



## Enhancing the In-Store Shopper Experience

### The Challenges Facing Retail Stores Today

Like many industries today, digital transformation is impacting the way brick and mortar retail stores successfully conduct business. Driven by the rapid growth of online retail brands, which deliver a highly-personalized and convenient experience to customers, to remain competitive and profitable the in-store shopping experience must be augmented as well.

By leveraging purpose-built networking technologies, brick and mortar retailers can exceed the expectations of today's connected shopper, optimize the in-house operations of the organization, and build a powerful business asset to continue to leverage in today's digitized society. These are the core network technologies and competencies that enable retail stores to do so.

### Customer-Driven Wi-Fi Solutions

Regardless of the business or environment, access to reliable and secure Wi-Fi connectivity is now a customer expectation; this includes retail stores. Providing pervasive Wi-Fi to in-store guests allows them to stay connected while they shop, interacting with their mobile devices the same way they do day-to-day. There is an incentive for the retailer as well: 80% of millennials state they use their mobile device in-store while they shop to help with their buying decisions. Extreme's Wi-Fi solution is simple, flexible, and fast. What does this mean for the in-store experience?



**Figure 1:** APs available for any environment, delivering simple installations and hide in plain sight design.

- **Seamless Guest Access:** The Wi-Fi solution allows for simple, frictionless access to the network by in-store shoppers. Any difficulty onboarding will discourage customer adoption and hurt the retailer's brand.
- **Secure, Reliable Connectivity:** The Wi-Fi solution maintains a strong connection while shoppers roam throughout the location, without a drop or disruption in service. The network also includes robust, built-in security capabilities to prevent the exposure or loss of confidential data for shoppers or the business. With an increase of mobile-based payments and transactions, this is critical for retailers today.
- **Quality, High-Capacity Performance:** The Wi-Fi solution meets and exceeds the performance expectations of users today; this means unfettered mobile and application usage—including the optimization of retail loyalty apps, access to social media, ability to stream video, and more. A quality experience builds trust and delivers value to a brand's customers.

# Meeting the Organizational Requirements of Retail Businesses

In addition to meeting the expectations of today's connected shopper, Extreme's purpose-built network solutions also support the unique business requirements of the retail industry, building a strategic platform that can be leveraged now and as the organization evolves.

The inherent functionality of Extreme's wireless infrastructure presents compelling benefits to retailers:

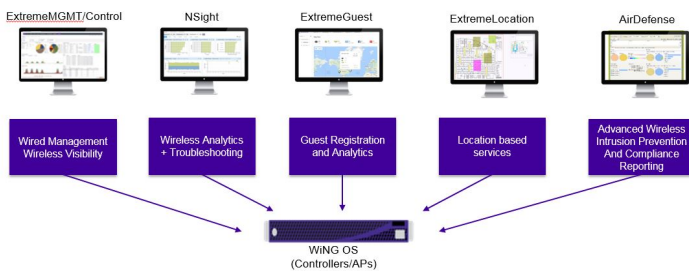


Figure 2: WiNG Architecture.

- **Simple and Fast Deployments:** Wi-Fi solutions that are built for seamless, fast deployments; this reduces the installation time and causes minimal impact to a store's day-to-day operations, keeping the doors of the retail store open and the shopping experience smooth. This extends to and includes retailers rolling out to many stores. Whether it's a single site or multiple locations, no onsite support is necessary - driving down install time and costs.
- **Zero-Touch Provisioning:** A key function that allows users of the Wi-Fi solution to rapidly deploy APs while also simplifying installations - no special training is required. Once the initial pre-configuration is completed on the wireless controller, deployments of APs is as simple as taking a new AP from the box, mounting it, and plugging in the network connection.
- **Distributed, Scalable Architecture:** Wi-Fi solutions that are flexible and adaptable, engineered to scale from the smallest networks to the largest geographically dispersed deployments; the architecture is tailored to the specific needs of the organization: retailers may leverage a variety of network configurations - cloud-based, on premise, or a mixture of both—the solution does not require organizations to lock into one architecture or deployment model. Retailers have stores, distribution centers and HQs; they need a single solution that can meet all these needs.
- **Low Total Cost of Ownership:** Wi-Fi solutions—including hardware and software—that offers one of the lowest total cost of ownership models in the industry, freeing up valuable resources to pursue more strategic endeavors.

Managing, monitoring, and maintaining wired and wireless networks is a consuming task, especially for retail businesses that traditionally have smaller IT teams. Not to mention, the network edge makes up a significant percentage of retail deployments; a cornerstone of brick and mortar stores, the network edge is where guests and devices access and engage with the IT-driven services provided by an organization. It is the point where an organization and its customers meet; it is where users engage, mobile transactions occur, and IoT devices connect and are managed. Of equal importance, the network edge is also the first line of defense for cybersecurity threats and where a large majority of breaches occur.

To address these challenges, Extreme's network solutions comprises of a secure, unified wired/wireless infrastructure complemented by a broad portfolio of applications and services, all augmented by artificial intelligence and machine learning. Managed from a single pane of glass, Extreme offers the only solution in the industry that leverages the same unified network products across cloud and on-premises deployments. Specific advantages of this solution include:

- **Centralized, Policy-Based Management:** Alleviate the burden of network administration with wired and wireless network management from a single pane of glass, with the ability to easily program and enforce comprehensive authentication and access policies across the topology of the network for users, devices, and applications. This includes edge switches, both manufactured by Extreme or by a third-party provider.
- **Pervasive Intelligence:** Retail's small IT staff is given a boost by augmenting human intelligence with machine learning and proactive AI; Extreme's virtual network engineer independently tunes the network for the changing conditions. Network issues are also identified sooner or even prevented, reducing help desk tickets and freeing up IT resources.
- **Granular Visibility and Control:** Wi-Fi solutions that enable better business decisions and application performance, with flow-based layer 7 application visibility and control (without sacrificing on performance) at the AP; access the ability to give priority to certain traffic sources. Also be able to rate limit, rate shape, prioritize and deny applications.
- **Intrinsic, Robust Security:** Extreme's entire product portfolio offers end-to-end network protection against any and all cybersecurity threats, in addition to offering a comprehensive security ecosystem to deliver integrated and automated compliance checks, threat detection, and intelligence related to onboarding devices and users.

# Data-Driven Insights and Contextual Engagements

Physical retailers have a unique advantage compared to digital retail in that the customer can physically engage with the products as well as consult with a sales or service staff in-store, but to deliver that value-added experience in-store retailers need to collect and leverage actionable analytics, as well as harness these analytics to better engage with customer base.

Data analytics not only deliver valuable insights to the business; it also has the ability to enhance the shopping experience for customers, creating a personalized experience for customers. This also includes operational analytics related to in-store movement and engagement, product placement and performance, and customer preferences and buying behaviors. ExtremeLocation delivers another layer of actionable intelligence, giving retailers three levels of powerful data:

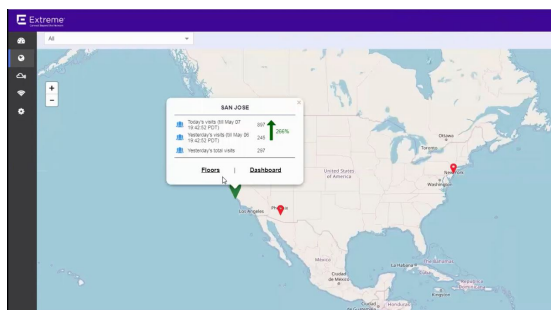


Figure 3: ExtremeLocation Portal.

- **Position:** Allows retailers to see the exact location of shoppers, devices, and in-house associates. Offering a higher-location accuracy, this feature provides auto-classification of devices based off of business-defined rules so retailers have an accurate depiction of the ratio of guest versus in-house assets.
- **Zone:** Allows retailers to identify and locate devices across a store, unlock department-level visibility, understand the popular zones in each store through integrated device density and dwell-time heat mapping, and monitor the movement of visitors from one zone to the other.
- **Presence:** Allows retailers to detect when shoppers arrive in their stores, understand the footfall and dwell-time trends in each store, see the peak and off-peak hours, and have a macro view of the top and bottom performance stores across geographies.

When combined with ExtremeLocation's activation engine, retailers are equipped with the exciting ability to engage with their customers in contextual, valued-added ways while also augmenting their in-house staff and assets. Applications of these technologies may include:

- Reacting to key events at the shop floor in real-time
- Identifying shoppers entering the store
- Engaging with shoppers related to their location on the shop floor
- Enabling contextual and personalized marketing
- Providing visibility of available staff and store assets
- Alerting employees on important tasks or requests
- Analyzing customer and staff behavior to optimize offerings and services

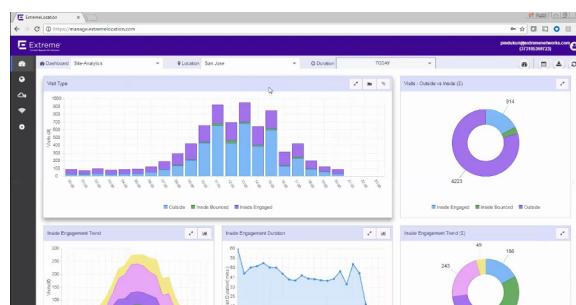


Figure 4: ExtremeLocation Guest Analytics Portal.

When measuring the analytics, impact, and success of these engagements, retail brands can only further increase the in-store experience for their customers and their in-house assets.

## Transforming the In-Store Experience

For brick and mortar retailers to remain profitable and competitive it is incumbent upon them to transform the in-store experience. This means investing in purpose-built networking technologies that create a value-added personalized shopping experience for customers as well as augments key business operations and assets.

Learn more about Extreme's networking solutions for retail by visiting our [Retail Solution Page](http://www.extremenetworks.com/contact) on Extreme's website.



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