

# RETHINKING EFFICIENCY IN RETAIL

Solution Brief

Efficiency has always been the name of the game for retailers. What's changed, however, is how retailers stay on track to meet increasingly challenging deliverables amidst labor shortages.

Being efficient now demands a more sophisticated approach to the retail environment, where people, processes and technology come together intuitively. It requires a nimble approach – the ability to think and understand quickly, making agile movements in a simple manner.

But what does this look like in practice? As the industry experiences colossal growth and becomes even more fast-paced, the only way to maintain momentum is to consider all the moving parts at once.

## POWERING NON-STOP PRODUCTIVITY

Retailers can't afford to silo innovation. What's needed now is a connected chain of reliable hardware and software that reacts efficiently, while feeding into a wider scope of what's possible.

Beyond just an output of efficiency alone, the key here is enabling retail to unlock the *how* – the means to monitor and measure how to become more efficient. For example,

analytics and real-time visibility can pinpoint new areas for improvements where businesses may lack visibility and put a stop to problems arising in the first place, whether that's downtime caused by failed devices, poor inventory management or inefficient communications.

Innovative tools used across multiple stores can only offer limited value without the ability to see where the devices are at any given time, how they're being used by associates and how they drive efficiencies. Combining hardware with a software platform, however, can unlock visibility into the entire device fleet. In doing so, retailers become empowered with the ability to maximize efficiencies.

For instance, data gathered from device-enabled associates can also be analyzed in real-time to assess whether workflows have been interrupted. If associates are set back by a device issue, IT teams can support them remotely to eliminate time wasted from being without essential tools.

## Efficiency

demands a sophisticated approach where people, processes and technology come together

## The Key

is enabling retailers the means to monitor and measure how to become more efficient

## Empower

with the ability to combine hardware with a software platform to maximize efficiency

## Solutions

need to combine analytics and real-time tactics to be designed to interact intuitively within and across different environments for consistency and improving efficiency levels

**Honeywell**

## CREATING A CONSTANT LOOP OF INSIGHTS

Feeding data back into operations combats very real and physical efficiency issues across the retail chain and empowers businesses to keep refining the way they work. A practical way that digital tools can offer the answer to physical problems includes their use in tackling high product returns rates.

By feeding information back into the system, retailers can utilize returns data to improve the manufacturing process from the very beginning. When combining this data with customer insights and trends, retailers can better understand what customers want, reshaping their operations to reduce losses on unnecessary product manufacturing.

RFID technology is also gaining traction for its ability to enhance visibility of stock across supply chains and ensure that the right stock is in the right place at the right time, thereby accelerating efficiencies in the purchase journey. Beyond facilitating the continuing popularity of click-and-collect orders, the data garnered can be used to enhance retailers' management of returns. The technology makes it easier to get items back into the supply chain quickly and makes it simpler to resell them at full price before they risk becoming irrelevant old stock or subject to "out of season" markdowns.

## DRIVING INTUITIVE INTERACTIONS

Both analytics and real-time visibility offer key tactics for maintaining a consistent and constantly improving level of efficiency, especially when harmonized with the right hardware. However, these solutions

need to be designed to interact intuitively within specific environments and across different roles. A one-size-fits-all approach will never fuel the greatest rewards for efficiency, and so tools need to respond to specific environments effectively.

Take the warehouse worker, for instance. They need durable, rugged devices that can withstand drops, yet are ergonomic enough to be used comfortably throughout a shift. No two warehouses or workforces are exactly the same, so solutions need to be highly configurable. In this scenario, the interplay of hardware and software in voice guided work is arguably one of the most efficient ways to minimize friction in workflows.

Associates can complete multiple different tasks productively, accurately, and profitably in an eyes-up, hands-free manner, while benefiting from software that integrates with a familiar platform. Yet what makes this approach future-ready is its responsive capabilities. Through voice-guided technology, data is continuously communicated back to the host system, so that warehouse managers have a clear view of what's happening, and tasks are prioritized efficiently and automatically. Whether it's for picking, performing routine maintenance tasks or banishing bottlenecks, workers have what they need to perform across the warehouse. Once a task is completed, their next move is then automatically triggered and guided thoroughly to avoid costly errors.

As increasing eCommerce volumes, speeds and complexities become a danger to efficiency, these intuitive interactions are a powerful way to simplify processes and help retailers stay in control.

## EFFICIENCY IS NEVER "FINISHED"

Looking deeper than innovation itself as the answer to efficiency, retail businesses need to think about it in a multi-faceted manner. Success depends on leveraging both hardware and software within an environment of changing customer priorities and emerging technologies to meet the ultimate goal of staying competitive. Reframing efficiency as something that never sits still and can always be improved will empower the industry to stay ahead of the game.



### For more information

[sps.honeywell.com](https://sps.honeywell.com)

### Honeywell Safety and Productivity Solutions

855 South Mint Street  
Charlotte, NC 28202  
800-582-4263  
[www.honeywell.com](https://www.honeywell.com)

HW-SB-Retail Efficiency-EN-LTR | Rev02 | 03/22  
© 2022 Honeywell International Inc.

THE  
FUTURE  
IS  
WHAT  
WE  
MAKE IT

**Honeywell**