

# Closing retail's gap between insight and action

Industry research shows how top-performing retail leaders turn agility into profit



Anaplan partnered with Incisiv and World Retail Congress to survey 298 retail executives across North America and EMEA to explore the technology and process investments that separate margin leaders from lost-sale laggards.

A retailer's ability to capture full-price sell-through and higher margin boils down to how quickly and accurately teams can move from insight to action. Our research uncovered a substantial performance gap between top-performing retail leaders and the rest of the industry.

Retail leaders stay closely aligned with market changes. When conditions shift, they adjust quickly. This protects margins from the "latency tax" — retail's most expensive operating cost.

### The latency tax:

The cumulative financial impact of slow decision-making.

**5¢**

It costs organizations around **5¢** of every dollar in revenue.

**2¢**

Top-performing retail leaders have cut this loss to just **2¢**.

**\$30M**

That's a **\$30M** gain for a \$1B retailer.

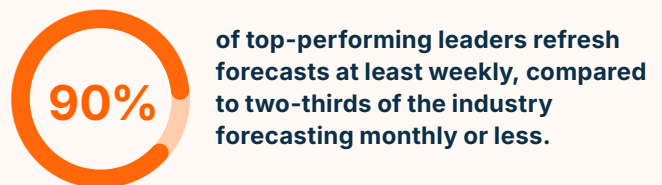
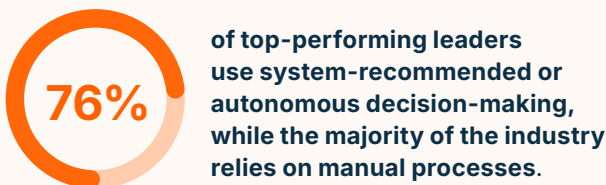
**And the rest of the industry?** Teams are disconnected, systems lag, and insights fizzle before action can be taken.

## What separates the leaders from the laggards?

Leaders augment human decision-making with system-generated insights

Study respondents were segmented by operational maturity, with leaders representing **the top 10% of retailers**. Retail leaders are investing in automation, together with system-assisted decision-making. They don't rely on busy humans to notice and interpret an alert, determine the right course of action, and initiate the correction.

However, this just solves the issue of speed — it doesn't boost accuracy. The ability to make informed, forward-looking decisions also requires frequent forecast updates.



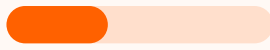
Speed comes from combining human and system-assisted decisions; precision comes from frequently updated forecasts. Value capture requires both working together.



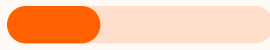
**The opportunity:** Anaplan supports retailers with applications built on industry best practices, advanced forecasting capabilities, and flexible scenario modeling, so every decision remains rooted in precise inputs and proven logic.

## Leaders align cross-functional teams on shared objectives

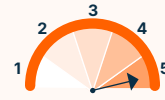
They understand that “what gets measured, gets managed.” Prioritizing shared north star metrics shifts focus from upstream cost minimization to downstream efficiency.



**38%** of leaders cite sell-through rate as the #1 KPI



**35%** of leaders cite lead time optimization as the #1 KPI



**5x** Leaders are more likely to use incentives across merchandise planning, operations, and supply chain teams

Retailers are rethinking what types of decisions they reward — and how that evolves their operating rhythm.



**The opportunity:** Anaplan provides a unified foundation for standardizing KPIs and rooting every decision in one shared source of truth.

## Even leaders have not fully committed to pursuing the AI opportunity

**The survey results are clear:** AI’s potential is not yet being fully realized across the retail industry

**The disconnect:** There’s a **60-point gap** between the organizations that state AI is important and the actual rate of deployment.



**~85%** of organizations state AI is important



**~25%** of organizations have actually deployed AI



**The opportunity:** Anaplan offers retailers an array of AI capabilities, including advanced ML-based predictive analytics, LLM-rooted conversational interfaces, and always-on agentic offerings.

## Unify planning from strategy to sale

Anaplan’s AI-driven scenario planning and analysis platform helps retailers capture full-price sell-through and stronger margins by strengthening the connection between strategy and execution.

**Our integrated application framework empowers retailers to:**



Orchestrate planning across the retail enterprise



Automate alerts and proactively surface risks



Unify teams with one shared data foundation



Model fast “what-if” scenarios



Monitor and shape demand with AI

Download the full research report →

Anaplan is a leading AI-driven scenario planning and analysis platform designed to optimize decision-making in today’s complex business environment so that enterprises can outpace their competition and the market. By building connections and collaboration across organizational silos, our platform intelligently surfaces key insights — so businesses can make the right decisions, right now. More than 2,600 global brands plan with Anaplan. To learn more, visit [www.anaplan.com](http://www.anaplan.com)