



Seamless checkout: a necessary trend

EHI study “Technology Trends in Retailing 2023”

Artificial intelligence continues to be seen as the technology that will be most important in future retail. This is one result of the current EHI study “Technology Trends in Retailing 2023”. Seamless checkout is expected to play a key part in this because of the growing importance of automation in these times of personnel shortages.

Artificial intelligence

As in previous years, artificial intelligence and machine learning topped the list for IT managers who were asked about the most important technology trends. This remains the most important technology for 52 percent, compared to 63 percent in 2021. One reason for the lower figure is that AI has already become established in many companies and is therefore no longer perceived as a future technology. AI is now being used by 69 percent of the companies surveyed (2021: 56 percent). Nine percent are planning to implement AI, and 22 have no such plans.

Seamless checkout

Second on the list of important trends, at 41 percent, is seamless checkout, which also includes self-scanning and autonomous stores. IT managers anticipate further progress in this technology owing to a continuing lack of personnel. The particular form that seamless stores will take will depend on the business sector, location, profitability and customer acceptance. 52 percent of IT managers report that they already have cashierless stores in operation or have specific plans for such stores in the coming years. The rest of those interviewed were not – or not yet – interested in this technology.

Customer centricity

Another important technological trend is customer centricity, which is rated high by 28 percent of IT managers (2021: 37 percent). The figure has dropped here too, but remains at a high level. Many companies are going to great efforts to personalise the customer journey.

Connected retail

In contrast, connected retail has declined markedly in importance. Whereas 44 percent of decision makers saw this as a big trend in 2021, now only 22 percent do so. A possible reason is that omnichannel retail is now a part of everyday routine for many companies. Cloud technologies show a similar percentage drop, from 33 percent to 24 percent. Most companies have established a cloud strategy and no longer see it as lying in the future.

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Rising IT budgets

The average proportion of the IT budget to net sales, at 1.53 percent in 2023, has continued to rise (2021: 1.47 percent). 76 percent of the managers surveyed expect that their IT budgets will increase in the years ahead.

Frequent use of electronic shelf labelling

Of the retailers surveyed, 56 percent report they are already using electronic shelf labelling (ESL) in their stores. Investments in ESL have risen particularly in food retail, reaching a coverage of 94 percent. Of these stores, 69 percent plan to step up their use.

The study was supported by Adesso, Anybill, Diebold Nixdorf, GK Software, Mercio, ServiceNow and Snabble.

Base data:

For the current study "Technology Trends in Retailing 2023" EHI personally interviewed IT managers from 92 retail companies in German-speaking countries on technological trends and investment priorities.

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About EHI

EHI is a research, training and consultancy institute for the retail industry and its partners. It has some 80 employees. The international EHI network comprises some 850 member companies from the retail, consumer goods and capital goods industries, along with service providers. EHI is also a shareholder of GS1 Germany and FoodPlus. It is a partner of Messe Düsseldorf and important trade shows like EuroShop. The President of EHI is Markus Tkotz, Managing Director of Markant. The Managing Director of EHI is Michael Gerling.



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