

DIGITAL RETAIL INTEGRATION:

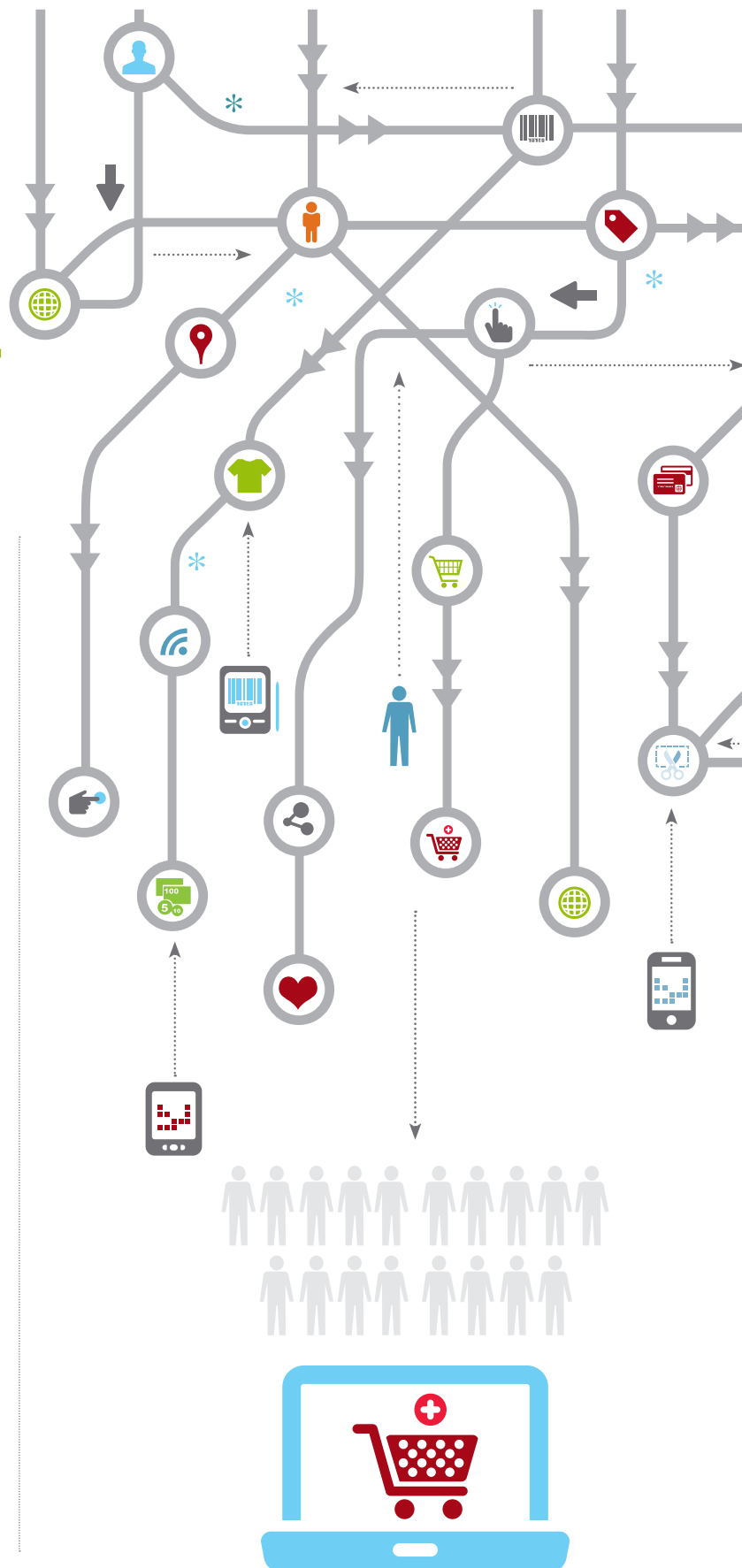
Wiring the Customer Experience

How quickly are consumers adapting to digital retail experiences, and how can retailers keep up with their tech-savvy shoppers? To uncover the trends that are already shaping the future, WD Partners surveyed 2,300+ people nationwide about the appeal, awareness, and usage of 14 current and emerging retail-specific technologies.

What we found surprised us: Participants revealed a high level of awareness and interest across the entire range of technology-driven retail experiences covered in the study, from Buy Online / Pickup In-Store (which appealed to 86 percent of participants), to Interactive Vending Machines of which 93 percent of respondents were aware).

Still, despite generally high levels of both appeal and awareness, respondents reported lower than expected usage for a number of these technologies. The likely reason is that retailers haven't yet implemented these technologies in-store – so their customers haven't had the opportunity to try them. But as our survey showed, demand is on the rise, so retailers need to catch up quickly.

The bottom line: Consumers want to move seamlessly across in-store, online and mobile shopping experiences. They seek tools and features that integrate product content and technologies mapped to their real-life needs for convenience, ease of use, access, and support.



Here's some of what you'll read in the report:

Using digital to drive traffic

Many retailers use digital retail technologies for “pre-shopping”— helping customers with online or mobile tools before they ever step foot in a retail location. Effective pre-shopping tools take into account individual shopping behaviors and what customers want to accomplish, so that shoppers have a great retail experience once they're actually in the store.

Appealing or unappealing? It all depends

Disinterest in some digital retail technologies stems from the simple fact that they're new. Some aren't yet in common use, so people either know little about them, don't know how to use them, or both. Plus, there are important differences of opinion along generational and ethnic lines. The most “unappealing” technology in the survey is still appealing to nearly two-thirds of Millennials.

Digital Divides and Gender Gaps

Men and women often have differing views on digital retail technologies. Retailers need to develop clear ideas about what content and which digital technology their customers find most useful and appealing.

Empowering sales associates

More than two-thirds of consumers think it is helpful for store employees to carry devices such as tablets or smartphones to help answer customers' questions. They're frustrated about actually *getting* such help, however. Successful in-store use of digital retail technologies is carefully planned and implemented, and supported by first-rate employee training and educational programs.

The steps to integrating digital retail technologies

You'll be successful if you have a good roadmap and plan of attack. There are three steps to getting started:

- Building a solid digital foundation
- Shifting from a cost center to a profit center
- Striving for digital synergy



★ THE TOP 5...

MOST APPEALING DIGITAL RETAIL TECHNOLOGIES

1 INTERACTIVE VENDING MACHINES



2 BUY ONLINE/PICKUP IN-STORE



3 CUSTOMER IDENTIFICATION



4 MOBILE-BASED COUPONS



5 MOBILE CHECKOUT



Highlights of the Study

The latest white paper from WD Partners captures the appeal, awareness, and usage of 14 digital retail technologies across generations, genders, and ethnicities. It also reveals which of these technologies consumers find most *appealing*, and why.

research methodologies

Quantitative:

An online survey of a national sample of more than 2,300 participants, segmented by generation (Millennials, Gen-Xers, and Baby Boomers).

Qualitative:

Focus groups with Millennials, Gen-Xers, and Boomers, including their reactions to the 14 digital retail technologies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on our findings and the implications for your business, please, call us at **888-335-0014**, or email talktous@wdpartners.com.