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The State of Retail  
**Power of In-Store Service**  
**2015**

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## Power of In-Store Service

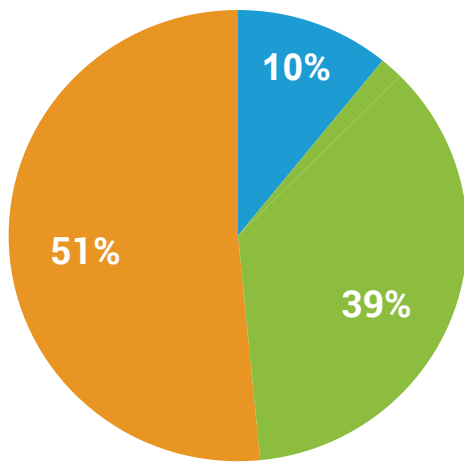
TimeTrade recently conducted a survey of 1,029 consumers and discovered that 85% of shoppers who come in to buy and do not get the right sales person with the right knowledge and expertise will go elsewhere.

TimeTrade has discovered through its own research and talking to customers that 85% of consumers who come in to buy and do not get the right sales person with the right knowledge and expertise will go elsewhere. This is why providing the right in-store service is so crucial. Customers today need a service guarantee that they will have prompt help from a knowledgeable employee who can provide them with product expertise. The reason is that the customer is coming in to buy and they are looking for final validation, for example, maybe they are narrowing down their purchase choice to three cameras

and want to learn more about each camera's reputation, etc. Fifty-one percent of TimeTrade survey respondents indicate that if a knowledgeable associate helps them, they are extremely likely to buy (**Figure 1**).

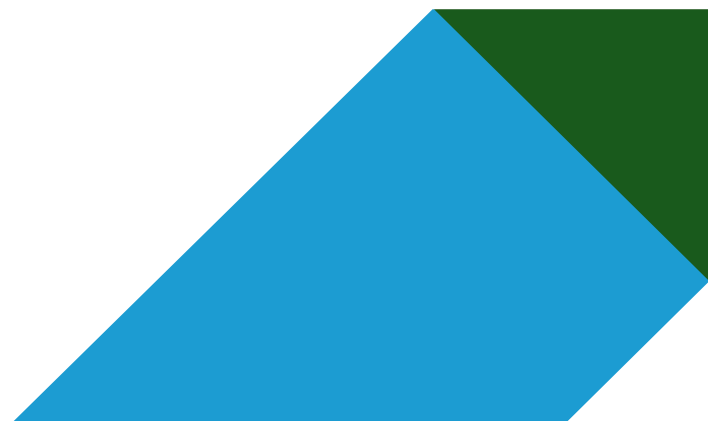
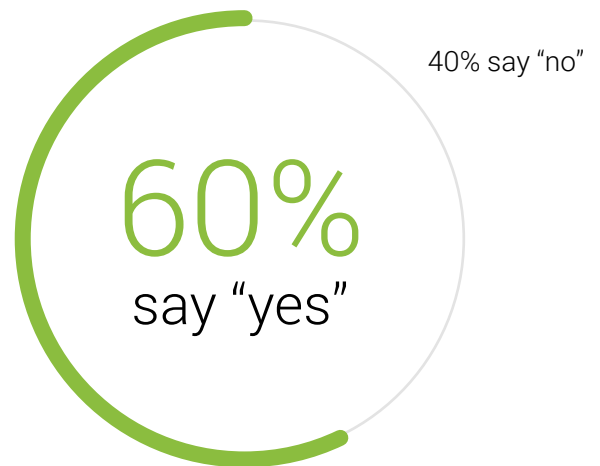
Not only does the in-store visit benefit the customer who may get additional expertise, but it benefits the retailer as it enables cross-sell and up-sell opportunity. The TimeTrade survey reveals that 60% will buy more than they originally planned to if they genuinely like the sales associate assisting them. (**Figure 2**).

**Figure 1.** When helped by a knowledgeable associate, how likely are you to buy?



- Extremely likely
- Somewhat likely
- It wouldn't make a difference

**Figure 2.** If you genuinely like the associate helping you, are you likely to buy more than you planned to purchase?



## Power of In-Store Service (cont.)

TimeTrade sees retailers restructuring around in-store collaborative selling. This type of collaboration between store managers and store associates is to ensure that all customers coming in the door receive the proper level of service. Some of largest brand names with the largest retail operations are going in this direction of collaboration. TimeTrade refers to this as the ["Appleization" of retail](#). Meaning, no modern retailer has made more strides at creating an exceptional in-store customer experience than Apple.

The cornerstone of the Apple experience is the service and attention customers receive while visiting the Genius Bar. Apple recently made changes to its Genius Bar this past year with an effort to further enhance the in-store experience and prioritize customer service based specifically on customer need. In addition to previously scheduled service appointments, Apple Genius Bars will now accept walk-ins to do a quick triage on a problem. Customers will receive text updates to keep them in the loop on expected wait time, be sent a reminder and then a final notification confirming an Apple Genius is available.

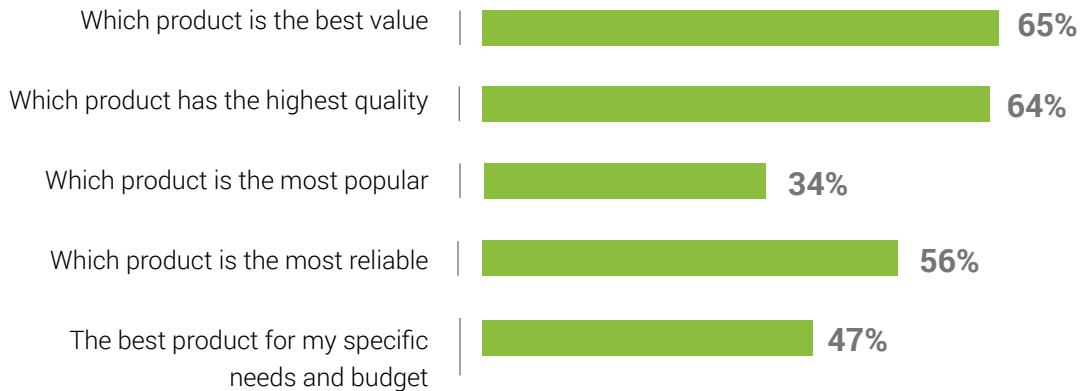
For shoppers, this seems like a simple, necessary, move based on evolving customer service expectations. After all, consumers value their time and expect retailers to understand this, but this is not always the case. However, achieving real-time collaboration at the sales-floor level is more difficult than it sounds. Apple is setting the stage and smart retailers will follow suit.

Retailers have to adapt to this changing market and take after this Apple business model to better leverage customer data and prioritize the customer experience. Making this change will require the right tools, which allow for the combination of big data, mobile technology and a cohesive effort among sales teams.



## Power of In-Store Service (cont.)

**Figure 3.** When being helped by an associate, I expect them to know:



Connecting customers with sales associates that have exactly the right knowledge and expertise to help them is just the beginning, the store then has to provide great in-store service and then follow up with the customer if needed.

According to the TimeTrade survey, consumers leave more satisfied after being helped by a knowledgeable associate and 91% are more likely to shop at that store in the future.

Respondents also report that if a product is the exact same price at four different retailers, more than 63% of consumers will decide where to buy based on the overall in-store experience they have with a retailer. And, even in this fast paced world, half of respondents value smart recommendations over fast service (50%).

Survey respondents also expect sales associates to provide valuable insights and recommendations based on product value and quality, more than popularity and reliability. Nearly two-thirds of respondents expect that sales associates can recommend which product has the best value and which has the highest quality (65%, 64%, respectively) (**Figure 3**). And, more than half of respondents (56%) expect them to know which product is most reliable.

Contrary to popular belief, the large majority of consumers expect to get the same experience whether they are shopping at a high end or typical department store.

## Power of In-Store Service (cont.)

Either way, consumers are much more concerned with the value of the in-store experience, seek superior customer service and equate this with overall customer satisfaction. Sixty-four percent of survey respondents indicate that if they receive help from a knowledgeable sales associate that recommends items that they need or want based on what the associate knows about them, they will leave the store much more satisfied (**Figure 4**). This proves that personalization is highly valued by today's customer.

**Figure 4.** *If a knowledgeable sales associate recommends items you may need or want based on what they know about you, what kind of impact would that have on your shopping experience?*

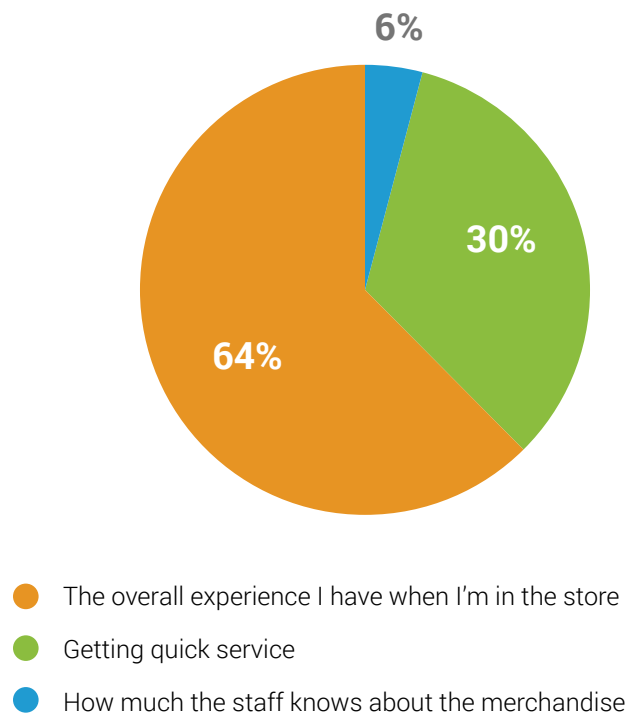


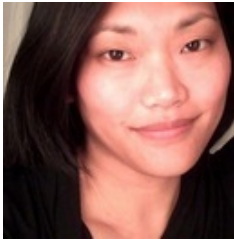
36% say it  
wouldn't make  
a difference

Responses from the TimeTrade survey also reveal that:

- What 50% of consumers value most in a sales associate while shopping is smart recommendations
- If an item is the exact same price at four different retailers, 64% of consumers will decide where to shop based on the overall customer experience they have in the store
- If an item is the exact same price at four different retailers, 64% of consumers will decide where to shop based on the overall customer experience they have in the store (**Figure 5**)

**Figure 5.** *If an item is the exact same price as four different retailers, how will you decide where to shop?*





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Sarah currently works as the Content Marketing Manager for TimeTrade. Wallace previously served as an Analyst for the telecom industry covering topics such as Next Gen Customer Experience, Big Data Analytics, Omni-channel, Social CRM and OSS/BSS.



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