

Retail Survey Report

The State of Software Solutions For Mid-sized Retailers

Omnichannel Operations and CX

2025 & beyond

May 2025

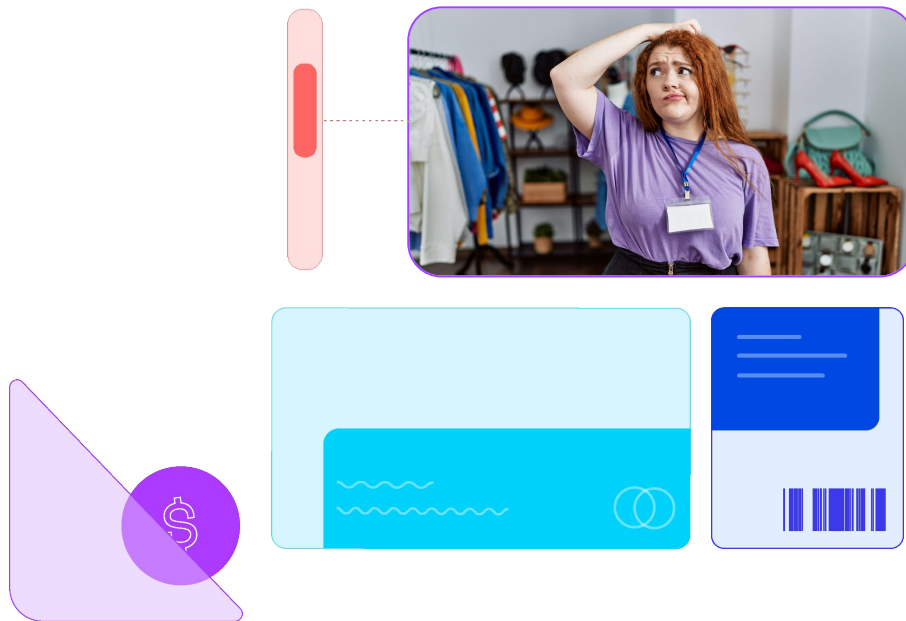
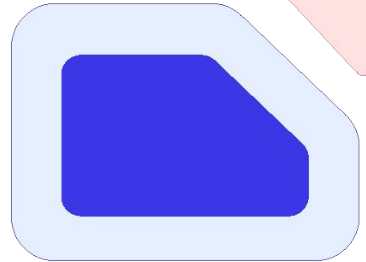
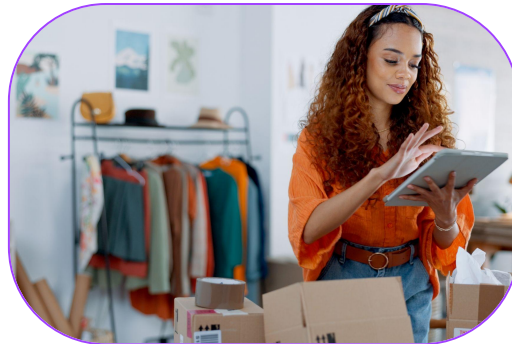
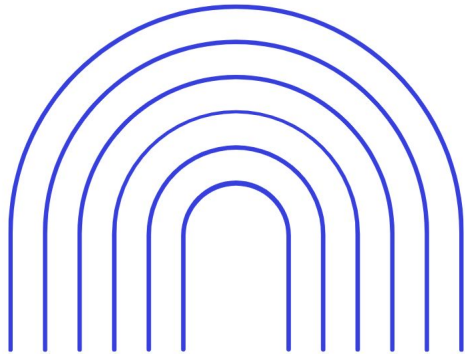


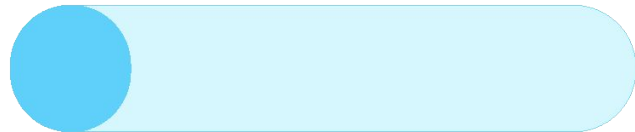
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Introduction & Key Findings



Introduction



Retail is in a period of recalibration. During the COVID-19 pandemic, online shopping surged and was adopted by many retailers, becoming a strong source of revenue. Since then, the pendulum has begun to swing back toward physical stores, while simultaneously, customer expectations for seamless omnichannel experiences continue to grow. For today's small and mid-sized retailers, those with between 10 and 500 stores, this hybrid reality presents a complex challenge: how can retail leaders deliver unified omnichannel customer experiences while streamlining operations across digital and in-store environments?

This report explores how retailers are navigating that challenge from an IT perspective. We surveyed retail leaders to understand how they are building the software ecosystems needed to support both operational efficiency and customer experience in a highly competitive, cost-sensitive market.

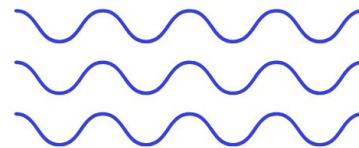
From customer experience, inventory visibility and system integration, to advanced order management and retail-specific ERP strategies, this report reveals both progress and persistent gaps, uncovering how retailers are navigating digital transformation today—and where they're headed next.

Methodology

To get more insight into the state of omnichannel retail operations and customer experience, we commissioned a survey of 300 retail leaders from the United States, all of whom are working at companies with between 10 and 500 stores with or without an online presence, and that have an annual revenue of between \$50-500M. We gathered responses from a wide range of Retailers in verticals such as Apparel, Footwear, Eyewear, Electronics, Cellular, Cosmetics (excluding Pharmacy), DIY, Furniture, Home decor, Jewelry, Liquor, Pet, Sporting goods, and Toys.

This report was administered online by Global Surveyz Research, a global research firm. The respondents were recruited through a global B2B research panel and invited via email to complete the survey, with all responses collected during March 2025. The average amount of time spent on the survey was 5 minutes and 07 seconds. The order of the answers to the majority of the non-numerical questions was randomized to prevent order bias in the answers.

Key Findings



1

Retailers prioritize customer experience, but the majority fall short when it comes to omnichannel experience execution.

87% of retailers cite customer experience as a high or very high business priority, and higher customer satisfaction is cited as the perceived top impact of a consistent and unified omnichannel experience.

Despite this, 59% are unable to deliver that experience — an issue that inevitably undermines customer satisfaction and loyalty. Retail chains with 20 to 50 locations perform the poorest in this area, likely due to scaling challenges and outdated systems that have not kept pace with their growth.

2

Lack of centralized and unified inventory systems correlates with inconsistent customer experience.

59% of retailers report that they rely on grappling with multiple disconnected tools, Excel spreadsheets or manual processes, because they do not have a single software solution for inventory forecasting, planning and management.

This fragmentation leads to issues like stockouts and overstocking, which directly impact the customer experience. Cross-referencing the data, we uncovered a clear correlation: **retailers using multiple inventory solutions are also significantly less likely to deliver a consistent, unified omnichannel experience.**

3

Generic ERPs aren't enough: 64% of retailers see high or very high value in retail-specific ERP solutions.

64% of retail leaders say there is high or very high value in using a retail-specific ERP system. Unlike generic ERPs, retail-focused solutions offer essential capabilities such as omnichannel order management, seasonal forecasting, and large-scale and multi-location inventory management.

To maximize impact, retailers should prioritize ERP systems that integrate seamlessly with POS and support retail-specific functions — rather than selecting based on financial and accounting considerations alone.

Key Findings

4

71% of retailers lack advanced order management capabilities... but plan to close the gap in 2025.

The majority of retailers **(71%) report having no or only partial advanced order management capabilities**, which include features such as omnichannel order capture, BOPIS (buy online, pick up in store), real-time inventory visibility, or order orchestration.

However, **most plan to invest in these capabilities in 2025** to improve their ability to fulfill and manage orders across channels. Notably, business owners and presidents are the most likely to be the decision-makers driving these planned upgrades.

5

73% of retail leaders are suffering from data inconsistency due to missing or fragmented integrations across finance, inventory and POS.

Only 27% of retailers have a single software solution that integrates point of sale (POS), inventory, and finance, while the remaining **73% rely on fragmented systems, resulting in inconsistent data across key functions**. This challenge is most acute for brick-and-mortar retail chains, where 85% report struggling with data consistency.

The struggle is also significant for omnichannel retailers with 65% of omnichannel retailers facing similar issues. These gaps in integration hinder both operational efficiency and the ability to deliver a seamless customer experience.

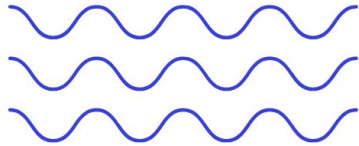
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Smaller retailers with annual revenue below \$250M are actively seeking unified inventory solutions to improve accuracy and efficiency

73% of retailers recognize the value of a single unified solution that covers inventory forecasting, planning, and management. Their intent to implement this type of system is driven by the need for better inventory visibility and more accurate forecasting.



Survey Report Findings



To What Extent Is Customer Experience a Priority for Retail Leaders?

87% of retail leaders consider customer experience to be a high priority, with 32% calling it a very high priority for their business.

Since COVID-19, retailers have been experiencing increased expectations for streamlined omnichannel customer journeys, and a surge in retail competition online. In this environment, a well-executed customer experience is no longer aspirational, it's a key capability that directly impacts brand loyalty and market position navigating digital transformation today—and where they're headed next.

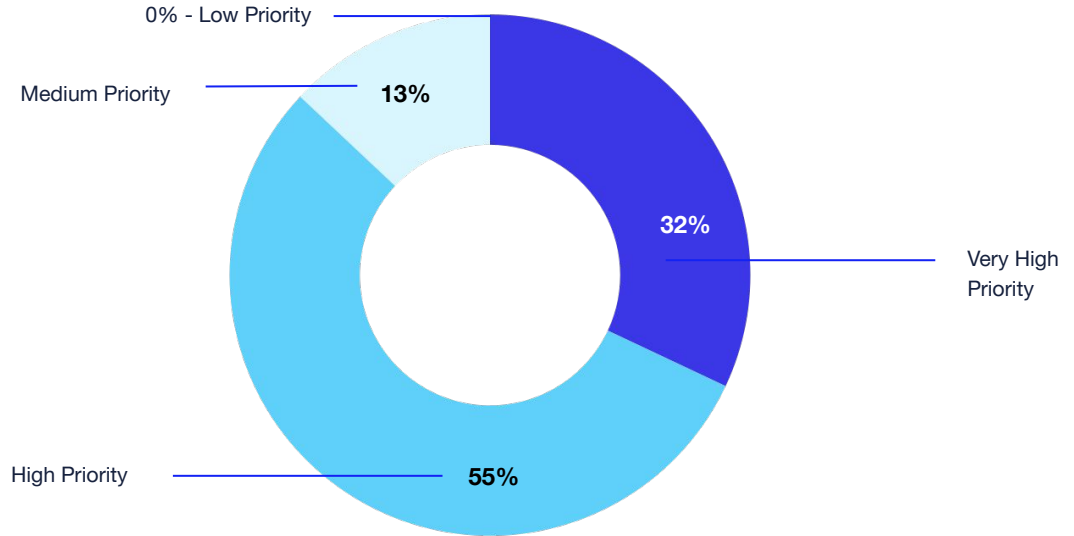


Figure 1: Organizational Prioritization of Customer Experience

Can Retailers Provide a Consistent Omnichannel Customer Experience Across Sales Channels?

Despite the importance of customer experience, 59% of retailers are providing inconsistent or partial omnichannel experiences. Unified omnichannel experiences can include consistent in-store and online personalization or loyalty programs, information about the availability of inventory across different channels, and seamless switching between channels without breaking the customer journey. We broke down the data by how many stores retailers manage, and found that **those with fewer stores find it a greater challenge to offer a unified omnichannel experience**. Interestingly, the group which offers the poorest omnichannel experience is those with between 21-50 stores, which may be because, while they've scaled their footprint and operations, they have not yet updated their systems to support their needs.

Pro Tip



If you're a retailer with up to 100 stores – you should invest in an omnichannel experience, to show that customer experience is your top priority.

Inconsistent or partial omnichannel experience

59%

Unified omnichannel experience

41%

Figure 2: Customer Experience Across Sales Channels

10-20 stores

63%

21-50 stores

65%

51-100 stores

51%

100-500 stores

39%

Figure 3: Inconsistent or Partial Omnichannel Experience by Number of Stores

What Is the Top Value a Full Omnichannel Experience Would Provide?

Retail leaders were asked to identify the primary benefit a unified omnichannel experience would bring to their business. 26% cited increased customer satisfaction, while an equal proportion pointed to improved operational efficiency. Additionally, 24% recognized the role of a full and consistent omnichannel experience in strengthening customer retention.

Pro Tip



Omnichannel experience has a direct impact on all aspects of running a retail business.

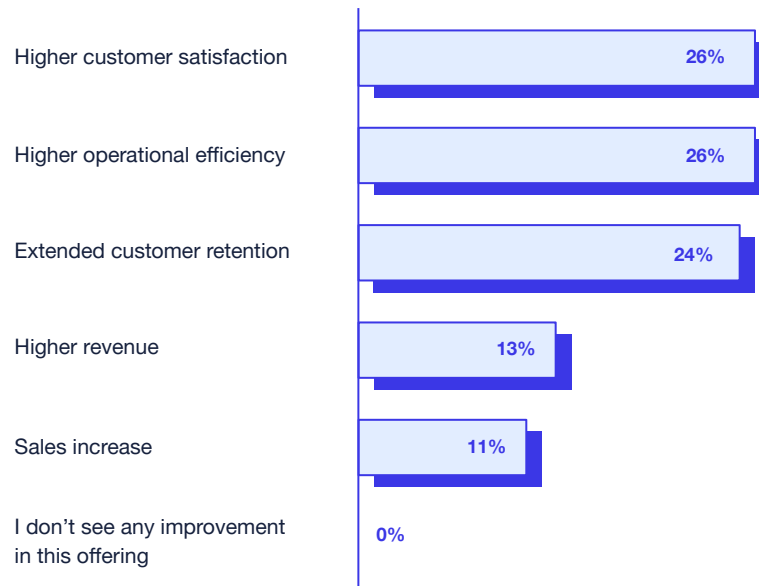


Figure 4: Areas that Would be Most Impacted by a Full Omnichannel Experience

Does Your Company Have Advanced Omnichannel Order Management Capabilities?

We asked retail leaders: “Does your company currently have advanced order management capabilities with components such as: omnichannel order capture, buy online, pick up in store (BOPIS), order orchestration, or real-time omnichannel inventory visibility?”

71% admitted that they have either **no or only partial** advanced order management capabilities, but are planning to enhance these capabilities this year.

The ability to fulfill an order with advanced capabilities means orchestrating and optimizing orders according to inventory availability across the chain or according to customer preferences, managing delivery options such as BOPIS or BOPAC, or easy handling returns of online purchases within stores.

Owners or presidents are most likely to be planning to enhance their technology to include advanced order management capabilities in 2025.

None or partial advanced order management, will enhance in 2025

Have all advanced capabilities

No plans to implement in 2025

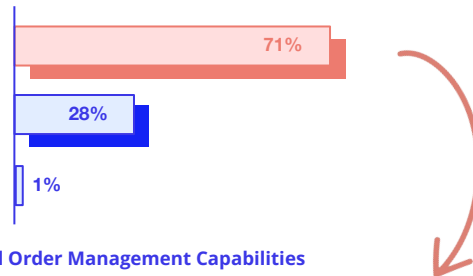


Figure 5: Adoption of Advanced Omnichannel Order Management Capabilities

Owner / President

Head of (Department / Function)

C-level (Chief Officer)

Director

VP

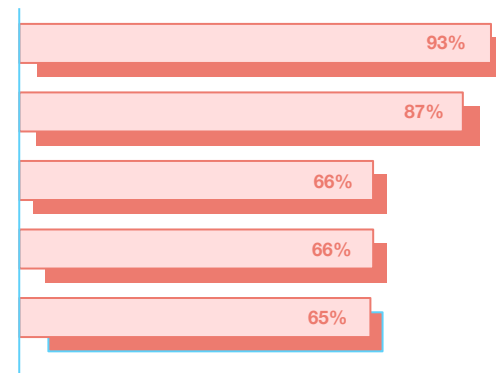


Figure 6: None or Partial Order Management, Will Be Enhanced in 2025, by Job Position

Current Retail Solutions in Place for Inventory Forecasting, Planning and Management

Most retailers have **multiple solutions** in place to plan and manage inventory. These may be connected but require manual effort to align data or are combined with the use of Excel spreadsheets. Just 41% have a single retail solution where they can centralize inventory planning and management. The struggle in managing inventory is accessing a single, unified picture – and most retailers can't align information across systems to get that visibility. We cross-referenced this data by those who cannot provide customers with a single, unified omnichannel experience, and found that 93% of those who have multiple solutions in place offer their customers a sub-par, non-unified, in-store and online experience. Without a single retail solution for centralized inventory planning and management, it is almost impossible to provide a unified omnichannel experience across all channels.

Pro Tip



Centralized inventory management capabilities have a direct impact on your customer experience.

Multiple solutions that are connected but need efforts to align data or Excel sheets

A single retail solution for centralized inventory planning & management

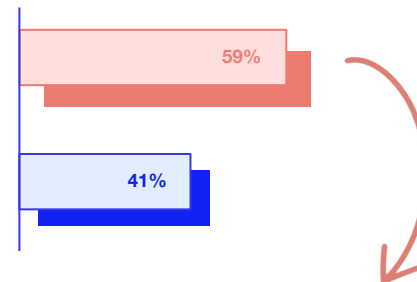


Figure 7: Current Retail Solutions for Inventory Planning and Management

Non-unified in-store & online experience

Partial omnichannel experience

Unified omnichannel experience across all channels

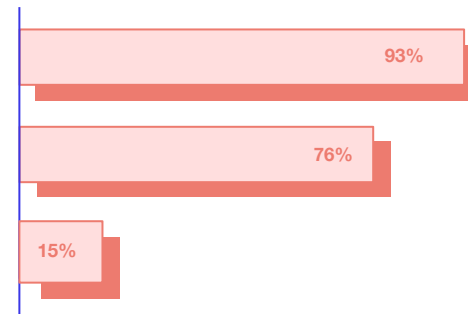
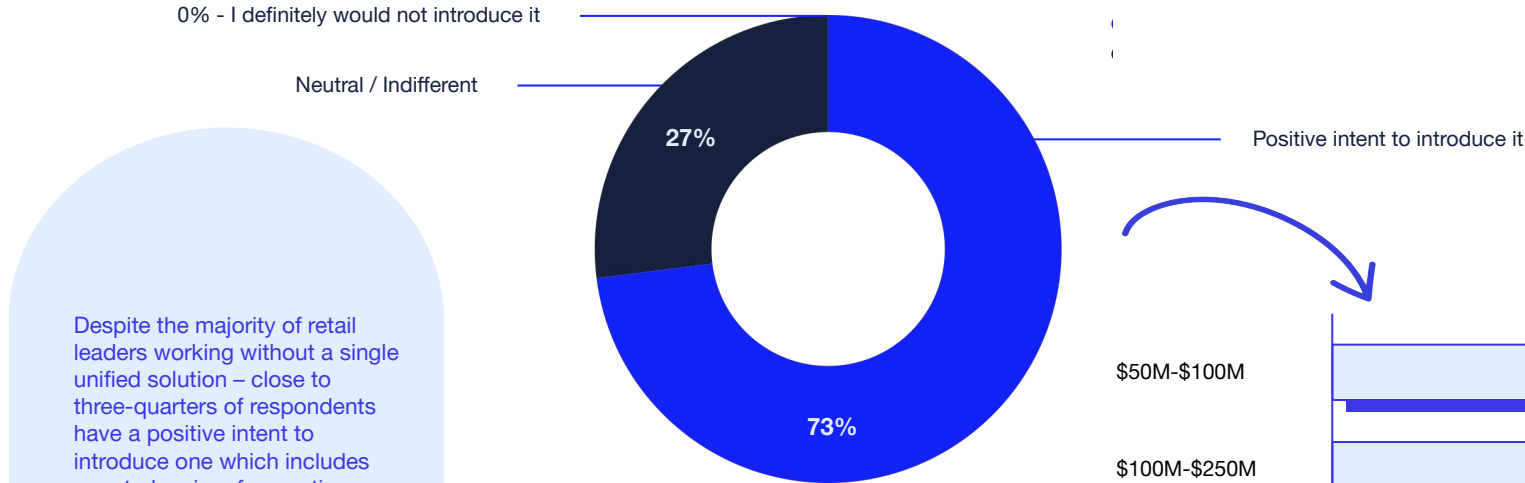


Figure 8: Multiple Solutions that Are Connected but Require Manual Effort to Align Data by Customer Experience Across Sales Channels

Interest in a Unified Retail Solution for Planning, Forecasting & Management



Despite the majority of retail leaders working without a single unified solution – close to three-quarters of respondents have a positive intent to introduce one which includes smart planning, forecasting, and inventory management. It's interesting to see that the smaller the company, the more inclined they are to want to introduce a single unified solution in their organization.

Figure 9: Interest in a Retail Solution for Unified Inventory Planning and Forecasting

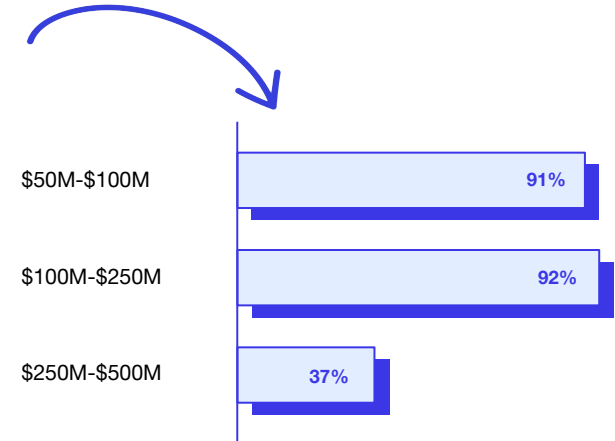


Figure 10: Positive Intent by Annual Revenue

Perceived Benefits of a Retail Solution for Unified Inventory Management

We asked retail leaders to consider the benefits they could achieve by adopting a unified retail solution for inventory management.

34% cited accurate forecasting, and 25% highlighted inventory visibility.

Pro Tip



If you're aiming for accurate forecasting and visibility as well as reduced inventory stockouts and overstocks – a unified solution for inventory.

Accurate inventory forecasting according to sales performance

34%

Inventory visibility

25%

Accurate inventory forecasting and reduces inventory stock-outs and overstocks

24%

Improved replenishment

11%

Reduced inventory stock-outs and overstocking

6%

Figure 11: Perceived Benefits of a Retail Solution for Unified Inventory Management

How Consistently Is Data Managed and Integrated Across the IT Stack of the Business?

We spoke to retail leaders to find out how common it was to have data integrated across mission critical systems such as a back-end ERP, supply chain operation solutions, and customer engagement through in-store or online POS software.

Close to three-quarters (73%) say that they are struggling with data inconsistency due to varying levels of integration between systems.

This problem is even more pronounced when retailers have brick-and-mortar stores, and in this cohort, 85% are challenged by lack of data consistency.

Pro Tip



To avoid data inconsistencies – a single solution across the IT stack is critical.

Data inconsistency and operational challenges due to integration issues

73%

Single solution, no major challenges

27%

Figure 12: Integration Level of POS, Inventory, and Finance Systems

Brick-and-mortar retailer

85%

Omnichannel - Online and brick-and-mortar retail

66%

Figure 13: Data Consistency and Operational Challenges Due to Integration Issues by Retail Type

What Value Would Implementing a Retail-Specific ERP System Provide?

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems are widely used across industries, but in retail, a generic ERP often falls short. Retailers require capabilities such as omnichannel order management, seasonal inventory planning and forecasting, and the ability to manage high volumes of transactions across multiple locations.

64% of retail leaders say that there is either high or very high value in a retail-specific ERP.

Pro Tip



Retailers need to choose their ERP based on retail-specific features and integration with POS, rather than relying on financial and accounting considerations alone.

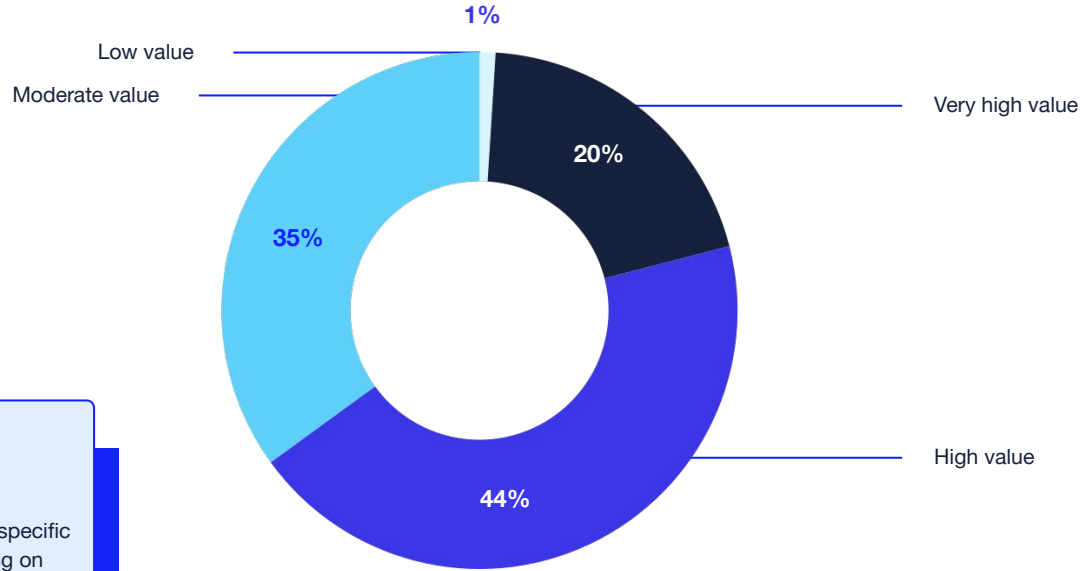
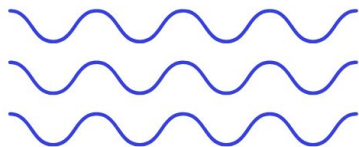


Figure 14: Value of Implementing a Retail-Specific ERP System



Demographics



Retail, Business Type, Number of Stores, Annual Revenue

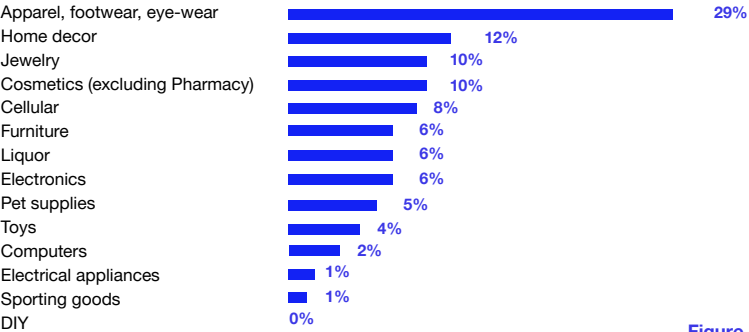


Figure 15: Retail

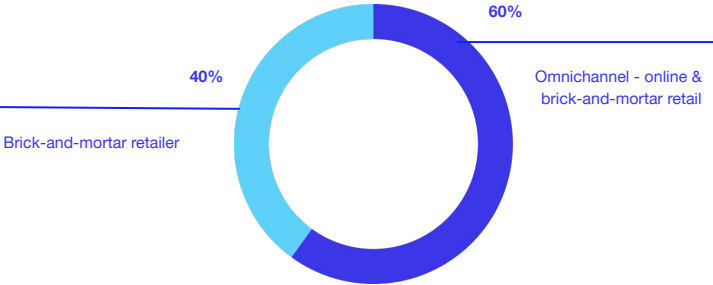


Figure 16: Business Type

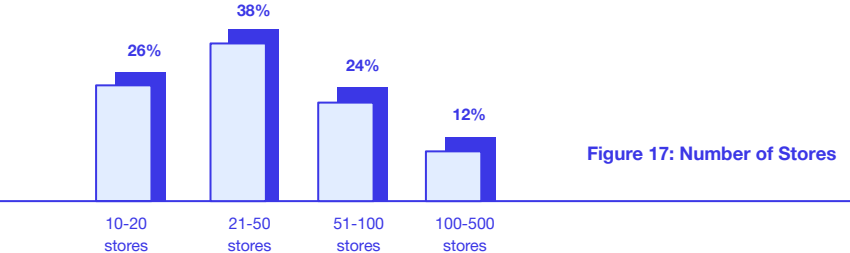


Figure 17: Number of Stores

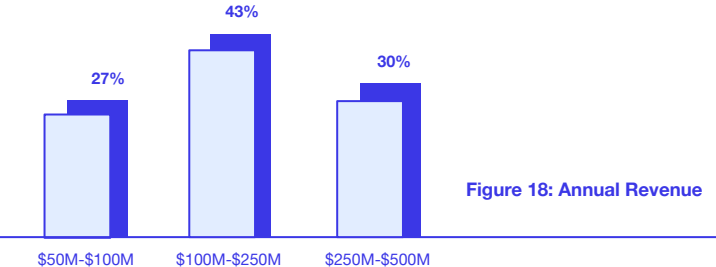


Figure 18: Annual Revenue

Job Position, Role, Department

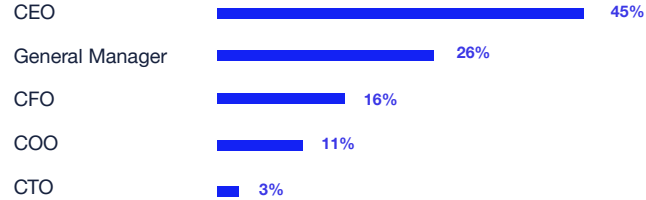


Figure 19: Role

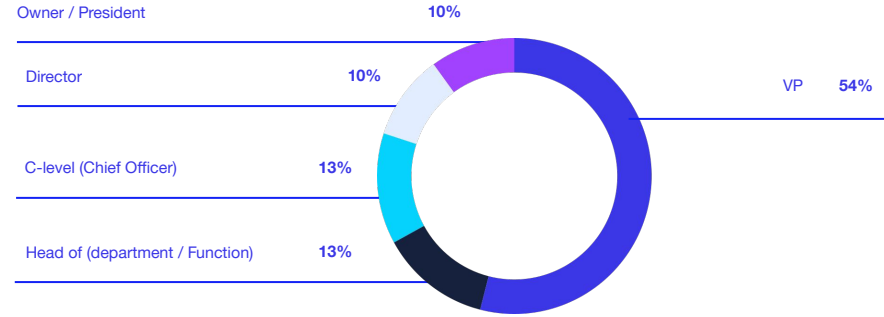


Figure 20: Job Position



Finance
21%



IT & Technology
18%



Retail / Store Operations
17%



Sales & Customer Experience
17%



Inventory
16%



Supply Chain Operations
11%

Figure 18: Department

About Priority

[Request a demo](#)

Priority end-to-end Retail Management, Unified Commerce, POS, and Retail ERP comprehensive solution is designed to streamline operations and deliver a seamless omnichannel experience across online and brick-and-mortar stores. Priority uses a modular approach built on its powerful platform, providing a single source of truth and ensuring centralized inventory management, replenishment, and order orchestration across all retail channels.

By simplifying management from the back office to the head office and stores, Priority gives retailers advanced and retail specific capabilities, real-time visibility into sales, inventory, and customer info, enabling data-driven decision-making and strategic planning. With 35+ years of experience and recognized by Gartner and IDC as a leading provider for cloud ERP solutions, Priority has helped leading retail chains and franchises—including Adidas, ACE Hardware, Columbia Sportswear, Kiko Milano, Aldo, and more—achieve operational excellence while meeting evolving customer needs.



For more information, please visit us:

