# Retailers plan to increase AI investment to enhance operations



In a significant development for the retail sector, Honeywell has announced the results of its AI in Retail Survey, which reveals that over 80% of retailers intend to ramp up their use of artificial intelligence (AI) and automation in their operations. This move is a response to the evolving behaviours of consumers and aims to enhance operational efficiencies, upskill employees, and improve overall job satisfaction. The findings from the survey, conducted by Honeywell in collaboration with Wakefield Research, were released on January 9, 2025.

The survey indicates that 35% of major retailers are planning to make substantial investments in AI this year. This investment targets critical operational challenges faced by retailers, particularly in the fast-paced and increasingly complex omni-channel environment. Key focal points for these businesses include enhancing return management processes, automating customer service, and ensuring continuous product availability.

David Barker, president of Honeywell Productivity Solutions and Services, commented on the transformative effects of AI within the retail sector. He stated, "We are truly in the midst of a new era for the retail sector where evolving AI capabilities will make a positive impact on the shopper's journey, the employee experience and the retailer's supply chain operation." Retailers are on a trajectory towards more autonomous operations, seeking AI and automation solutions that not only provide actionable analytics but also support the professional development of their workforce.

Quantitative insights from the survey suggest that AI's role is expanding to foster a more engaged and skilled employee base. Notably, 52% of retail leaders believe that AI tools can facilitate quicker career advancement for employees, enhance their soft skills, and add ongoing value to their roles. Moreover, 60% of executives reported that these AI solutions would ease employees' workloads, with 55% noting an increase in job satisfaction as a direct outcome of implementing AI technologies. This trend aligns with the retail sector's intent to boost employee satisfaction, which is increasingly being recognised as a critical component for improving customer experiences.

The customer-facing benefits of AI were also highlighted in the survey. Approximately two-thirds (66%) of consumers reported having employed AI in their shopping experiences, whether through chatbots for inquiries, price comparisons across retailers, or review summaries. The most popular application of AI, as indicated in the findings, was price comparison, with 53% of respondents indicating this as their primary use case. Additionally, 41% mentioned checking product availability, while 34% appreciated a more streamlined checkout process facilitated by AI.

The survey provides a clear picture of the ongoing digital transformation in retail, aiming to respond rapidly to customer needs while enhancing employee capabilities. This development marks a significant trend in the industry, with Honeywell's research underscoring the potential of AI technologies to shape future retail practices and operational frameworks.

For further insights and details on how Honeywell’s solutions are influencing this new retail era, interested individuals can visit Honeywell's dedicated webpage on the subject.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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