

By Eric White, Director of Retail Strategy, [Wren Solutions](#)



Customer delight and customer misery have very different influences on company stock performance, as pointed out by Jon Picoult, Founder of Watermark Consulting. In his recently published blog post called [Yes, Virginia, There Is A Return On Customer Experience Investments](#), Picoult looked at the stock performance of companies based on how well they did in Forrester's Customer Experience Index (CxPi) and found that customer experience leaders outperform customer experience laggards in the stock market.

While many retailers rely on workforce, store optimization and brand-relevant shopping experiences to deliver their best customer service, it's worth considering how **video surveillance** can play a role in **impacting customer satisfaction.**

Given retail's broad adoption of surveillance video, most are well-positioned to double the impact of their investments.

For example, video can be used not only to monitor what is happening in and around the store from an operational standpoint, but also **how customers shop, car and foot traffic patterns, merchandising opportunities, and product replenishment needs.**

Thanks to network video, oversight of operations can take place at the store-level or at the corporate level. By making it easy for corporate headquarters to verify stores are consistently meeting expected standards, as well as share video across an organization, network video can take retailers beyond a loss prevention mindset and deliver new analytical capabilities and collaboration opportunities for improving operations that result in happier, more satisfied customers.

Is the shopping environment clean, pleasant and safe?

First and foremost, retailers should ensure they are operating clean, safe environments. What customer wouldn't be frustrated with impassable aisles or hard-to-reach products? With video, interior and exterior areas of a store can be monitored to keep managers and employees aware of problems they may not have visibility to at a moment's notice.

Things to monitor for “shopability” and esthetics include:

- Activities, including the safety of the parking lot or near the entrance of the store;
- Abandoned shopping carts littering the parking lot and blocking high-value parking spaces;
- Customers having difficulty reaching or locating items;
- Aisles and check-out areas to ensure customers can move quickly and freely within the store;
- Theft deterrent strategies on products that could impact a customer's experience negatively;
- Food preparation, handling and placement;
- Fixtures, product packaging, procedures and technologies that may be interfering with the shopping or check-out experience;
- Employee activity to ensure customers are being properly processed and correct procedures are being followed; and
- Employee productivity to identify trends or spot training opportunities.

Merchandising: Getting Customers What They Need

Forward-thinking retailers are using video in their high-end and fast-moving merchandising departments as a tool to prevent customer frustration, boost sales, conversion rates, and reduce the need for associate intervention. With video, Store Planning and Merchandising can evaluate in-store activities and customer traffic patterns to determine:

- Low stock or out-of stock problems;
- Length of time customers spend in a department or looking at displays;
- Peak traffic times and general traffic patterns within the store;
- How to maximize adjacencies and display materials;
- Level of customer interaction with displays positioned in impact areas;
- Which items need more marketing support;
- How long customers are waiting in line to pay; and
- Needs for the replenishment of product on shelves.

From queue management, customer flow, staff allocation and marketing analytics, video is a strong mechanism for widening retailers' views and alerting them to areas that need customer service enhancements. The ultimate result is happier, more satisfied customers.

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Putting Surveillance Video To Work To Monitor Customer Satisfaction

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