

SAP INSIGHT REPORT

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# Retail Reimagined: Driving Simplicity, Innovation & Growth

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# Introduction

The retail sector is undergoing a seismic shift, with evolving customer expectations and market pressures forcing leaders to rethink their business strategies. Future competitiveness hinges not just on agility, but on cultivating a culture of continuous innovation. The question is no longer whether transformation is necessary, but how quickly and efficiently businesses can evolve to meet the growing demands of consumers.

This is retail's imperative and was the strategic context that drove discussions during the recent executive roundtable hosted by SAP, supported by Connect Media. Following the theme of *Driving Simplicity, Innovation & Growth in Retail* the roundtable convened industry leaders to explore how SAP has become a strategic growth partner for businesses when it comes to simplifying operations, driving innovation and accelerating long-term growth for the future.

Conversations were led by Linda Davis, Head of Industry Advisory & Centre of Excellence, SAP with exclusive insights from Felicity McIntosh, Head of Loyalty & CRM, Bapcor Retail.





# Simplifying Complexity Through Automation

For today's retailers, operational complexity represents one of the most significant barriers to growth and agility. The challenge spans multiple fronts, from managing expansive product catalogs and fragmented customer data to overcoming siloed systems that hinder visibility and efficiency. Forward-thinking retailers are demonstrating that these challenges can be transformed into competitive advantages through strategic simplification and intelligent automation.

A compelling example of this can be seen through Bapcor, the automotive retail group that reimaged its customer engagement strategy. The company moved from rudimentary email collection to a sophisticated, yet simple loyalty program powered by SAP Emarsys. Previously reliant on basic email collection, the company now leverages automated, multi-channel engagement to drive repeat purchases and customer retention. By implementing an automated, multi-channel approach built around straightforward spend-and-earn mechanics, Bapcor achieved remarkable results: increased customer retention, higher lifetime value, and stronger purchase frequency, all managed by a lean CRM team.

**“We try to keep it simple. A spend-and-earn points system – but layered with automation across email, web, and mobile. That’s where we see the real growth happening”** Felicity McIntosh shared during the roundtable.

As Bapcor proved, SAP's tools like Emarsys deliver sophistication through simplicity -integrating seamlessly with legacy systems to unlock rapid ROI.



# Agility & Experimentation at Scale

The ability to experiment, learn, and adapt quickly has become a critical differentiator for retailers, yet many businesses remain trapped in 'paralysis by analysis,' waiting for perfect solutions. As the retail landscape continues to shift at an accelerating pace, leaders must embrace a mindset of experimentation if they are to stay on the front foot of change.

Bapcor's loyalty program evolved through trial and error. What began as a conventional points-based system evolved into a sophisticated retention engine through continuous testing.

As Felicity highlighted during the roundtable, **"We've made a lot of mistakes along the way, but we are learning every day. You must start somewhere."**

Businesses do not need perfect solutions from day one. They should start small, measure impact, and scale what works. In an industry where change is the only constant, the most successful retailers will be those who build experimentation into their operating DNA. As seen through Bapcor, the path is not linear. It's a continuous cycle of testing, learning and refining.



## Conclusion

Retail's future belongs to those who operationalise simplicity as a springboard for innovation. Transformation is a continuous journey. By simplifying complexity, businesses can fuel innovation and ultimately drive long-term growth. Leaders must fully embrace a mindset of continuous experimentation if they are to withstand the current pace of change in the future.

Through strategic partnerships with enablers like SAP, retailers can address the age of disruption with agility and efficiency at scale.

As Linda Davis, Head of Industry Advisory & Centre of Excellence, SAP highlighted, **"If you're trying to solve a problem, ask SAP - we've likely already helped others navigate it as well. Let's create your next competitive advantage together."**



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