

## Beacons Hold Potential, But Shoppers Are Still Not Tech Savvy in Stores

By Evan Clark from Women's Wear Daily  
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Shoppers might have their eyes glued to their smartphones, but they are nowhere near the cutting edge when it comes to retail technology.

In fact, they come off like relative Luddites in a poll by **First Insight**, which asked 1,085 American consumers in June about retail technology, their shopping experiences and how they were impacted by marketing and advertising.

Just look:

*Which in-store technology do you find most helpful?*

Price barcode scanner — 47.9 percent.

*If you had to pick between a virtual dressing room and a traditional dressing room, which one would you choose for trying clothes on?*

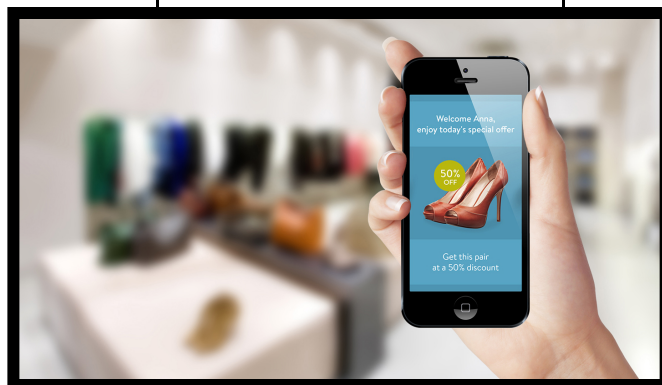
Traditional dressing room — 58.6 percent.  
I don't know what a virtual dressing room is — 30.8 percent.

*Have you ever engaged with an in-store beacon?*

I don't know what a beacon is

— 70 percent.  
No — 27 percent.

“The more niche technologies like...virtual dressing rooms, I think, for retailers deploying those, the benefits to them are more the public relations,” said Jim Shea, chief commercial officer of First Insight. “They get some nice



publicity around that. [Virtual dressing rooms] draw people into the store, they want to see it.”

However, Shea said beacons appear to be here to stay, although shoppers might not equate the word “beacon” with the push notifications they receive on their phones as they pass lease lines.

“The retailers are making huge investments in beacon technology,” said Shea.

Macy's, for instance, is betting on beacons big time and, after

a test at its flagships in New York and San Francisco, said last year it would roll the beacons to all of its stores with more than 4,000 devices using Shopkick's shopBeacon technology.

First Insight specializes in data helping retailers optimize their pricing and Shea said there's plenty of room for merchants to be efficient.

“The offers that retailers are offering online as well as the ones they're getting ready to offer with these beacons are generic offers,” Shea said. “If the retailer is coming up on the fall season, everybody gets 30 percent off sweaters.

“We're now segmenting the results of this consumer data we're getting and we're triangulating on what sets of consumer like what sets of products and what prices they're willing to pay,” he said.

That opens the door for more personalization, and potential for just enough of a price cut to entice shoppers to spend.