

Retail Systems awards 2017

THE WINNERS

19 October 2017

London Marriott Hotel, Grosvenor Square

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Retail Systems awards 2017

WELCOME



Michelle Stevens
Editor, Retail Systems

Retail is one of the industries which has been most affected by rapid technology advancements and changes in consumer behaviour; but is also one which has embraced this trend. Whether it be in-store, in-app, in-home or online, consumers have never had more choice in the way that they can research or purchase products.

Retailers can now engage their customers through a number of different channels and social media networks, as well as use technology to drive recommendation capabilities and personalised user experiences. They can also offer them a multitude of ways to pay – and UK consumers are continuing to adopt contactless and mobile payments, with biometric features now coming to the fore.

The past 12 months has also seen an acceleration in developments around the Internet of Things, and the use of virtual and augmented reality in the shopping journey.

On the delivery side, the increasing popularity of Click and Collect shows no sign of slowing, one-hour delivery options are now being offered, plus drones and self-driving robots continue to be piloted.

But along with the burgeoning opportunities also come the challenges of deploying seamless, large-scale technology roll-outs, making sense of the huge volume of data now available, and of course, keeping that data safe and secure. And retailers are rising to the challenge of analysing the rich data at their fingertips, to provide that ever valuable single view of the customer, as well as gain a holistic view of their supply chain, fulfilment and stock operations.

Such a dynamic time in the industry has been reflected in a record number of entries to this year's Retail Systems Awards, so thank you to our panel of judges (see page 7), who undertook the difficult task of deciding the victors from another exceptional field. In this review you will find a round-up of all the category winners, plus highlights of the submission from Red Ant and Sofology (on page 8), which was crowned the Overall Winner at the 2017 awards.



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THE WINNERS

Now in their twelfth year, the Retail Systems Awards continue to recognise technology excellence and innovation across the retail sector. This year's event saw industry figures gather at a gala dinner and trophy presentation ceremony held at the London Marriott Hotel, Grosvenor Square on 19 October.

Guests were greeted with a lively champagne reception, followed by a welcome speech by Michelle Stevens, Editor of Retail Systems and Chair of the 2017 judging panel. The awards were then hosted by comedian Alun Cochrane, who entertained the sell-out audience with a stand-up set before handing out the trophies to the night's winning companies...

In-store Innovation of the Year

The first award of the evening recognised the use of technology to engage in-store customers across different channels. Red Ant and Sofology took the win in this category with the roll-out of a clienteling and assisted sales application for Sofology store employees, which was also designed to provide a seamless omnichannel shopping experience for customers. Read more on page 8.

Payments Partnership of the Year

This category saw the first high commendation of the night, which went to Yoyo and Caffé Nero for a mobile app that is enhancing the payments and loyalty experience for the coffee chain's customers in the UK and Ireland. But the trophy went to Klarna and Arcadia, for a partnership that is bringing a new consumer financing service to the fashion group's online shoppers, including Klarna's 'buy now pay later' offering.

Retail Charity Partnership of the Year

A new category for 2017, the gong went to Doodle and Cancer Research UK for the country's first charity Click and Collect partnership. The collaboration is increasing the number of Click and Collect points available to consumers by placing Doodle concessions in Cancer Research UK stores, which is also helping to drive footfall and boost revenue for the charity.

Technology Project of the Year

A high commendation was awarded to Greenlight Commerce and BHS here, for bringing BHS back online by delivering the brand's new website in an impressive timeframe of just eight weeks. The winner, however, was a technology project that has delivered notable results around supply chain visibility and forecasting. The award went to RELEX Solutions and Granngård, for implementing a new ERP system which has helped the Swedish retailer increase sales and stock availability.



In-store Innovation of the Year



Payments Partnership of the Year



Retail Charity Partnership of the Year



Technology Project of the Year



Online Retailer of the Year



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Delivery Initiative of the Year



In-store Technology of the Year



Mobile Solution of the Year



Online Solution of the Year



Mobile Technology Vendor of the Year

Online Retailer of the Year

eSpares picked up the title of Online Retailer of the Year at the 2017 awards. The company was recognised by the judging panel for not only focusing on optimising its website for both employees and customers, but also for joining up its social media and email marketing approach, as well as boosting its customer service offering.

Delivery Initiative of the Year

On the dot was the victor in this year's delivery category. The company has been collaborating with retailers and developing its own technology to pioneer one-hour delivery, against a retail backdrop where online ordering and same-day delivery options are becoming increasingly popular among consumers.

In-store Technology of the Year

For this win, the panel recognised a cloud-based point of sale system that also integrates inventory management and reporting. The trophy went to Vend, for its flexible in-store technology that is helping independent retailers optimise their business decisions and better serve their customers.

Mobile Solution of the Year

This impressive mobile app won over the judges by demonstrating how it is allowing the large customer base of one of the UK's major High Street retailers to manage their store card accounts on-the-go. Apadmi scooped the gong here for its work with Argos Financial Services on digitising Argos Card account management for customers.

Online Solution of the Year

Increasingly took the plaudits in this category for its use of artificial intelligence to automate product bundling for online retail. The firm's technology is aiming to assist retailers grow bigger baskets through cross-selling and create strong customer loyalty through personalised recommendations.

Mobile Technology Vendor of the Year

Poq walked away with this trophy for creating a platform on which leading retailers are building their mobile apps and boosting their app commerce revenues, capitalising on the growth of smartphone-generated sales in the UK retail sector.

Online Technology Vendor of the Year

Consolidating a successful evening for the company, 2017's Online Technology Vendor of the Year was Klarna. The firm was recognised for enabling retailers to

offer new 'try before you buy' and 'pay later' options to their online customers, through Klarna's easy checkout interface and flexible consumer finance service.

Multi-channel Technology Vendor of the Year

Volo Commerce received a high commendation here for its scalable, multi-channel commerce platform. But RELEX Solutions was victorious this year, for providing systems that are being used by retailers to improve stock management and data analysis across multiple channels.

Startup Company of the Year

This winning startup impressed the judges with its innovation designed to reconnect shoppers with bricks and mortar stores in their area. NearSt took the plaudits in this category, with its new app that is allowing consumers to browse, order and collect the stock available in their local High Street stores.

Most Disruptive Retail Technology

This accolade was awarded to a company whose technology has the potential to be a real-game changer in the industry. This year's recipient was Curalate, which is making user generated content across the web shoppable, increasing customer engagement and boosting sales for retailers such as Dune London.

Best Engagement & Loyalty Scheme in the Hospitality and Leisure Sector

For a scheme which is continuing to evolve and offer its customers industry-first benefits, the winner in this category was Hilton. The hotel chain's customer loyalty programme, Hilton Honors, has more than 63 million members globally, and is the first to allow members to combine points and money for stays, as well as let family and friends pool their points.

Best Engagement & Loyalty Scheme in the Retail Sector

The judges felt this project really went the extra mile in order to understand its customer base and develop a mobile loyalty app. The trophy went to Omnicco Group and Coop Denmark for a scheme that saw the retailer's staff spend time living with different families to effectively gauge their needs and build a compelling digital loyalty offering.

Most Disruptive Engagement & Loyalty Technology

The panel's vote went to a firm that is using a vast technology network to engage customers through gamification at high-traffic retail locations. Ksubaka took this prize after running successful campaigns for several high profile brands in the Asia-Pacific region, which saw consumers engaged through more than 7,000 media screens that combine gaming, advertising and retail.



Online Technology Vendor of the Year



Multi-channel Technology Vendor of the Year



Startup Company of the Year



Most Disruptive Retail Technology



Best Engagement & Loyalty Scheme in the Hospitality and Leisure Sector



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Retail Systems awards 2017



Best Engagement & Loyalty Scheme in the Retail Sector



Most Disruptive Engagement & Loyalty Technology



Best Use of Marketing and Engagement Technology



Employee Engagement Project of the Year



Retail Partnership of the Year (In-store)

Best Use of Marketing and Engagement Technology

A high commendation in this category went to Urban Airship and The Cleveland Cavaliers for the use of mobile marketing technology to engage with millions of fans at a personal level. But the trophy was awarded to Intilery and Sofology for a successful campaign that has been engaging and retargeting the sofa retailer's customers across multiple channels.

Employee Engagement Project of the Year

In this category, the judges gave the nod to EE and NICE for a large-scale transformation project that has improved EE's operations by building on employee feedback. The three-year initiative, established after the mobile operator brought together the Orange and T-Mobile brands in the UK, led to huge increases in the company's employee Net Promoter Score.

Retail Partnership of the Year (In-store)

A high commendation was awarded here, this time to KVH Media Group and Asda. Their long-standing radio partnership is continuing to evolve by making engaging audio content more localised at store level. But Ecrebo and Waitrose took home the trophy for the deployment of an in-store 'message at till' solution which is targeting customers with personalised offers and coupons at the point of sale, printed alongside their till receipt.

Retail Partnership of the Year (Online)

In another hotly contested category, Rich Relevance and Shop Direct picked up a high commendation for building a robust personalisation solution that caters for the mobile-first customer. But for a partnership that has seen the successful roll-out and expansion of an intelligent recommendation engine for online customers, the winners on the night were 15gifts and 02.

Outstanding Individual Achievement

This year's winner has established and grown a company that has succeeded in raising funds, attracting retail clients and developing new technology for the retail industry. The recipient of 2017's Outstanding Individual Achievement award was Imogen Wethered, the CEO and Co-founder of Qudini, a firm whose cloud-based platform allows brands with physical stores to digitally manage their queues.

Overall Winner

The entries for the 2017 Retail Systems Awards were outstanding, so it was a hard task for the judges to select just one from all the category winners. But they opted for a project involving in-store technology for employees that is also driving a cross-channel experience for consumers, crowning Red Ant and Sofology this year's Overall Winner.

THE JUDGES

- **Gerald Dawson**
Finance Director
Forthglade
- **Claire Joel**
Head of IT
French Connection Group
- **Sharon Peters**
Head of IT Business Solutions – Food Programmes
Marks and Spencer
- **Nadine Sharara**
Customer Director
Hobbs
- **Michelle Stevens**
Editor
Retail Systems
- **Professor Merlin Stone**
Managing Director
Merlin Stone Ltd
- **Ben Tyson**
Managing Director
Born Social



Retail Partnership of the Year (Online)



Outstanding Individual Achievement



Overall Winner

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WINNER'S PROFILE

**red
ant**

IN-STORE INNOVATION OF THE YEAR & OVERALL WINNER Red Ant and Sofology

Red Ant and Sofology took home the trophies for both In-store Innovation of the Year and Overall Winner at the Retail Systems Awards 2017. The duo won for a clienteling and assisted sales application, which was designed for Sofology store employees to provide a completely seamless shopping experience for customers – removing the boundaries between the online and offline worlds.

The two companies sought to roll-out a solution which was able to deliver a personalised and joined-up experience for omnichannel shoppers, with support tailored specifically to each customer's preferences. Shopfloor staff ('Sofologists') are now better informed through access to a full range of product information and customer 'wishlists', and the technology has helped to boost sales, engagement and loyalty among Sofology customers.

The app gives Sofologists everything they need to know at their fingertips. It provides instant access to the full endless aisle of over 200,000 product combinations, as well as enabling clienteling through detailed customer profiles, browsing history and product preferences tracked over multiple store and online visits. Designed to be customer-facing, the app builds customer trust and enables a truly omnichannel checkout – not only can customers complete their purchase anywhere in the store, they

can also take their basket away with them and checkout from the comfort of their own home for a completely seamless experience.

Sofologists moving from the existing legacy system to the new Red Ant platform have found it easy to use, efficient and intuitive, while in-store conversion rates are up and there has been a particular rise in the number of 'complete at home' purchases. Customer feedback from the roll-out has also been extremely positive, with users reporting that they immediately feel comfortable and familiar with the way in which the app works.

The Retail Systems Awards judging panel was extremely impressed with the Red Ant and Sofology initiative, stating: "This is a very slick use of an app



to deepen customer engagement and improve customer experience, as well as address the difficult problem of connecting the offline and online customer journey."

Dan Mortimer, CEO at Red Ant, said: "Sofology is committed to putting technology innovation at the forefront of its in-store strategy, enabling Red Ant to support the transformation of the in-store experience. We're delighted with the remarkable results and with receiving such tremendous industry recognition – Sofology is a terrific partner with a real vision for a connected future."



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