



Strengthen the Supply Chain with Real-Time Vendor Analytics

Sharing integrated, cross-channel data in real time is critical to managing supply and demand in a rapidly evolving retail world



Reshaping today's retail landscape

Gone are the days of supply chains designed for a single-channel world. In today's new normal, managing the retail supply chain is a bit like playing connect-the-dots when the dots are in constant motion; without a real-time view of the big picture, every move is based on guesswork.

Retail vendors today are grappling with this issue as they try to stitch together information from disparate, disconnected data sources in order to understand the fluctuations of supply and demand in all sectors of their ecosystem. Digital security barriers, siloed technology, and systemic delays in getting the right information to the right people all prevent any real-time transparency.

At the same time, the number of channels where CPGs can connect with consumers continues to proliferate—even as the boundaries delineating those channels continue to blur. In addition to wholesaling through retail outlets, many vendors are reaching out directly to consumers through online channels like social media and digital advertising.

But they need to accommodate a new level of consumer expectations, such as online ordering with in-store pickup and fully stocked inventory regardless of where they shop. The boom in smartphone shopping, along with the advent of “show-rooming” (where consumers browse in stores but buy online from less-expensive competitors), only underscores the pressures retailers face.

As fallout from the pandemic continues to wreak unprecedented disruptions in the supply chain—nullifying the value of historical modeling to forecast inventory planning—retailers are turning to technology to help them navigate the waters of change and uncertainty in the market.



Source: "2021 Retail and Consumer Goods Analytics Study: Where Do We Go From Here?" RIS News

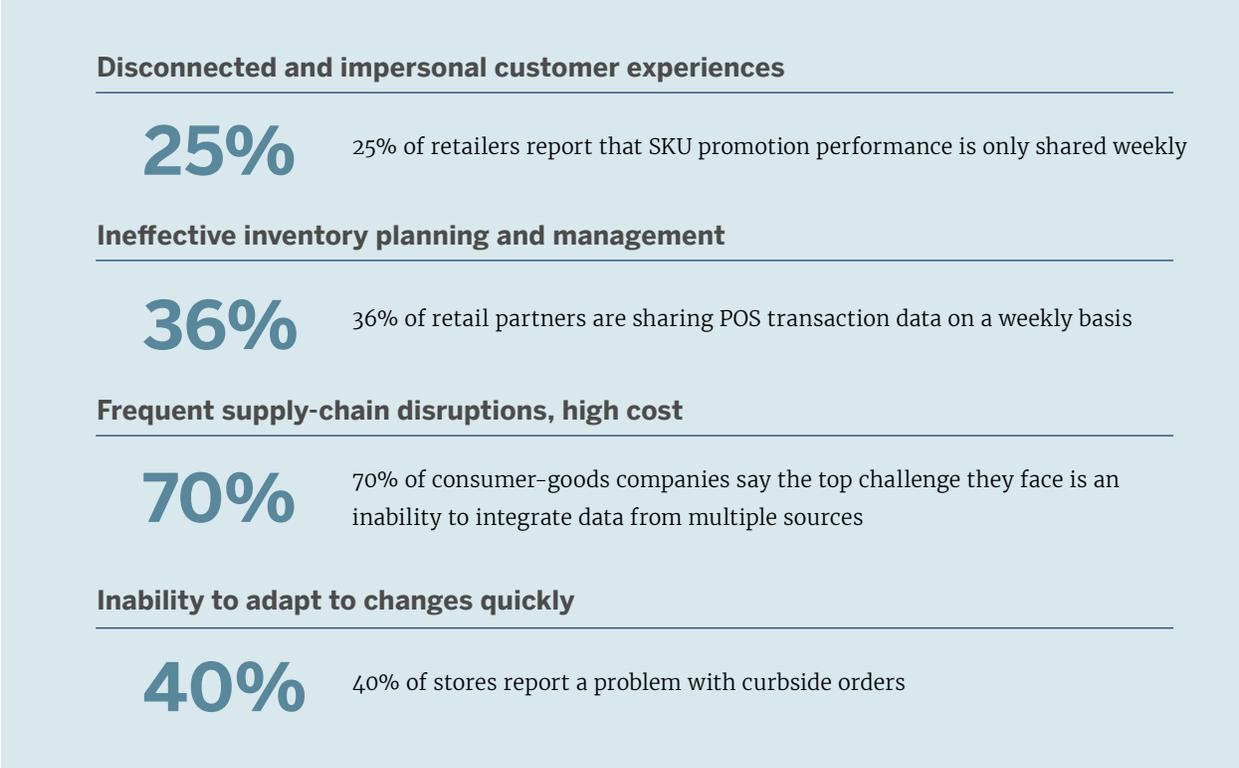
Right data, right people, right time

From ground level in this unsettled new world of retail, critical questions arise: How can vendors get to a single source of truth—a point-of-sale data hub—where they can track individual SKUs across multiple channels, regions, and stores to understand sales and stock levels? How can they trace customers’ interactions with their brand across all channels to gain a 360-degree view and deliver more personalized experiences?

And finally, how can they leverage real-time signals from the market to do a better job of managing their supply chain and inventory distribution, given that historical modeling methods are virtually useless today? Across the board, CPGs are having a hard time finding the answers.

Inventories are greatly reduced so stores—brick-and-mortar and online—can carry their cost of goods sold. Shoppers have disconnected experiences when expectations generated online are not matched in the store. Vendors have little visibility or transparency across channels and lack an understanding of regional demands. Today’s rapidly changing retail dynamics challenge vendors to gain an up-to-the-minute, transparent view of the entire supply chain. And the way to accomplish this is by getting the right data to the right people at the right time.

A majority of vendors lack access to integrated, real-time data and analysis capabilities across the retail supply chain, and this has a quantifiable impact:



Source: <https://risnews.com/ris-cgt-analytics-study-2020>



Source: "State of the Connected Customer," Salesforce, 4th edition

The path forward: Data sharing and collaboration in real time

The extraordinary challenges retailers face today call for innovative new solutions. For vendors, this translates to an urgent need for transparent data sharing that provides a real-time, single source of truth across all aspects of the supply chain—from a high-level, aggregate overview to insight into the different retail channels all the way down to individual brand and SKU performance.

When retailers can share with vendors up-to-the-minute information on sales, inventory levels, and stock levels, they provide transparency that enables a new, collaborative dimension to the partnership; vendors can assume a degree of control over the relationship by proactively responding to real-time information from the retailer.

The Retail Intelligence Solution from Tableau provides a tailored, prescriptive, and actionable roadmap to solving the complex challenges retail vendors face today. It's designed from the ground up to empower CPGs with the real-time, granular data they need to manage the supply chain, meet customer expectations, and thrive amid the tumultuous changes rocking the retail market.

Access and analyze from anywhere at scale

Traditionally, data has lived on-premises and been shared through static spreadsheets and PDFs, often via email. It's a time-consuming process that's compounded by the need to curate that data before it's available for analysis. When it's finally in a useful format and available to those who need it, the data is old.

The multi-cloud Retail Intelligence Solution eliminates this process by making data and analytics securely and instantly available—from anywhere to everyone who needs them. The data doesn't come to users (except in the form of subscriptions or data-driven alerts); users come to the data. They can explore vast amounts of real-time data in seconds and analyze billions of rows in minutes without trade-offs in performance.

And they can quickly scale up and down as needed to accommodate periods of peak activity. With real time transaction and POS-level data available on demand, CPGs can make smarter decisions faster.

Moreover, the solution advances real-time collaboration among retail partners by utilizing “clean rooms” to enable rule-based, permissioned sharing of data sets. Vendors can designate which portions of each data set are visible to each company—providing end-to-end visibility into the supply chain while maintaining strong governance and security.



Source: “Catch them if you can: How leaders in data and analytics have pulled ahead,” McKinsey, September 19, 2019

Granular views inspire targeted action

Analyzing and reporting on data is one thing, but understanding it is another. This is where Tableau’s powerful partnership with Salesforce and Snowflake sets the Retail Intelligence Solution apart. The solution offers unmatched scope and seamless integration, with:

- Data-visualization and natural-language processing (NLP) capabilities from Tableau
- AI-augmented analytics from Salesforce
- Snowflake data warehousing
- Secure data sharing and third-party data from the Snowflake Data Marketplace

Case in point: A large retailer with nationwide locations had difficulty stocking the right products in the right stores; one location might sell out of a product completely while a store in another region had a surplus of the same product. The problem stemmed from an inability to aggregate and analyze inventory data from across all store locations in a way that showed decision makers the dynamics specific to each region.

Leveraging the Retail Intelligence Solution, the retailer was able to:

- Understand aggregated quarterly performance for a given region
- Drill into a single location falling short of corporate targets
- Identify an inventory issue in the largest revenue-generating department for this location
- Take corrective action by reassigning inventory from neighboring locations

By analyzing historical inventory data to trace patterns of customer behavior, the retailer could use forecasting analytics to provide direction on how to best provision individual locations going forward. This new clarity helped the organization better understand all of its customers and plan accordingly.



Source: "Meeting Adversity with Data," Retail and Consumer Goods Analytics Study 2020

Transparency across the supply chain

In today's new normal, every strategic advantage counts. By making up-to-the-minute, visually understandable data immediately available to everyone who needs it—from vendors to retail executives and managers to front-line store associates—the Tableau Retail Intelligence Solution provides real-time transparency across the retail supply chain.

Operations become coordinated and streamlined when everyone is working from the same up-to-date data. Profits rise when intelligence informs every decision. And retailers deliver exceptional customer experiences when they understand those customers deeply on every level.

The current market disruptions affect everyone in the retail space, but retailers that empower their vendors with real-time analytics can seize the opportunity to improve supply-chain performance from end to end.

Dive deeper into data-driven solutions for retail operations.

Additional resources

[Learn more about the Retail Intelligence Solution](#)

[Snowflake for Retail](#)

[Salesforce Retail Solutions](#)

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About



As the business intelligence platform for more than 90% of Fortune 500 financial services companies, Tableau is the proven solution for organizations that are focused on leading with data. Tableau provides a complete, integrated analytics platform that enables teams to work collaboratively and gain deep insights from their data using machine learning, statistics, natural language, and smart data prep. With enablement resources, including training, certifications, and Tableau Blueprint, not to mention inspiration and support from the passionate Tableau Community, organizations who choose Tableau can be confident their deployment will be a success and lead them to data-driven culture.



Snowflake delivers the Data Cloud—a global network where thousands of organizations mobilize data with near-unlimited scale, concurrency, and performance. Inside the Data Cloud, organizations unite their siloed data, easily discover and securely share governed data, and execute diverse analytic workloads. Wherever data or users live, Snowflake delivers a single and seamless experience across multiple public clouds. Snowflake's platform is the engine that powers and provides access to the Data Cloud, creating a solution for data warehousing, data lakes, data engineering, data science, data application development, and data sharing. Join Snowflake customers, partners, and data providers already taking their businesses to new frontiers in the Data Cloud. [Snowflake.com](https://www.snowflake.com).



Salesforce is the world's #1 CRM platform—integrating every part of a company's interactions with customers including marketing, sales, service, commerce, HR, and much more. As part of the Salesforce family, Tableau is designed to connect seamlessly with products across the Customer 360 platform. This allows you to use Tableau to blend Salesforce data from any cloud with your other business data for a complete view of your customers. Put customers at the center of everything you do, and deliver the connected experiences they expect.