

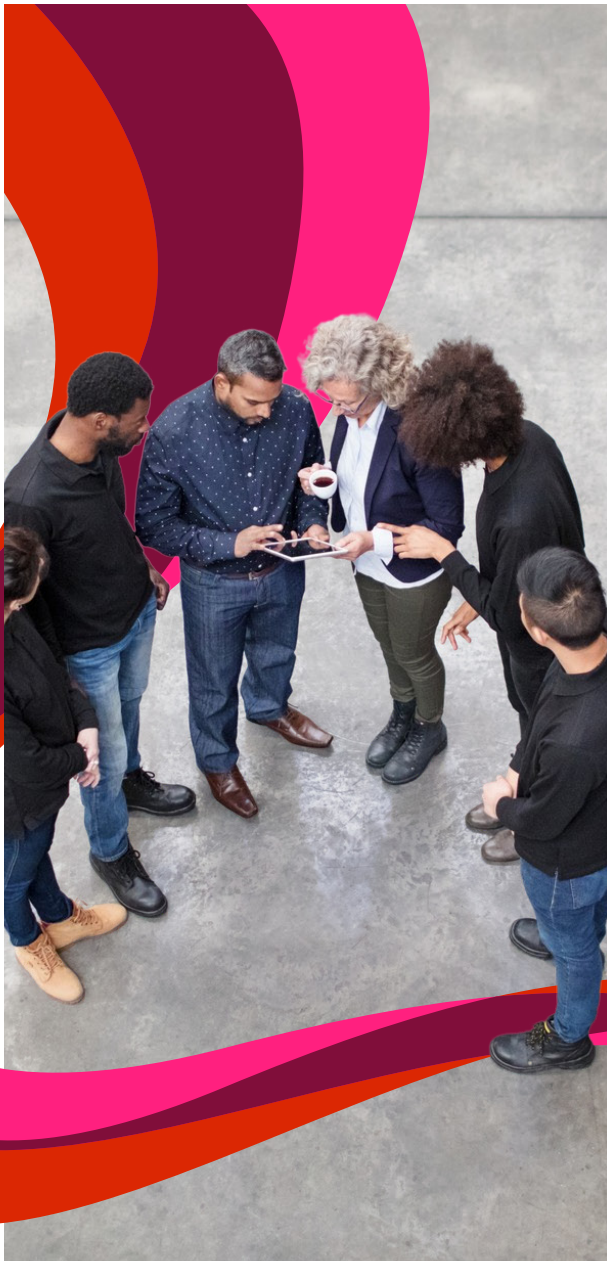
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The New Retail Technology Roadmap

A playbook for getting things
right the first time around



The new retail technology roadmap starts with store team enablement.



We created Zipline eight years ago after experiencing the pain of trying to improve store execution at a Fortune 100 retailer. We knew there were thousands of store operations professionals that would welcome a platform that brought together targeted communication and task management to improve the way stores received and acted on information.

However, what we didn't anticipate was that we would be competing with POS vendors, AI innovators and robotic software.

Of course we don't really compete with these vendors. But, one of the most common reasons why our deals stall is because ops teams feel like they have too much on their plate to take on another project.

We get it. Most of us come from retail. We know first-hand how much work you have on your plate every single day.

But, we also have the advantage of being able to look under the hood of our customers' Zipline instances and see the amount of work that is being funneled through a single channel - - Zipline. And, we can definitely tell you that taking on this project won't slow you down. It will speed you up and drive 90+% execution.

**Can taking on yet another project actually take work off your plate?
Yes - if it's the right project.**

What could you accomplish if you had confidence that your fleet would understand and execute to brand standards the first time around?

If stores consistently executed HQ's requests, store audits wouldn't exist.

But store audits do exist. And there are a lot of them. Checking up on everything from product displays to fire extinguisher placement is a huge (albeit unfortunate) part of running and managing a retail fleet.

So, why don't store teams actually do what they're told to do the first time around? It's not for lack of trying.

The reality is that stores aren't given the right information at the right time in an easy to digest way. They're swimming in communications: some apply, some don't. Some are urgent, some aren't. It's difficult to prioritize, and labor hours are tight - So stores do what they're able to, which is typically 30% of what HQ asks.

Zipline ensures that communications are sent in a streamlined and targeted way, with clearly defined tasks that show exactly "what good looks like." There's no ambiguity around who does what or what the expectations are. Zipline also helps brands establish a single source of truth, so the latest information is always available in an easily accessible way, without having to scroll through old emails or hunt through an outdated intranet.

The result? Things get done right the first time on time. In fact, across all our customers, next-day store execution is above 90%.

Can you afford to roll out a new initiative in stores without really knowing what your customers are say? Or how your pilot tests are going?

Stores are the best barometer of customer sentiment. Frontline employees are the first to see how customers react to new products and the first to hear what they're asking for. They know what's resonating (and what's not) better than any marketer or merchant at HQ. They also know what's working in stores and what's not working better than any IT or operations lead. (Let's face it: no mock store can come close to the real deal in the field.)

So: before you invest heavily in that AI-powered fitting room technology you're piloting, for example, take time to find out what customers really think.

Many brands have informal ways for employees to share feedback with leaders - occasional surveys, virtual suggestion boxes, and sporadic "ask me anything" Zoom calls. But too often these methods don't extend to all store employees, or capture data that's siloed in one department. Unless store feedback is truly operationalized, it's not going to provide any strategic business value.

Zipline makes it easy to capture ideas and feedback from the field on an ongoing basis and immediately funnel those ideas to the right people. Without input from those closest to customers, HQ is at risk of missing new trends or investing in the wrong initiatives.





How much more quickly would you be able to implement new technology if you could align your stakeholders in half the time?

Chances are your brand is in the middle of a digital transformation. And, guess what! *So is everybody else.*

With huge departments now dedicated to IT, almost all large retailers are in the midst of implementing and rolling out new technology upgrades. From POS upgrades to AI-powered inventory trackers to speedy pick-and-pack, these last few years have markedly accelerated the pace of retailers' digital strategies. The companies that succeed the fastest are the ones that will come away with more market share and profitable growth.

Why, then, do most retailers still struggle with technology rollouts? Why do they still rely on project managers, lengthy team conference calls, store visits, and other outdated methods to ensure successful implementations?

Zipline dramatically improves the speed and success of technology rollouts by ensuring that everyone - both in the field and at HQ - is aware of the initiative, aligned as to why it's a priority, and knows their role in the process. Zipline can drive accountability and provide a portal into training, even tracking the progress of completion in real-time.

How much more smoothly would your implementations go if you knew every employee had your brand's best interest at heart?

In today's tight labor market, attracting top talent is on every retailer's list of priorities. But what if you didn't have to hire new store employees in order to elevate the level of expertise in your business?

What if every employee you've already hired simply gave 10, 20, or 30% more?

Motivating stores at scale is possible. When employees understand how the work they do impacts the goals of their company, they feel empowered and contribute more to their day-to-day job.

Effective retail leaders give meaning to the work that individuals do for the company.

So, a store greeter isn't just saying hello. Rather, he's a brand ambassador that knows that when customers are greeted within seconds of entering the store, they're more likely to buy.

By modernizing communications and investing in technology that brings together communications and task management, retailers can help employees feel connected to the brand. Employees see how their workload is part of a bigger picture, and how their tasks are critical to the vision of the brand. They make it easy to provide the information people need to make good decisions and help them understand how those decisions affect the overall vision of the organization. As a result, employees feel motivated, knowing that their work has impacts and stay with the company longer.

**What if you could rely on your stores to execute amidst turbulent leadership changes?
How much more quickly would your initiatives come to life?**

Over the last couple of months, the press has been full of news about changes in the C-Suite at big retailers. Companies like Gap, Bed Bath & Beyond, and Under Armour are just three of many that have lost long-standing CEOs recently. In fact, according to business coaching firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc, CEO departures are up almost 25% over last year.

Why now? According to Sucharita Kodali, VP and principal analyst at Forrester, "...they were probably struggling before the pandemic. Those issues would have come out in 2020 or 2021 if not for the pandemic. And they're coming out now." The effect on employees can be extreme. Employees can worry about their roles and the fate of the company. They might proactively begin looking for new jobs (and we all know the challenges of hiring today.)



Regular communication to employees in the field during tumultuous leadership turnover alleviates feelings of doubt and fear that "the ship is going down." Zipline allows leaders to communicate with employees in the field in a variety of ways - from personalized messages to broadcast videos.

What if you could accomplish all this and more without doing all the heavy lifting?

When you partner with Zipline, you get much more than a SaaS platform. We work with you to understand your organization and your hierarchy to ensure that you can reach the right employee with the right communication. We can integrate with the systems you're using today to provide a one-stop-shop of everything a store team needs to know and do, whether it's training, etc etc

If you would like to chat about accelerating your digital transformation, please contact us. We would love to chat.

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