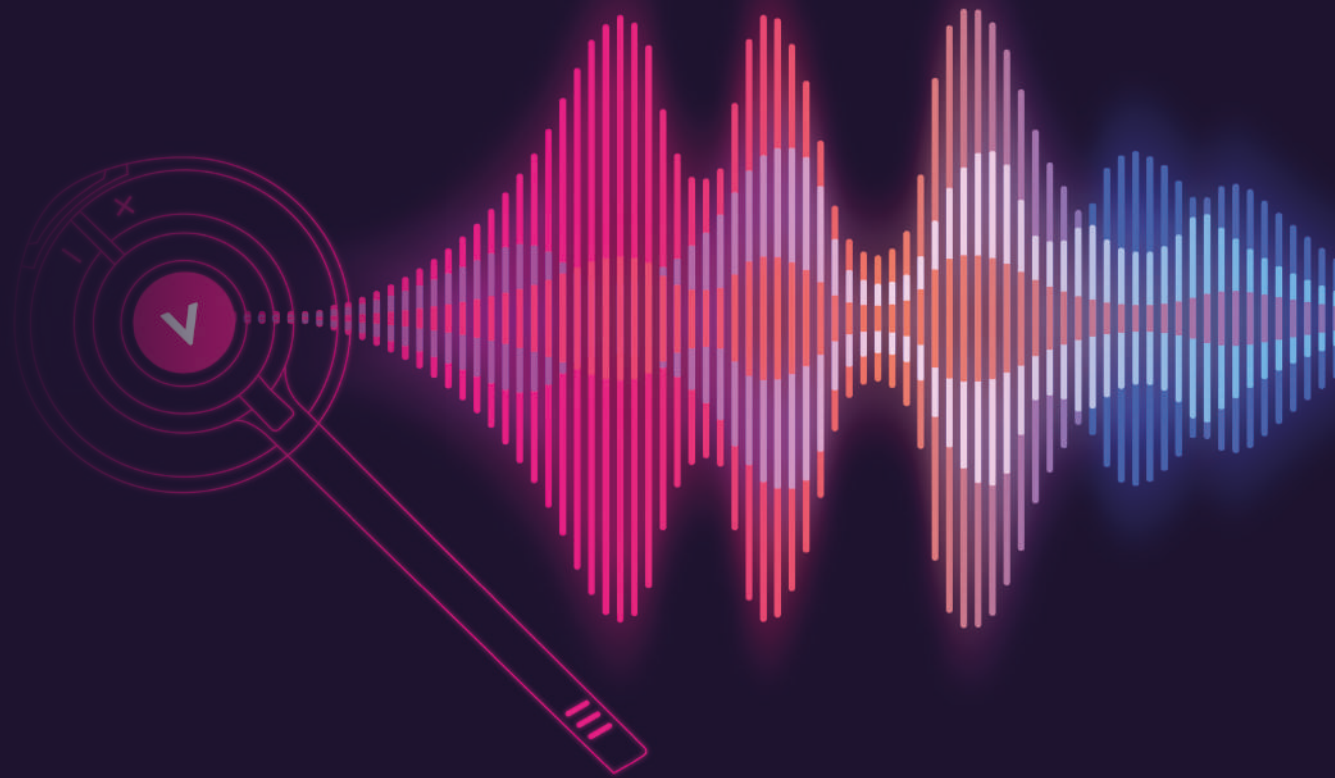




How to guide

How to amplify your in-store knowledge sharing



Introduction



In the aftermath of the pandemic, retailers are still finding it difficult to fill shop floor vacancies, leading to shortages that place more pressure on existing colleagues. In particular, retail stores have been left grappling with the challenge of sharing specialist knowledge amongst colleagues to maintain high levels of customer service.

To better understand the impact of this on retail colleagues, retail technology solutions provider, VoCoVo undertook a survey of both in-store employees and decision makers at retailers with over 100 stores across the UK, the USA and Germany. This included 1,003 colleagues with over six months' experience in retail and 258 senior retail decision makers.

The research set out to understand the true scale of the disconnect between the technology needed in store and the technology that head offices have implemented so far or have future plans to do so. With a focus on smart technology adoption rates and the biggest challenges being faced by customer-facing colleagues, the findings have shone a light on three key areas where this disconnect must be addressed to ensure a truly connected retail experience for all.

76%

of retail colleagues **are now covering extra roles and responsibilities due to labour shortages** in their stores.

These teams need all the help they can get to provide the seamless experiences that consumers have come to expect.

As customers rethink their brand loyalties and increasingly move online, an understaffed and ill-informed shop floor presence is a sure-fire way to get them heading towards the exit. All is not lost, however, if large format stores can amplify their knowledge-sharing and enhance efficiencies by harnessing the power of voice.

Tick-tock, your customers are waiting

As e-commerce continues to grow in a post-pandemic landscape, physical stores have been making great progress to enhance the in-store experience to compete. In particular, speed truly is of the essence if physical retailers want to retain customers as slow response times will send them running for the hills (or the internet at least). Our [research](#) in 2020 found that customers are becoming increasingly sensitive to waiting times in stores.

34%

of customers will leave a store if they have to wait for **more than 10 minutes**

54%

will **go online rather than wait for a colleague** to answer their question

Now more than ever in an uncertain landscape of consumer spending, speeding up response times is key to retaining custom, but to deliver this, colleagues might need help checking stock, processing returns or finding information, particularly if they're new to their role.

Armed with connected headset technology, store colleagues can easily communicate with each other and ask questions without having to run across the store to find them, leaving frustrated customers waiting. Many store colleagues already recognise the value that can be added by effective use of technology.

43%

of retail colleagues **say smart technology helps them provide better, faster customer service**

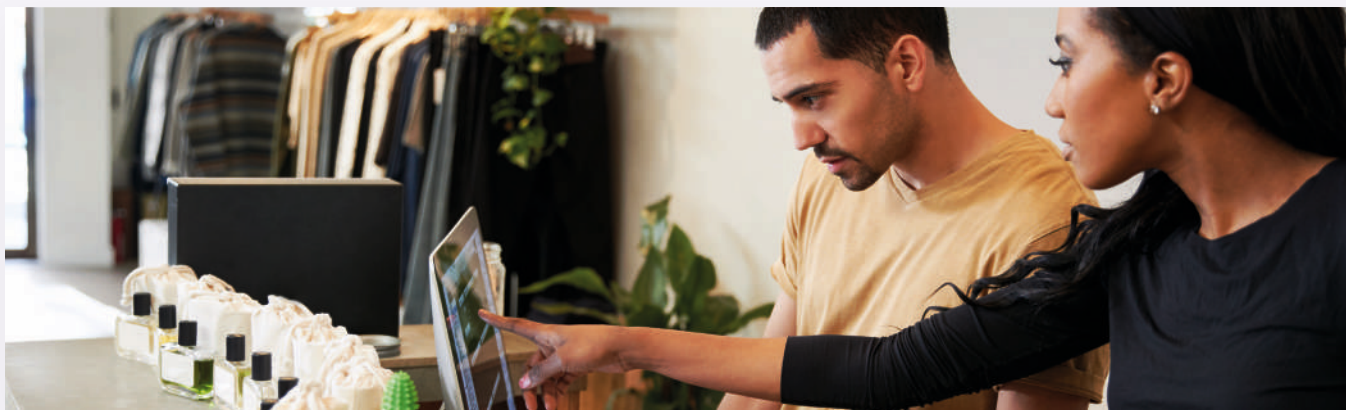
32%

believe that portable **voice communication technology would help them** deliver better customer experiences

Similarly, installing two-way call points lets customers proactively request help without needing to track down a colleague. By placing them in the areas of the store where customers are most likely to need assistance, you can ensure your customers get the most from this capability.



Make training a breeze



When it comes to employee training, retailers tend to think they only have two options available to them: providing a comprehensive training session, which means removing an experienced colleague from the floor, or taking a more casual approach which means that you run the risk of new hires making mistakes. In either scenario, customer experience suffers.

82%

of customers have been in a situation where **they felt better informed about products than colleagues**

But what if you could offer effective on-the-job training? With connected headset technology that embraces a conference approach, experienced colleagues can perform their usual tasks while simultaneously explaining them to new recruits. By adopting the multi-conference feature, you can even create separate channels for each store department. This allows new colleagues to tune into the relevant conference and get answers to their questions faster for a better customer experience.

As well as improving customer experience, focusing on training in this way has been proven to improve colleague retention by up to 50%.

Top tip:

Intuitive technology is the backbone of training and upskilling, so invest in communication tools that have easy onboarding and one-click connection to help new staff learn faster.



More talking, less walking

45%

of retail colleagues say that
**smart technology in-store
makes their jobs easier**

Switching to hands-free technology also unlocks the power of multitasking, allowing in-store staff to answer questions while continuing to work. This frees up colleagues to serve more customers and complete other important tasks. Customer experience is also improved due to employees being able to easily transfer the customer to a more knowledgeable member of the team should they be unable to answer their query.

These capabilities have a material impact on store teams because it's not just customers who want a streamlined shopping experience – colleagues are keen to maximise efficiency too.

38%

of colleagues think they **could
give better customer service if
they had access to technology
that improved efficiency**

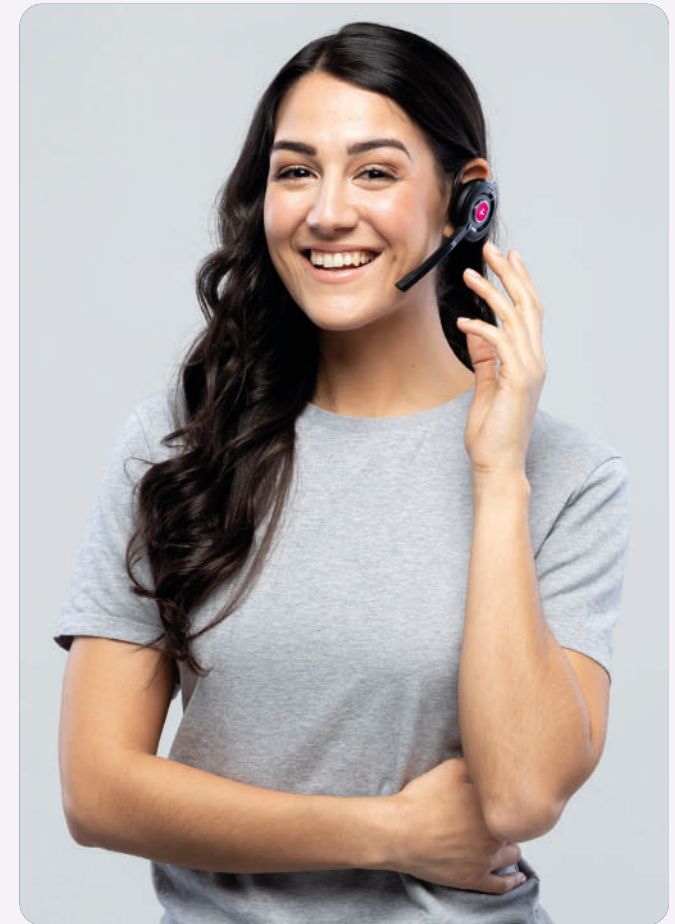
Daily impact of team headsets

105	1.4	£442
minutes saved per associate, per day	km saved per associate, per day	monetary saving per store, per week



"Being a customer service driven retail store, we decided to incorporate various communication devices to improve the overall in-store experience. Each checkout now has a VoCoVo Keypad installed which links up to the colleague headsets, allowing for two-way communication between checkout colleagues and service hosts allowing us to assist customers in store quickly and efficiently."

Steve Edwards | Senior Manager
Central Retail Operations



Conclusion

With consumers wanting immediate answers and faster service, connected headset technology allows store colleagues to bring customer experience up to speed. By arming your employees with two-way headsets, you can empower teams to rapidly gather information from colleagues. They can also respond instantly to enquiries, check stock remotely, receive on-the-job training and call for assistance.

Not only does this use of technology allow colleagues to connect to each other and elevate the customer experience to better compete with online retail, but it also helps improve efficiency and streamline operations.

What's more - this is only the beginning of what connected voice technology has to offer. In the future, even the simple touch of a button could give way to more instantaneous voice activation, offering a true hands free experience and unlimited potential to busy colleagues.





About VoCoVo

Established in 2016, VoCoVo drives transformation in retail communications to maximise operational efficiency and enhance customer experience for leading global retailers. Now connecting over 100,000 colleagues in 21 countries through voice, their retail-ready hardware, software, and smart integrations power store teams across Grocery, Home Improvement, and Fashion.

VoCoVo is growing fast and is trusted by household names in the UK, Europe, Australia, and North America. The company has a list of accolades, from regional Business of the Year and Innovation awards to 5th place in the Sunday Times Tech Track 100.



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