

Why IBM?

IBM value proposition

Sales reference guide

IBM value proposition

Overview

IBM is one of the strongest, most recognized vendors in the world — and you should not hesitate to use that equity to your advantage with customers. To help you communicate the value of working with IBM to retailers, you can use the following five key selling points:

- **IBM understands on demand business**

In retail and many other industries, IBM is empowering customers to gain the speed, flexibility and resilience to handle whatever the market does next. We understand how on demand businesses can lower costs, increase revenue and respond quickly to industry pressures. We know how to help companies make the right decisions related to technology, strategy, business practices and corporate culture. And we have shown – through customer engagements in many different markets – how on demand transformations can yield enormous potential rewards in the short- and long-term.

- **IBM delivers advanced technology**

With nearly 37,000 patents worldwide, IBM is the global leader in the ownership of technological intellectual property. IBM Retail Store Solutions has an exclusive opportunity to leverage these innovations in the design of hardware, software and services for the retail industry.

- **IBM has broad, cross-industry experience and expertise.**

Retail is only one of the industries IBM serves. IBM works equally hard developing innovative solutions for customers in aerospace, finance, government, healthcare, telecommunications and other industries. Through systematic knowledge sharing and cross-industry initiatives, IBM has the unique capability to take proven solutions from one industry and adapt them for customers in other industries.

- **IBM maintains an unparalleled global presence**

With offices in more than 100 countries and a network of IBM Business Partners that spans the globe, IBM is equipped to deliver service, technical support, rollout, consulting and other activities on a global scale. These services are critical for retailers who plan to expand operations across borders or go global.

- **IBM attracts the best IT people in the world**

As a clear industry leader in information technology (IT), IBM attracts and retains the most talented individuals from around the world to staff its service and support teams. That means IBM customers in every industry and every geography can expect fast, flawless service from knowledgeable professionals.

- **The IBM reputation speaks for itself**

IBM has developed a worldwide reputation for innovation, clear strategic thinking and swift implementation of complex solutions. The only way IBM can protect this reputation is by continuing to meet and exceed the expectations of its customers.

IBM Retail Store Solutions value proposition

Overview

In any competitive situation, prospective customers can evaluate their options on several levels. Many will focus on the systems and services they need today – and this is where the IBM Retail Store Solutions portfolio stands out. However, there will also be situations where product features will not be enough to set IBM apart. You will need to emphasize the overall value of IBM Retail Store Solutions. This value is communicated in terms of four critical benefits retailers can expect when they choose IBM Retail Store Solutions as their technology partner – regardless of segment, size of business or store-specific needs.

Customer choice

Retail is a complex, diverse industry that spans every geography and includes independent shop owners as well as organizations with thousands of stores worldwide. As a result, there is no one-size-fits-all solution for retail – or even one solution that can meet the needs of every retailer in a given segment. That's why IBM Retail Store Solutions is dedicated to expanding customers' choices for hardware, software, connectivity and other critical factors. The more choices retailers have, the easier it is to help them find the ideal solution for a store. Ideal solutions are those that maximize productivity and cost-efficiency while strengthening the retailer's loyalty to IBM. IBM maximizes choice three ways:

1. Promoting open systems

IBM products are designed to integrate with products from both IBM and non-IBM providers. IBM does not use proprietary technology, which locks customers into a single, inflexible way of running their stores – with zero cross-platform compatibility or options for integrating other providers' products.

2. Maintaining a broad product portfolio

IBM meets a wide range of retailer needs with point-of-sale (POS) systems and other retail solutions, from the plug-and-play IBM SureOne® to the high-end models of the IBM SurePOST™ 700 Series to the IBM Kiosk for self service and other unique applications.

3. Building strong relationships with IBM

Business Partners

No single company could provide all the hardware and software retailers need to run their stores. To give customers as many choices as possible, IBM depends on specialized offerings from its global network of Business Partners.

Investment protection

Essentially, investment protection is retailers receiving maximum value for the products they purchase from IBM Retail Store Solutions. The benefits for the retailer are significant: they spend less money to run their stores, eliminate the hassle of discarding and replacing obsolete equipment, and gain the flexibility to purchase new solutions as their needs dictate. To ensure exceptional investment protection, IBM Retail Store Solutions has to meet a number of different goals. These include:

1. Retail hardening

Our laboratory-tested, retail-hardened systems are engineered to withstand harsh environments and deliver high reliability and uptime on a daily basis. Protection from dirt, dust, grease, liquids, vibration and shock is built in, so retailers do not have to worry about their systems going down under normal retail conditions.

2. Long product lifecycles

Reliability helps ensure a long lifecycle, but there are other important factors. One is excellent service. Another is the availability of parts – which IBM guarantees for five years after every product has been withdrawn from marketing. Plus, IBM Retail Store Solutions systems are built to be upgraded. They have the connectivity and other options retailers need to add the latest peripherals, increase memory, improve processor speed or implement new e-business solutions – without replacing the system unit.

3. Long-term stability

IBM Retail Store Solutions has maintained a leading position in retail for more than a quarter century, and has the financial size and strength to make sure it will be available to support our solutions and bring new products to the retail market in any business climate.

Technology leadership

Although the basic principles of effective retailing do not change, the tools retailers can use to improve sales, reduce costs and serve customers are constantly evolving. IBM Retail Store Solutions makes it a priority to thoroughly assess new technologies, closely align them with retailers' real-world needs and bring the most powerful, practical solutions to market. This shows retailers that IBM Retail Store Solutions invests in new technologies selectively. In other words, retailers gain a trusted partner in IBM – a partner who provides the best available technology and establishes clear connections between the capabilities of the technology and the bottom-line benefits for the store. IBM Retail Store Solutions proves its technology leadership in many ways:

1. Patented innovations

For nine years in a row, Retail Store Solutions has led all other IBM divisions in the number of patents received. Recent innovations include powered USB connectivity and cooling-tunnel technology.

2. Industry presence

There is an ongoing struggle in retail between the innovations of individual companies and the move to standardize and make life easier for retailers. IBM maintains a strong presence among retail industry organizations and other groups responsible for managing the dialogue and eventually making the decisions.

3. Next-generation thinking

IBM invests significant research and development funding to create the future of retail. IBM continually tries to improve every aspect of the retail experience, from the POS to the back-office to 'stores of the future' that realize the full promise of integrated multichannel retailing.

Total solutions

The word 'solutions' is used so frequently that it is far too easy to forget its real significance. To retailers, however, the importance of purchasing a solution – as opposed to a product – cannot be understated. Retailers can buy a product from any ordinary manufacturer. When retailers purchase solutions from IBM, they receive a unique arrangement of components that work together to deliver a measurable business result: higher operator productivity, lower maintenance costs, greater customer loyalty. It is the IBM responsibility – not the retailer's – to help ensure the solution meets the retailer's individual requirements and delivers the expected results on a consistent basis. The benefits for retailers are obvious: peace of mind, confidence and a sense that IBM will help them develop a new solution if new issues arise. Overall, there are three reasons why the division is called IBM Retail Store Solutions – not IBM Retail Store Products.

1. Providing true solutions

Retailers can come to IBM Retail Store Solutions as their single source for high-quality hardware, software, financing, consulting and a wide range of services. Working with IBM Business Partners, Retail Store Solutions can deliver all of the elements of the solution – whether it is for one store or an end-to-end, enterprise-wide implementation.

2. Building not only boxes, but relationships

IBM Retail Store Solutions has no interest in booking a big sale and moving on to the next prospect. The goal is to partner with retailers over the long term, providing the solutions they need to reduce costs, energize sales and expand their business as they see fit.

3. Prioritizing retail

The IBM Retail Store Solutions team understands this business as well as or better than anyone. Most important, this experience is used to create viable solutions to real retail problems. Helping retailers – of any size, in any market, all over the world – is what 'retail solutions' really means.



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