



I'm not such an old fossil when it comes to retail shopping habits

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“Do you know that really old film? The one with the dinosaurs? You know, Jurassic Park? The new one looks awesome.”

The day my son said this to me over a family dinner, I died a little inside. “How is Jurassic Park old?!” I thought to myself. “It only came out yesterday...”

But that’s the thing, I guess. Each generation has always seen things differently. Where one sees ground-breaking cinematic special effects in a well-loved blockbuster; another sees old puppets on screen with even older actors.

I recently [read an article](#) which looked at the world of retail through the lens of Gen Z consumers, and it got me thinking; it’s not just classic films that generations see differently.

It’s clear that Gen Z is looking for something very different from their retail experience. While previous generations put convenience, speed, and value for money at the top of their shopping list; Gen Zedders want an immersive, engaging retail adventure.

The race to meet these expectations is already well underway. And the brands leading the pack are the ones making the best use of smart technology.



A multi-channel approach

Perhaps a more appropriate term for Gen Z would be ‘Generation Omnichannel’. They have never known a world without the internet and as a result, don’t think in terms of traditional channel boundaries.

They expect to seamlessly integrate with brands across the entire retail ecosystem. They want to actively share opinions, collaborate, and co-create with their favourite high street names. In the process, they expect brands to be highly responsive to their needs.

Many of the big names are already stepping up to the plate. Take the beauty brand Sephora, for example. Regularly voted as the [number one retailer](#) for best customer experience, Sephora uses its [award-winning app](#) to deliver exactly what Gen Zedders are looking for.

The Virtual Artist feature uses augmented reality to let users ‘try on’ products. Push notifications deliver recommendations based on past purchases. Customers who use certain products, but haven’t purchased in a while, will receive discount codes encouraging them to stock up again. All app users get a complimentary gift on their birthday... I could go on!

Another big brand getting omnichannel right is M&S, which is on a mission to turbocharge its online growth by implementing new digital initiatives. Their latest offer - [M&S Live](#) - is a live shopping service where customers can view product demonstrations, ask questions, and buy anything featured.

A smarter future in store

With all this talk of online personalisation, you could be forgiven for thinking that Gen Z is only interested in the digital shopping journey. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, more than [80% of Gen Z consumers prefer to shop in-store](#) – with online purchases accounting for only 7.4% of their overall spending.



But that doesn’t mean retailers can simply open the doors of their shops and wait for the customers to flock in. The key to success is blending physical and digital shopping into one fully connected customer journey

One great example of a brand already doing this is Nike. The sportswear giant lets customers reserve items online and then retrieve them from pickup lockers in its flagship New York City store. Plus, once shoppers have picked up their goods, they can skip the queues at the till – [paying directly from their mobile device with Instant Checkout](#).

Lush is another brand cleverly connecting the digital and in-store experiences. Their (very Instagrammable) [app-first store in Japan](#) uses the #LushLabs phone app as the primary source of in-store interactivity. Shoppers can scan the products with the Lush Lens, and then get instant information to their device about the product’s ingredients, benefits, and even videos of how they dissolve in the tub.



Powering retail growth

As well as using tech to deliver an immersive customer experience, savvy retailers can leverage technology to optimise other areas of the business. By analysing data collected from traffic flow analysis, such as preferred shopping periods and dwell times, retailers can make informed decisions about inventory, pricing, and merchandise placement.

[The Vitamin Shoppe is a fantastic example of a retailer leveraging shopper traffic data to great effect](#). They used real-time analytics to identify ‘power hours’ – where shopper traffic peaked – and adjusted their scheduling to better accommodate the increase. The result? \$6 million in additional sales.

The rules of retail have changed.

And if traditional retailers want to avoid going extinct, they need to adapt. We can help. We can help you connect your hardware, software, and services to deliver a seamless shopping experience your customers will love, with Lenovo solutions powered by Intel® technology. Get in touch today.