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# Customer Experience Trends in Retail

Survey Results | 2020

IN CONJUNCTION WITH



# Executive Overview

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It is no secret that retailers are facing tremendous competition and need enormous amounts of intelligence to provide a high-quality, consistent customer experience (CX). Customer loyalty all but depends on being treated intimately and consistently at every touchpoint and across engagement channels. So the question is: "What do retailers need to change to create the best possible CX?"

Between October 2019 and January 2020, Gatepoint Research invited selected ecommerce, contact center, sales, and customer service executives to participate in a survey themed *Customer Experience Trends in Retail*.

- 100 executives voluntarily participated

Management levels represented are predominantly sales senior decision makers:

- 26% were executives (CxO or VP)
- 74% were Directors

Respondents work for firms across a wide range of revenue levels:

- 31% work in Fortune 1000 companies with revenues over \$1.5 billion
- 29% work in large firms whose revenues are between \$500 million and \$1.5 billion
- 7% work in mid-market firms with \$250 million to \$500 million in revenues
- 33% work in small companies with less than \$250 million in revenues



# The survey asked respondents...

What does your current technical environment look like for sales and service? Is it automated, manual, or both?

What would make a difference? What is the biggest opportunity for improvement?

What challenges do you face in delivering a high-quality, consistent CX?

How consistently can you deliver CX across all channels?

Are you close to making an investment in CX technology?

## Results *at a* Glance

**42**

percent of respondents say not being able to use data effectively leads to inconsistent customer interactions.

**76**

percent rely on both automated and manual environments.

**55**

percent engage separate vendors and work to integrate the different systems.

**1/3**

of respondents say they can't predict customer needs.

**27**

percent of respondents have engaged with a vendor to improve CX. But are they working with the right one?

**2 out of 10**

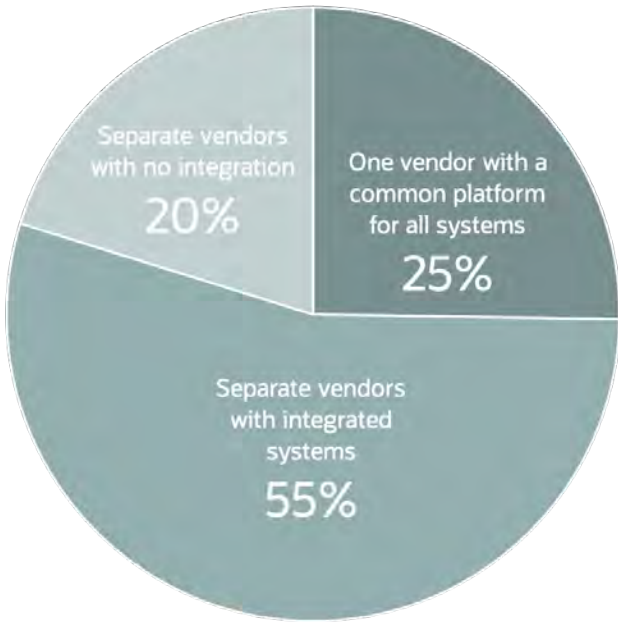
respondents do not have any insight into customers' prior interactions.

**#1**

Connecting adaptive intelligence to customer-influencing areas is the #1 near-term CX objective.

# Results

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## Describe your technical environment for sales and service.

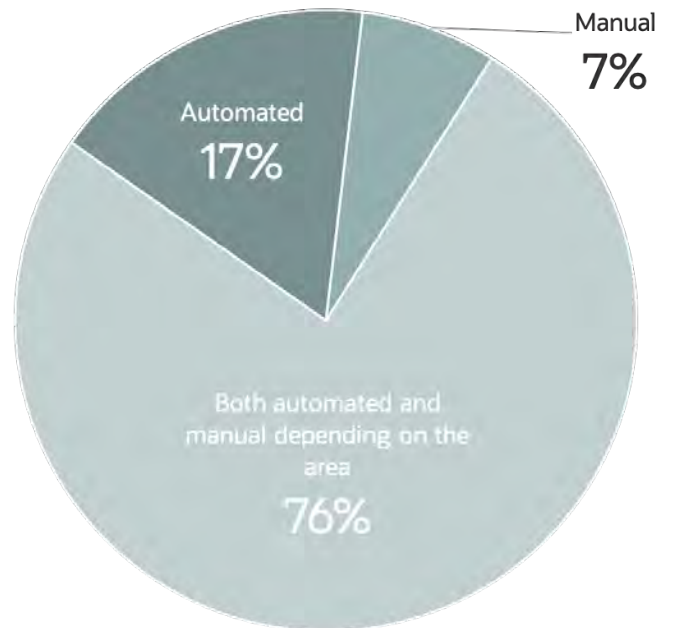
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Over half (55%) engage separate vendors and integrate systems. 1/4 work with one vendor (for all systems) and utilize a common platform. The remaining 20% work with a variety of vendors and have no system integration.

## Are your technical environments automated or manual?

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Just 17% of respondents have a fully automated technical environment. Over 3/4 (76%) rely on a combination of automated and manual environments, depending on their needs of the area. And, 7% still deal with fully manual environments.

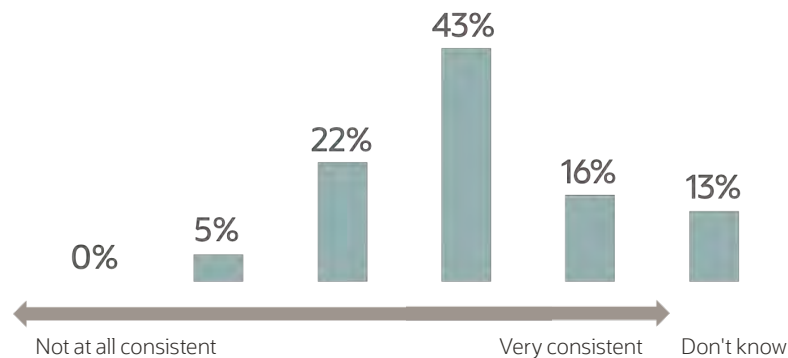




# Results

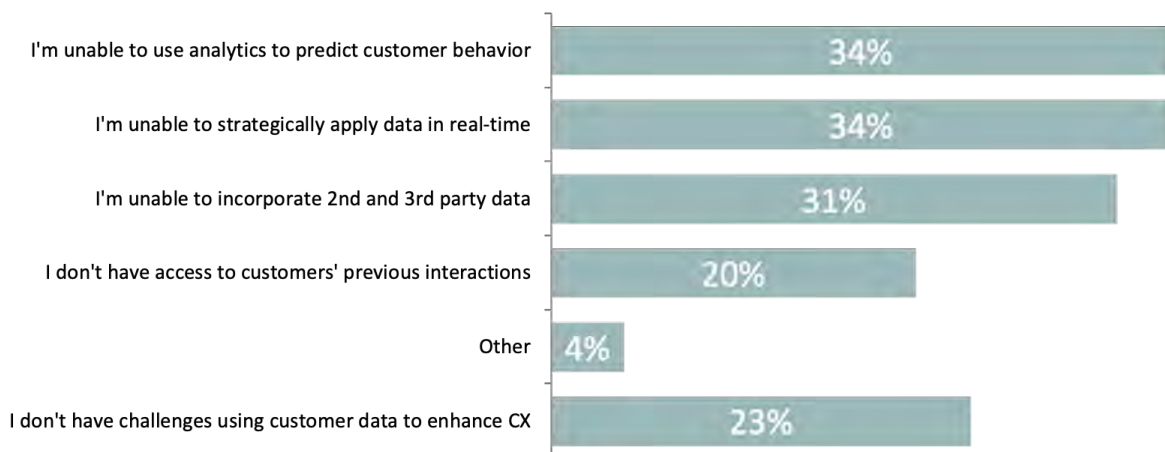
## How consistent is the customer experience you deliver across channels?

59% of those surveyed say they are delivering either a "consistent" or "very consistent" customer experience (CX) across channels. 22% aren't sure one way or another, and a few (5%) are pretty sure their customers are not experiencing consistency across channels. Perhaps most surprising is the number of respondents who don't know or can't measure CX across channels—13%!



## What challenges do you have using customer data to enhance CX?

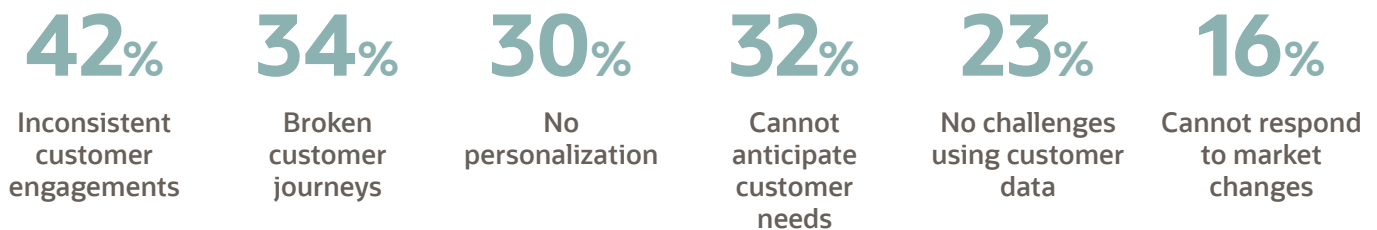
Three issues are challenges for retailers, impeding them from using customer data to enhance the customer experience. The first: 34% are unable to predict customer behavior and/or strategically apply data in real time. Nearly as many (31%) can't incorporate 2nd and 3rd party data. In addition, 1/5 of retailers cannot see customers' previous interactions, eradicating the 360-degree view that is vital for a memorable CX.



# Results

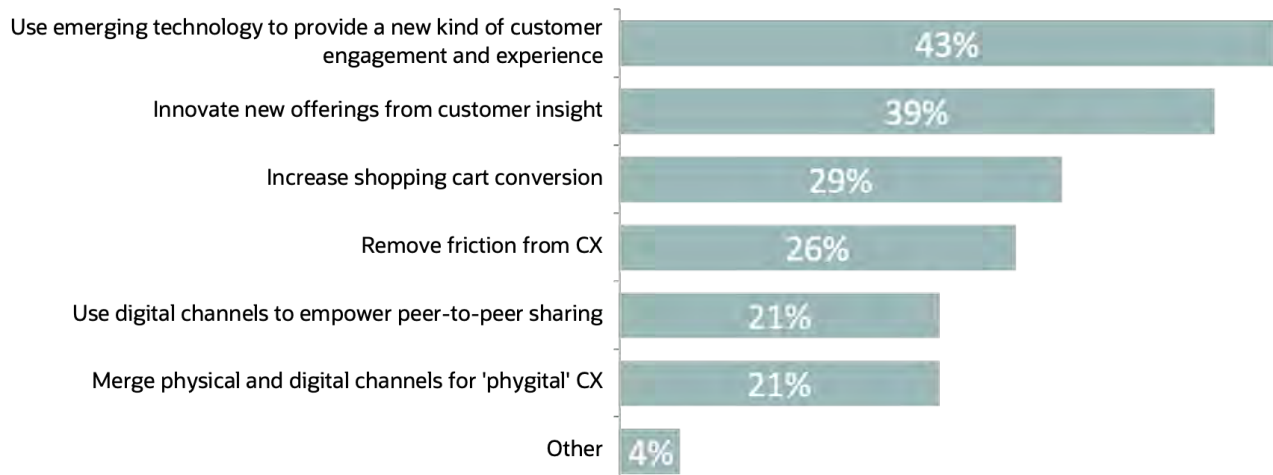
## How do your challenges in trying to use customer data affect CX in your business?

Respondents stated that not being able to use data effectively creates inconsistent customer engagements (cited by 42%) and fragments customer journeys (34%). Nearly a third say they can't anticipate customer needs (32%), while 30% are not able to personalize the customer experience as much as it should be.



## What are your CX objectives in the next 12-18 months?

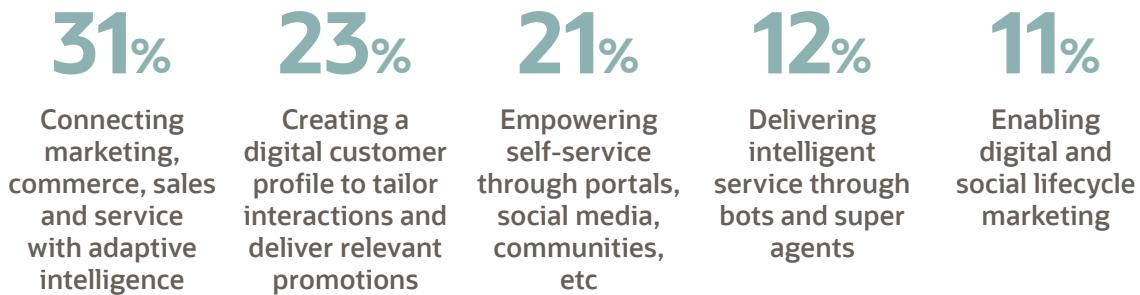
Innovation and technology to improve CX are two highest-ranked CX near-term objectives. Respondents strive to provide new experiences through emerging technology (43%) and innovative offerings (49%). Slightly more than a 1/4 (each) want to increase shopping cart conversion and remove any friction from the CX. One with probably help the other. Finally, peer-to-peer sharing and “phygital” CX round out the list of objectives (21% each).



# Results

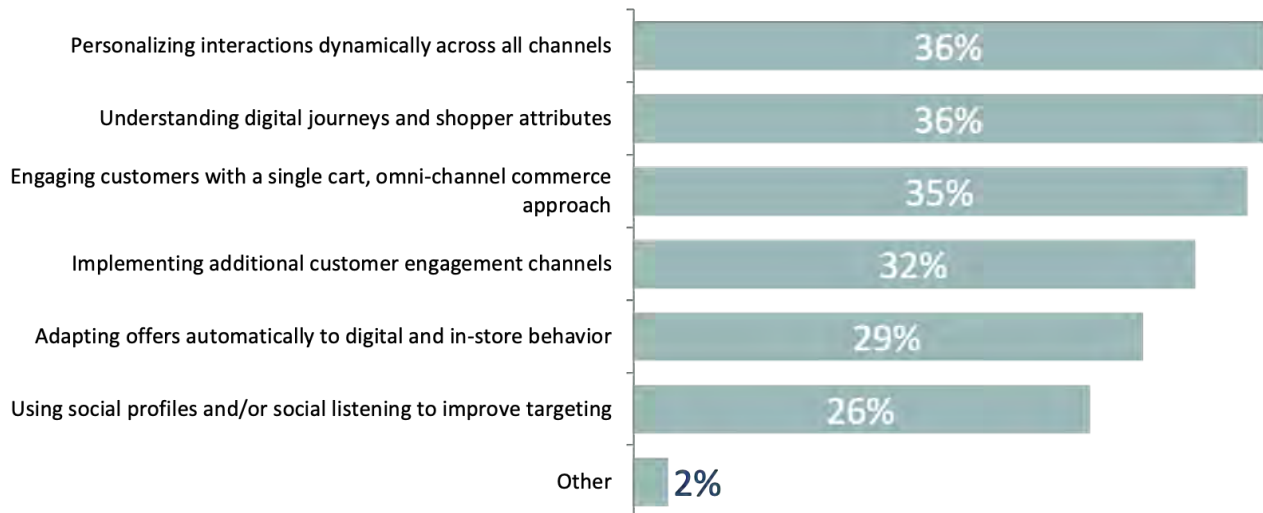
## What is the top opportunity for improving CX in your organization?

Asked to cite one opportunity to improve CX, the majority of respondents focus on a key idea: Almost 1/3 (31%) said connecting adaptive intelligence to customer-influencing areas (marketing, commerce, sales, service) is the top opportunity.



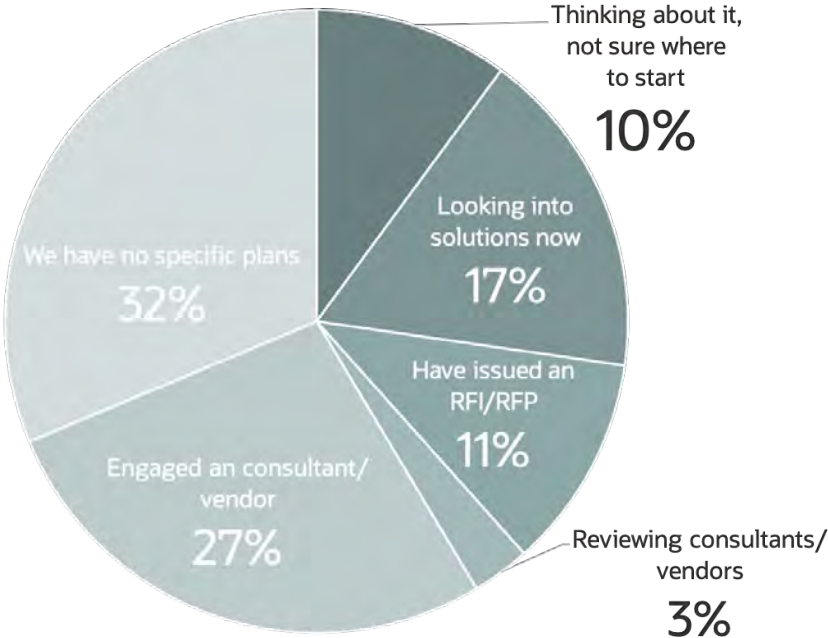
## What would help you meet your CX objectives?

When asked to list what would be needed to meet CX objectives, respondents answered in a variety of ways. 36% felt that dynamic, personal interactions, as well as understanding digital journeys and shopper attributes was needed. Coming right behind (at 35%) was the need to engage customers in an single cart, omnichannel, approach. Other ideas: more channels, adaptive offers and improved targeting.



# Results

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## Where are you regarding investing in better CX capabilities?

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All but 31% (with “no specific plans”) are somewhere in the process of improving their capabilities around customer experience. 1 in 10 are “thinking about it,” while almost 1/3 ( 31%) are in the midst of discovering what they need, and more than a quarter are already working with a a consultant or vendor (27%).



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