



Press information

Contact details:

ONE IN THREE UK SHOPPERS BELIEVE HOLOGRAMS WILL REPLACE SHOP ASSISTANTS BY 2015 *In-store holograms that answer questions and facilitate purchases might be just seven years away*

London, 20th May 2008, Walk into a department store in 2015 and there's a good chance you'll have a conversation with a holographic sales assistant. They'll be on hand to answer all your questions and make your purchase. Too far fetched? Not according to a third of UK shoppers.

New TNS international survey – ***New Future In Store*** – looked at future innovations in shopping, and found that 32 per cent of UK shoppers believe holographic sales assistants will be in widespread use in the UK in just seven years – signalling a massive shift in how technology will dictate the way we shop.

But despite expectations, we are accepting innovations like this with reluctance. While 73 per cent of UK shoppers surveyed agreed that a holographic sales assistant ranked as extremely innovative, the concept is not seen as an attractive one with just 15 per cent of UK respondents saying it appeals to them. Even fewer UK shoppers – just 6 per cent - indicated they would definitely be likely to use this innovation if it were to become reality.

Barry Lemmon, Global Head of TNS Retail & Shopper Insights, said: “With technology having an ever increasing impact on the way we shop, we undertook this study to gain insights into the kind of innovation shoppers would welcome, and the initiatives that run the risk of turning shoppers off. The most highly regarded innovation in our survey was the use of a biometric fingerprint that links to a shopper's bank account or credit card to make payment – saving time and reducing risk of fraud, which we know are key concerns for shoppers. But when it comes to standing in front of a hologram as opposed to the traditional warm human being,

there was a noticeable lack of enthusiasm in the UK. The message to retailers in this case is to tread with caution. Customers like technology and innovation when it makes for a better shopping experience, but not when it de-personalises it.”

TNS’s New Future In Store survey asked 4,600 primary household shoppers online in eight countries – Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, Spain, the United Kingdom and United States – and asked them to comment on 12 innovations – including intelligent shopping trolleys, interactive dressing rooms, collaborative bulk-buying shopping communities, and shopping social network sites. Internationally, 42 per cent of shoppers believe holographic sales assistants would be in widespread use by 2015 rising to 69 per cent in China and 49 per cent in Spain. Shoppers in those same two countries also liked the idea of the hologram sales assistant more than the cautious Brits, with 59 per cent in China and 39 per cent in Spain giving it a high appeal rating.

Siemon Scammell-Katz, Managing Director of shopping consultancy [TNS Magasin](#), said: “Technology will be pervasive by 2015 and this will redefine the retail interface. Shoppers can be excused for assuming hologram sales assistants would lack the human touch. But paradoxically, shoppers are frequently overwhelmed by too much choice and this technology will provide welcome reassurance and help at the point of purchase, particularly for high value or complex items. And when a shopper has acquired all the information they need, they can still speak to staff to get further assistance. Once shoppers see holograms in action, they’ll like the idea of having a knowledgeable alternative to the traditional warm human being to turn to for help.”

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Note to editors:

New Future In Store surveyed more than 4,600 primary household shoppers online in eight countries – Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States. The data was collated and analysed in February 2008. Go to www.tnsglobal.com for a copy of New Future In Store in PDF format.

Here is the list of 12 retail innovations in our consumer survey:

1. Interactive Dressing Room Mirror

It looks like any other mirror, but is actually a high-resolution digital screen with a camera that can relay live video and project holographic images of clothing items so customers can see how they will look in an outfit without trying it on.

2. Interactive Dressing Room Help

Using a digital touch-screen, a shopper in the dressing room can communicate with sales personnel – without having to return to the sales floor to search for help.

3. Smart Carts

A smart cart incorporates interactive technology via a video screen on the front of the cart, enabling customers to locate products, access shopping lists, check prices, receive promotions and coupons, and scan purchases. The technology also can provide retailers and suppliers with rich data on the shopping trip.

4. Biometric Payment Fingerprint

A shopper can pay for purchases by placing his/her finger on a sensor that reads its fingerprint, linking it to the shopper's bank account or credit card to record the purchase.

5. Shopping Social Network Site

Shoppers share information about the hottest stores, designers, trends and must-have products – all online. Retailers and suppliers will be able to monitor social networking sites to find out what consumers want and take early action to develop and stock those products.

6. Group Buying by Consumers

Shoppers join online collaborative shopping communities to aggregate their buying power with other consumers.

7. 3D Body Scanning

A 3D scan of a shopper's body will be used to make recommendations about the brands and specific clothes most likely to fit well, or to help fit custom-made clothes.

8. Sales and Product Information via Mobile Phone (Based on Location)

Shoppers will opt-in to networks that send them text messages about sales, products and retailers that are relevant to the shopper based on current location.

9. Holographic Sales Assistant

Shoppers will interact with an in-store hologram that can answer questions and facilitate merchandise transactions.

10. Participate in Collaborative Product Development

Product developers will encourage consumers to post ideas and answer surveys online about new products and how existing products can be improved.

11. Shopping by Mobile Device

Consumers will use mobile devices to place orders and arrange delivery from remote locations.

12. Self-activated Shopping Agents

Networked devices in the home – such as networked fridges – will monitor what products consumers use, create shopping lists, and communicate with other devices to arrange deliveries.

About TNS Retail & Shopper Insights

TNS Retail & Shopper Insights is a specialist area of expertise that helps leading consumer products manufacturers and top retailers gain actionable insights into the shopper environment. TNS has built a unique offering that tracks the entire 'shopper journey' (before shoppers enter a store, as they walk around a store, at the point of purchase, and after they have selected a product for purchase).

Equipped with the latest technology and research techniques, a team of TNS retail and shopping experts is forging global partnerships with some of the world's best-known manufacturing and retail brands.

<http://www.tnsglobal.com/research/retail-shopper-research/>

About TNS

TNS is a global market information and insight group.

Its strategic goal is to be recognised as the global leader in delivering value-added information and insights that help its clients make more effective business decisions.

TNS delivers innovative thinking and excellent service across a network of 80 countries. Working in partnership with clients, TNS provides high-quality information, analysis and insight that improves understanding of consumer behaviour.

TNS is the world's leading provider of customised services, combining sector knowledge with expertise in the areas of Product Development & Innovation, Brand & Communications, Stakeholder Management, Retail & Shopper and Customer Intelligence. TNS is a major supplier of consumer panel, media intelligence and audience measurement services.

TNS is the sixth sense of business™.

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