



# Consumers rate the most helpful in-store technology

By Marianne Wilson from Chain Store Age  
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Pittsburgh -- Consumers love their smartphones, but retailers shouldn't count out the "old tech" yet in terms of customer appeal. And merchants will have to put some effort into getting consumers to accept some of the new high-tech bells and whistles.

A new survey by First Insights reveals that consumer awareness of beacons — by far the most talked about in-store technology — is very low, with 70% of respondents not knowing the definition of an in-store beacon. Respondents in the "Consumer Survey Report" identified price barcode scanners, offered by such retailers as Target, Walmart and Costco, as the most helpful in-store technology, which suggests the continuing importance of price to consumers.

In other survey findings, asked to choose between a virtual dressing room and a traditional dressing room for trying on clothes nearly 60% of consumers chose the traditional room.

The report cautions that retailers will walk a fine line between losing and winning customers with the introduction of new capabilities.

Retailers will face an uphill battle, for example when it comes to the much-hyped facial recognition technology, with more than 75% of respondents

saying they would not shop at a store that used facial recognition technology for marketing purposes. But First Insights suggested that discounts might be the key to turning consumer perception around, as the number dropped to 55% of respondents when they knew there would be a benefit associated with it.

Despite the rise of using social media in the workplace and at home, consumers haven't taken it in-store. More than 60% of respondents never interact with a retailer's social media platforms while shopping in-store, presenting an opportunity for retailers to refine their marketing strategies.

In other findings:

- More than 90% of respondents indicated they aren't more likely to buy an apparel item if an athlete or celebrity endorses it. That means big potential savings for retailers who pay big bucks to hire celebrities and sports stars for product endorsements.
- Even though many millennials today are glued to their smartphones, 98% say don't want to be texted by retailers about promotions. Respondents between the ages of 18 and 50 identified that they prefer receiving promotions via email.

"This survey revealed the importance to retailers in understanding their target

consumer, from their preferences regarding in-store technologies to the small but important details such as whether it's better to reach them by text or email," said Jim Shea, chief marketing officer of First Insight. "Consumers today expect the shopping experience to be personalized and want retailers to evolve along with their preferences."