



Five ways **retailers** can leverage **AI** with immediate impact



Executive summary

The retail industry today stands at a critical inflection point. Evolving consumer behaviors and expectations, increased competition, and the rapid rise of enterprise AI are causing retailers to rethink the way they operate. Forward-thinking retailers recognize that those who do not adopt AI will be left behind and fall out of consumers' favor. This shift is more than simply replacing existing processes with AI tools. It requires retailers to reimagine every aspect of their operations from customer experience to the way their store associates and corporate employees work.

One example is omnichannel customer experience. While omnichannel isn't a new concept in retail, customer expectations have changed. Shoppers now assume their retailers will offer a seamless experience across every channel, expecting "consistent information to be at their fingertips, regardless of the channel they choose to engage with."¹ Personalization is just as critical: 80% of customers are more likely to make a purchase when offered a personalized experience ([source](#)), with 76% expressing frustration when those expectations aren't met.²

1. <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/operations/our-insights/rediscover-the-omnichannel-approach-focus-on-what-truly-matters>

2. <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/growth-marketing-and-sales/our-insights/the-value-of-getting-personalization-right-or-wrong-is-multiplying>

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Enterprise AI gives retailers the tools they need to navigate their current challenges. AI-powered innovations are transforming omnichannel operations, customer experiences, and employee enablement.³ In this paper, we explore five key use cases Glean can help retailers stay relevant in an evolving technology landscape.

3. <https://www.launchconsulting.com/posts/revolutionizing-retail-how-ai-and-technology-are-shaping-the-future-of-work-and-employee-engagement>

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1

Transform the customer service experience

According to IDC, customers now expect “personalized and seamless shopping journeys across channels,” as well as flexible payment and fulfillment options.⁴ In other words, industry leaders have set the bar, and it’s up to everyone else to meet these new expectations—or risk being left behind.

AI-powered tools provide a solution. “AI is the ultimate tool for delivering on these expectations, with its ability to intuitively understand customer desires and craft personalized services.”⁵ Retailers looking to transform the customer experience should leverage AI to:

- Achieve 24/7 customer service availability for frictionless customer interactions.
- Provide AI-powered virtual shopping assistants. Virtual shopping assistants should understand customer intent and context, offering helpful, conversational guidance.
- Ensure flexible, transparent shipping and returns, including cross-channel returns, with clear customer communication throughout the fulfillment journey.
- Reduce return rates with more accurate product details, and convert returns and exchanges into new sales opportunities.

4. AI in Retail: Redefining the Future; Transforming Merchandising, Omnichannel, Supply Chains, and Sustainability Practices, IDC, 2024

5. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/sap/2024/04/19/artificial-intelligence-in-retail-6-use-cases-and-examples/>

How Glean transforms the customer experience

- ✓ **Associates** use Glean to become product experts and advisors, such as reminding customers to buy the required accessories, and increasing share of wallet while driving higher customer satisfaction. Associates can have a unified view of each customer, accessible through natural language search in chat, email, documents, or other tools. Glean can combine, analyze, and summarize CRM, retail BI, POS, and ecommerce data to reveal larger trends across customer segments or even the entire customer base.
- ✓ **Customer support teams** use Glean to resolve issues faster with instant access to authoritative answers. For instance, Glean can provide step-by-step processes for issue resolution or guide customer support representatives through exchange and refund policies. Glean can also give customer support teams important sales context, helping them turn returns or exchanges into net new revenue.
- ✓ **Store managers** can use Glean to recommend the next best actions for their associates. Managers can use Glean to build custom AI agents to engage in everyday tasks, offering proactive responses and insights. Glean can suggest resolution paths and next steps for customer service issues, draft responses, and recommend additional products & services based on customer 360 view. This can reduce customer wait times for services and improve customer satisfaction.

Together, these improvements to the customer experience set the foundation for a truly omnichannel retail strategy—where every interaction is consistent, connected, and contextually aware.

2

Deliver on the promise of omnichannel

With rising customer expectations and new channels emerging every year, delivering a connected experience across platforms has become table stakes. But today, omnichannel means more than just bridging the traditional divide between brick-and-mortar and online shopping—it spans mobile apps, social media, and customer support channels. For example, today 46% of consumers buy products directly through social media platforms—more than double the number in 2019—and 70% use social media to evaluate retailer reviews before making a purchase.⁶



Retail transformation begins with – and depends upon – developing comprehensive omnichannel capabilities across the business.

6. <https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/news-room/press-releases/2024/pwc-2024-voice-of-consumer-survey.html>

In this context, retailers seeking to achieve a seamless omnichannel customer experience, from discovery to last mile, should have several objectives in mind:

- Gain a 360° customer view powered by an AI data integration that connects purchase history, browsing behavior, loyalty program participation, customer service interactions, and social media engagement into a single, widely-accessible profile.
- Engage customers by delivering the personalized experience they expect. Leverage full customer context, at scale, to deliver tailored product recommendations and personalized offers across every channel.
- Use aggregated customer insights to better understand customer preferences and provide more personalized recommendations and interactions across every touchpoint.
- Maintain consistent product information and inventory data across channels while enabling flexible fulfillment options like buy-online-pickup-in-store (BOPIS) and curbside pickup.
- Ensure consistent marketing messaging across channels, and enable AI-powered communications and support.
- Analyze and drive insights from vast amounts of real-time, cross-channel data to optimize marketing campaigns and resource allocation.

How Glean helps drive omnichannel operations

Glean is a generative AI solution that connects company knowledge across every system to provide precise and personalized information that boosts employee efficiency and productivity. By helping your front-line staff find answers and resolve issues faster, Glean accelerates your omnichannel transformation.

- ☑ **Store associates and customer service representatives** gain instant access to comprehensive, cross-channel customer data. Unified access to past online purchases and browsing behavior, customer service calls, and loyalty status help associates tailor recommendations, identify relevant promotions, and provide hyperpersonalized experiences.
- ☑ **Marketing and advertising specialists** use Glean to make data-driven decisions by integrating marketing, CRM, and POS data with qualitative insights on customer behavior, to help teams create campaigns and promotions that drive shopper interest across channels.

Of course, delivering these experiences at scale depends on one crucial factor: a knowledgeable, empowered workforce.

3

Transform the employee experience

Behind every great customer experience is a well-equipped employee. From onboarding to daily decision-making, retail associates and corporate staff need the tools and information to succeed. A successful employee experience starts with seamless onboarding and effective training, helping teams ramp up quickly and deliver consistent service. By 2025, 80% of retail executives expect their companies to use intelligent automation, with 40% already implementing some form of it. To keep up, retailers need to equip employees with the right knowledge and training to work with AI, so they can be more productive, efficient, and prepared for the future of retail.⁷

“By offloading routine tasks [with AI], employees can engage more meaningfully with their work, fostering a sense of purpose and achievement. When employees feel that their skills are being utilized effectively and that they are contributing to the company’s success, their engagement levels naturally increase.”⁸

Attracting associates is another challenge. 70% of retail employers struggle to find candidates with the right technical skills, and 82% face challenges finding individuals with appropriate cross-functional experience.⁹

7. <https://www.analyticsinsight.net/intelligent-automation/80-of-companies-will-adopt-intelligent-automation-by-2025>

8. <https://www.launchconsulting.com/posts/revolutionizing-retail-how-ai-and-technology-are-shaping-the-future-of-work-and-employee-engagement>

9. <https://www.indeed.com/lead/focus-on-retail>

Retailers can leverage AI to:

- Streamline onboarding and training of new and seasonal employees so they become more productive, faster. This includes personalized development pathways via customized training and feedback systems supported by AI-powered, individualized learning management tools.
- Empower teams with real-time customer, product, and operational data that enables better-informed customer interactions and improves customer satisfaction.
- Improve customer experience scores by prioritizing localized, rapid employee enablement.
- Enhance employee engagement and coordination with real-time communication.
- Integrate AI-driven tools that offload repetitive work and free employees for higher-value tasks that require human interaction.



Glean reduces onboarding time by up to 50%.

How Glean helps transform the employee experience

- ✓ **Seasonal employees** become productive much more quickly. Glean reduces onboarding time by up to 50%. Glean enables associates to quickly search and find product collateral and better understand key processes by delivering real-time, natural-language product and customer information that helps make new associates as effective as experienced employees from day one.
- ✓ **HR business partners** leverage Glean to provide HR and compliance data instantly, to every team member, via a simple, easy-to-use natural language interface. Employees can self-serve answers to questions such as “How do I book vacation days?” and “What are our latest safety policies?”
- ✓ **Store managers** and other leaders use Glean to make vital information available to every employee, when and where it’s needed. This improves employee productivity and satisfaction by eliminating the need to wait for answers to common questions, by expanding employee knowledge on demand, and by empowering employees to excel at their jobs and grow their careers

Empowering employees isn’t just about productivity—it’s also what enables retailers to embrace change, experiment with new tools, and build a culture of innovation.

4

Innovating faster with AI to stay competitive

Retailers are turning to AI to identify and capture market opportunities faster than ever. To stay competitive, they need the right technical infrastructure and organizational capabilities to support rapid experimentation, iteration, and deployment of new solutions. “Successful retailers embrace data-driven, AI-enabled, cloud-first cultures focused on profitable growth and use data to drive pricing, promotion, assortment, and other merchandising strategies (or omnichannel strategies).” ¹⁰

To drive AI-powered innovation, retailers should focus on:

- Spot shifts in consumer behavior faster and act on them sooner. Leverage AI to distill industry reports, trend forecasts, and social media activity into clear, actionable insights.
- Speed up feature development and deployment while cutting time to value. Streamline organizational processes to support quick decision-making, resource allocation, and the integration of new tools and partners to keep momentum high.
- Explore new avenues for operational automation. The AI landscape is evolving rapidly. Staying ahead means ensuring teams have access to the latest tools and the knowledge to apply them effectively.

10. AI in Retail: Redefining the Future; Transforming Merchandising, Omnichannel, Supply Chains, and Sustainability Practices, IDC, 2024

How Glean helps accelerate retailer innovation

- ☑ **The merchandising team** can use customized agents to collect and analyze changes in consumer preferences, new product categories to inform data driven merchandising decisions.
- ☑ **The engineering team** uses Glean to cut down development cycles by helping engineers find the context they need across their multiple tools, systems, and documentation. Stakeholders can leverage Glean to get up to speed on new projects in half the time, quickly find trusted coding resources, and ship high-quality products faster.

Retailers that foster a fast-moving, innovation-first mindset are better equipped to tackle the next challenge: modernizing operations and unlocking new levels of efficiency.

5

Optimize operational efficiency and visibility

Modernizing legacy infrastructure is one of the biggest hurdles in retail transformation. Outdated systems make it difficult to implement AI-driven processes and data-driven decision-making across supply chain and overall operations. Yet AI has the power to optimize every aspect of retail operations, from inventory management to pricing strategies.

“Some retailers have found it difficult to implement gen AI widely because it requires rewiring parts of the retail organization, such as technical capabilities and talent. Data quality and privacy concerns, insufficient resources and expertise, and implementation expenses have also challenged the speed at which retailers can scale their gen AI experiments.” ¹¹

11. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/llm-to-roi-how-to-scale-gen-ai-in-retail>

In embarking on operational transformation, retailers should look to AI-powered tools to:

- Modernize legacy infrastructure to boost productivity, gain full supply chain visibility, and enable faster, data-driven decisions.
- Use AI to predict demand, allocate inventory dynamically, and optimize delivery logistics based on historical sales data, weather patterns, local events, and economic factors. Advanced analytics also strengthen fraud detection while minimizing disruption to legitimate transactions.
- Enable dynamic pricing based on demand, stock levels, or what competitors are charging—and synchronize pricing and inventory across channels. Dynamic pricing represents a crucial operational capability, but retailers must balance revenue optimization with customer perception and brand positioning considerations.
- Manage increasingly autonomous retail operations like cashier-less stores, automated warehouses, and self-driving delivery vehicles with sophisticated monitoring and reporting systems.

How Glean helps optimize operational efficiency

- ☑ **Retail staff** use Glean to quickly summarize inventory and pricing data to optimize operations and improve the customer journey with accurate information at each stage.
- ☑ **Logistics and supply chain workers** use Glean to analyze supplier contracts, pricing agreements, and inventory reports, helping them make data-driven decisions on operations management. With Glean's natural language interface, teams can surface insights from structured and unstructured data sources—including emails, chats, supplier reports, contacts and warehouse records.

With the right AI tools in place across people, products, and processes, retailers can move forward with confidence—ready to lead through a multi-layered transformation agenda.

6

Moving forward with a multi-layered transformation agenda

Retailers today face transformation challenges that go beyond simply adopting new technology. Success depends on a fundamental shift across their omnichannel presence, customer experience, employee enablement, operational efficiency, and merchandising strategy. Retailers that effectively leverage AI across these areas will be best positioned to meet evolving customer expectations and thrive in the new retail landscape.



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11. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/llm-to-roi-how-to-scale-gen-ai-in-retail>



Accelerating your business transformation agenda

Glean is the AI Work Assistant that connects and understands all of a company's data, accelerating and automating workflows across the organization. With Glean, retailers can pursue a unified AI strategy, eliminate complexity, and drive real innovation to tackle their biggest transformation challenges.

[Get a demo](#)