were cited by most.

Unsurprisingly, the leading function performed by the current POS, according to RIS News, was enabling transactions (89%). Mobile was integral to the areas with current low adoption but with the highest

intent to add it in the next two years. Just 12% were integrating the POS with consumer mobile apps vs. 60% with future plans, and the POS operating on a sales associate's mobile device was implemented by 7% compared with 55% with intent to add it.

Despite all of the attention focused on cashierless checkout in the Amazon Go mold, most of these retailers had no plans to implement this tech (53%). Around half as many were taking a wait and see approach. Only 3% were testing it.



It's important to note that the RIS News survey has a small sample: 38 US retail executives. But they were employed by large national chains, so the skepticism surrounding cashierless checkout is likely to be a common sentiment among retailers of this level.

More retailers are focused on mobile POS as an added access point rather than eliminating cashiers—even if they haven't perfected the concept yet. In addition to added convenience, by some measures, **mobile POS has also led to an increase in sales.**

According to the BRP study, just 8% of retailers had implemented mobile POS that was working well, 17% adopted systems that needed improvement, but 31% of respondents had plans to adopt mobile POS by the end of 2018.