



Cisco TelePresence for Retail: Improving Collaboration and Performance

Executive Summary

Slim profit margins, dynamic markets, and rapidly changing consumer preferences demand retail agility. Collaboration solutions, such as Cisco® TelePresence™, offer new ways to transform your business and respond effectively to dynamic markets. Cisco TelePresence delivers a unique, in-person experience with remote participants, helping you to:

- Accelerate decision making and responsiveness
- Increase productivity while reducing travel stress and cost
- Give customers access to product experts
- Create new business opportunities

Introduction

Retail is a challenging industry, even in the best economic climates. Operational and energy costs are rising, which narrows profit margins. At the same time, consumers hold high expectations of their shopping experiences, requiring you to find new ways to continuously differentiate your brand and products while delivering high levels of customer service. Even when consumers shop and spend less, you cannot raise prices to offset higher costs and lower revenue without the risk of losing customers to competitors. As consumers reduce spending during turbulent economic conditions, you are challenged to maintain both profitability and consumer loyalty.

More Intense Competition

Retail competition is global, resulting in more choices for customers and creating more competition for their attention and budgets. Customer loyalty becomes critical as you seek to generate more sales from your customers. Retail strategies for turning loyal customers into strong advocates for a brand require delivering personalized services, becoming highly responsive to customers inquiries, and providing assistance to customers at the point of sale.

Meeting Customer Expectations

Consumers expect to be able to find information on demand and products and services tailored to their preferences. To meet these high expectations at the point of purchase, much communication and collaboration is required throughout the supply chain, store management, and operations. Increasingly, suppliers, retailers, and consumers need to share information among and across all channels in order for retailers to deliver the products and assortments that sell well in broad and niche market segments.

Rapid Decision Making Required for Responsiveness

Product lifecycles are shorter than ever before, and vendors continuously introduce new products to anticipate trends or meet consumer expectations. Because you must maximize product sales in a shorter amount of time, it becomes even more critical to collaborate closely with suppliers to develop, allocate, and replenish products quickly and efficiently. Manual processes, telephone conversations, and in-person travel across time zones and global locations often result in delayed decisions and longer time to market.

Maintaining Employee Productivity Is Difficult

Travel has always been a requirement for retail executives and managers. However, with rapidly changing market dynamics and rising travel costs, extensive business travel can be counter-productive. Many retailers are seeking ways to recover the time that executives and managers spend traveling and to improve their quality of life. In addition, constant communication with store managers and associates is needed to maintain operational efficiency and coordination. During difficult economic times, optimizing employee productivity across the organization becomes even more essential to profitability.

Cisco TelePresence for Retail

Cisco TelePresence helps improve operational and employee efficiency while delivering capabilities that can change satisfied shoppers into loyal advocates. A powerful collaboration solution for retailers, Cisco TelePresence can help you increase sales, reduce costs, and achieve competitive differentiation, even in an uncertain economy.

Face-to-Face Meetings – Without Travel

Cisco TelePresence creates immersive, in-person meeting experiences between people – over the network – with the visual context and richness of a face-to-face meeting. It combines innovative technology and design, integrating advanced audio with ultra-high-definition video and interactive collaboration tools. By enabling your retail business and suppliers to meet, discuss, and make decisions in real time, you can reduce the time and delay inherent in traditional collaboration among multiple people or groups. Cisco TelePresence also reduces the need for frequent travel, enabling people to accomplish more in the same amount of time and to reduce the stress and fatigue associated with being away from home. You gain the ability to efficiently access data on demand, effectively interact with virtual teams all over the world, and manage these interactions in real time.



Connecting Customers with Experts

Cisco TelePresence Expert on Demand is a next-generation collaboration solution that transforms the way that you can deliver high-touch customer services. You can create innovative customer experiences by connecting customers with product experts or other specialists using in-store kiosks or a consultative meeting room. With Cisco TelePresence Expert on Demand, it is now easy to deliver the right information to customers exactly when they need it for making purchase decisions.

Using the Network as the Platform

By using the network as your platform, you can easily integrate access to information for every user, including employees, customers, and suppliers. Security, management, rich connectivity, video, media, mobility, voice, and identity services are enabled in the network itself. As a result, you can provide your users with access to the information and people that they need, at any time and with any device. With network-based services available to all devices, you can also execute new retail strategies and implement new applications far more rapidly, easily, and cost-effectively than ever before.

Gain Competitive Differentiation

Cisco TelePresence solution delivers immediacy and accelerates new initiative execution. For example, a large consumer electronics retailer is rapidly expanding its share in new markets, both domestic and global. Using Cisco TelePresence, the company can quickly assemble headquarter executives, local employees, and project leads. Headquarters-based executives can scale their management expertise and insight and provide guidance to multiple stores across the globe with minimal travel, improving their productivity. Cisco TelePresence is used to recruit local talents remotely while maintaining a strong brand presence and identity. By deploying Cisco TelePresence solution the retailer is able to differentiate itself against competitors with timely execution of initiatives based on input from pertinent stakeholders at a fraction of the cost.

Improve Supply Chain Efficiency

Collaboration with critical supply chain members can help accelerate product innovation, time to market, and response to trends. U.S.-based Procter & Gamble uses Cisco TelePresence solutions to link 138,000 employees in dozens of countries and improve collaboration among its product teams and outside creative agency. The ability to collaborate in real time enables the company to stimulate innovation and reduce time to market for new products. Other Cisco customers have been able to quickly tune product selections, adjust pricing strategies, and take advantage of unexpected buying opportunities by using Cisco TelePresence to link essential members of their global supply chains.

Optimize Employee Effectiveness

Retailers typically face high levels of employee turnover, but Cisco TelePresence can play an important role in mitigating this challenge. For example, Cisco TelePresence can help you improve hiring processes and deliver high-touch training, thereby increasing employee competence and job satisfaction. Information from headquarters can be communicated more effectively to help with product promotions and improve store profitability and customer satisfaction.

Scale Expert Resources

Customers of complex or technical products often require specialized information, yet it can be costly to hire product specialists for every store location. Cisco TelePresence can be used to share specialized resources among all store locations. Customers benefit from an immediate meeting with an employee who can answer questions, improving their shopping experience and satisfaction with their purchase. You can reduce the cost of providing superior customer service by eliminating the need to hire additional specialists. And you can use in-store Cisco TelePresence kiosks to give customers self-service access to a dedicated team of experts.

Create New Opportunities

New opportunities exist for transforming traditional retail business models. Retailers can dedicate space for Cisco TelePresence kiosks that provide on-demand access to non-retail expertise, such as healthcare, banking, or other convenient services that help generate higher revenue per square foot of retail store space.

Why Cisco?

Effectively meeting retail challenges within static or shrinking budgets is easier with an integrated approach. Cisco has years of experience working closely with leading retail enterprises and has carefully built a collection of network, security, application, and management best practices. Cisco retail network architecture and validated network designs have been successfully created and tested for small, medium-sized, and large retail stores, enterprise data centers, and the Internet edge to support e-commerce operations.

Cisco Connected Retail

Cisco Connected Retail solutions allow you to use the strength of your network for connecting with today's consumer, collaborating more effectively with suppliers, heightening security, and reducing operating costs. By using the network as your platform, you can easily integrate access to information for every user, including employees, customers, and suppliers. Security, management, rich connectivity, video, media, mobility, voice, and identity services are enabled in the network itself.

Business and Social Transformation

Cisco TelePresence and Cisco networks play an integral role in improving return on investment and supporting "green" strategies that can reduce costs, improve quality of life for employees, enhance work quality, and improve strategic business processes that create competitive advantage. Cisco TelePresence is proven to transform business models, boost revenue and productivity, and significantly reduce travel spending. It also has an environmental and social impact. Enabling employees to minimize travel encourages work-life integration and allows organizations to reduce their carbon footprints.

Cisco Advanced Services

Cisco Advanced Services help make networks, Cisco TelePresence applications, and the people who use them work better together. Using a Lifecycle Services approach, Cisco provides fixed-price planning, design, and optimization services to help increase business value and return on investment.

Cisco Partners

Understanding the need for retail flexibility, Cisco collaborates with strategic partners to offer you Cisco TelePresence solutions that are right for your needs. Leading global telecommunications carriers offer Cisco TelePresence-based services, applications, and professional services.

Learn More Today

Cisco TelePresence for Retail solutions can help you achieve your business goals while enabling new strategic business initiatives. Learn more about Cisco TelePresence and how it can transform every aspect of the retail enterprise by visiting <http://www.cisco.com/telepresence>. Resources are available to help you establish a technical blueprint to begin your collaborative journey.



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