Global Survey: Mobile Technology in Retail

Technology welcomes a new era of productivity and satisfaction

Retailers around the world know that mobile technology is one way to increase productivity and customer satisfaction now and into the future.

Increasingly, the necessity of managing all of these mobile devices points to the need for a robust mobile device management (MDM) solution.

To find out how retailers currently use and manage Apple, Android and Windows devices — and how they plan to in the future — Jamf commissioned Vanson Bourne, a global third-party research firm, to conduct an independent study of 700 IT decision-makers in the retail sector from six different countries around the world.

Mobile tech drives revenue; has challenges

The results are clear: the vast majority of retailers have already invested in mobile technology and plan on investing even more. From point-of-sale to online show rooms, retailers have no doubt about the benefits of mobile technology in tracking inventory, organizing staff and engaging customers. They see mobile technology, when well managed, as a powerful revenue driver.

But, there are difficulties. Many retailers use a combination of Android, Windows and Apple technology, which can sometimes complicate management and communication from one device or MDM solution to another.

99%
of stores have
at least one
mobile technology

Mobile technology is here to stay
Current mobile device investments

What mobile technology?
(top multiple-choice answers)

☑ **79%** free Wi-Fi

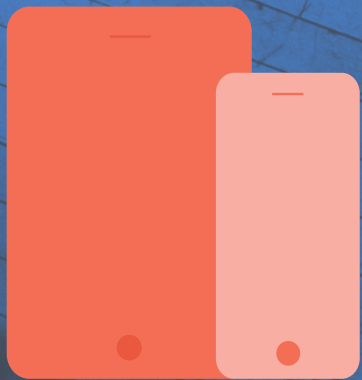☑ **71%** company-issued mobile devices for staff use

☑ **65%** mobile devices for point-of-sale (POS) systems

☑ **63%** devices for linking brick-and-mortar with online store

☑ **62%** interactive touch screens in-store

☑ **60%** shared mobile devices

When looking at current and planned investments, the mobile technology story is even stronger with 95% planning to offer company-issued mobile devices for staff use, 95% point-of-sale systems, 93% connections between physical and online shops, 94% fixed interactive screens in-store and 90% shared mobile devices.

What's coming next?

Future increases in mobile technology investment

Nearly all (rounded to 100%) IT decision makers surveyed say that their retail stores plan on increasing their mobile device use in the coming years. Why?

91% agree using mobile technology in retail makes them more competitive

Benefits of mobile technology

Mobile technology has resulted in/would result in:
(top multiple-choice answers)

- ☑ **58% improved customer service**
- ☑ **52% ability to show more product inventory**
- ☑ **51% improved efficiency of in-store teams**
- ☑ **49% increased employee productivity, satisfaction and motivation**

Almost all (rounded to 100%) of IT decision makers believe mobile technology offers value

Mobile technology streamlines processes

91% of IT decision makers at retailers agree that using mobile technology has/would increase revenue by streamlining the sales process. This can be done by the implementation of mobile technology optimizing the following tasks:

(Tasks and process that have or would be optimized:)

- ☑ **96% inventory planning and management**
- ☑ **96% point-of-sale**
- ☑ **96% personalization of the customer experience**
- ☑ **95% implementing promotions**
- ☑ **95% employee productivity and motivation**
- ☑ **95% staff communications**
- ☑ **95% staff training**
- ☑ **92% streamlining pricing**

93%

experience or expect challenges

Challenges of mobile device management

Multiple device brands and systems cause concerns

While retailers clearly see enormous advantages in using mobile devices in their stores, 93% of respondents experience and expect challenges. Here is a look at what they're acing (top multiple-choice answers):

37% struggle with security and compliance

37% have difficulties managing multiple devices and different functionalities/logins

35% find integrating mobile technology with existing/legacy systems troublesome

33% see supporting technical difficulties/ troubleshooting devices as an obstacle

Apple versus a mix of devices

Problems with mixed Apple, Windows and Android devices

Stores that use a mix of Apple, Windows and/or Android devices are the most likely to experience challenges when implementing mobile technology.

	Mixed Devices (Apple, Windows and Apple)	Android/Windows only	Apple only
Problems managing multiple devices and different logins	45%	31%	23%
Security and compliance issues	43%	32%	31%
Difficulty integrating with existing systems	40%	32%	31%

This suggests a standard, single brand of ecosystem is more efficient.

None of these things are quite like the other

Causes of mobile device management difficulties

A clue to why retailers experience difficulties in their device ecosystem may have to do with the devices themselves:

Around half

(48%) of those surveyed use a mix of Apple, Windows and/or Android devices

Using the same brand of devices within retail stores makes them easier to manage, yet the largest proportion of retailers are using a mix of brands — making some of the challenges of mobile technology implementation hard to overcome.

This suggests that narrowing down the focus to one brand of device could improve mobile technology operations.
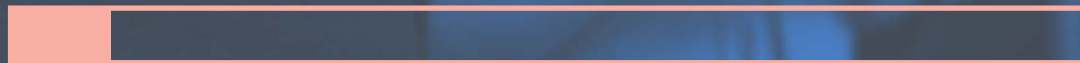
Mobile realities and mobile preferences

Who is using which type of device?

48% Use a mix of Apple, Windows and/or Android devices

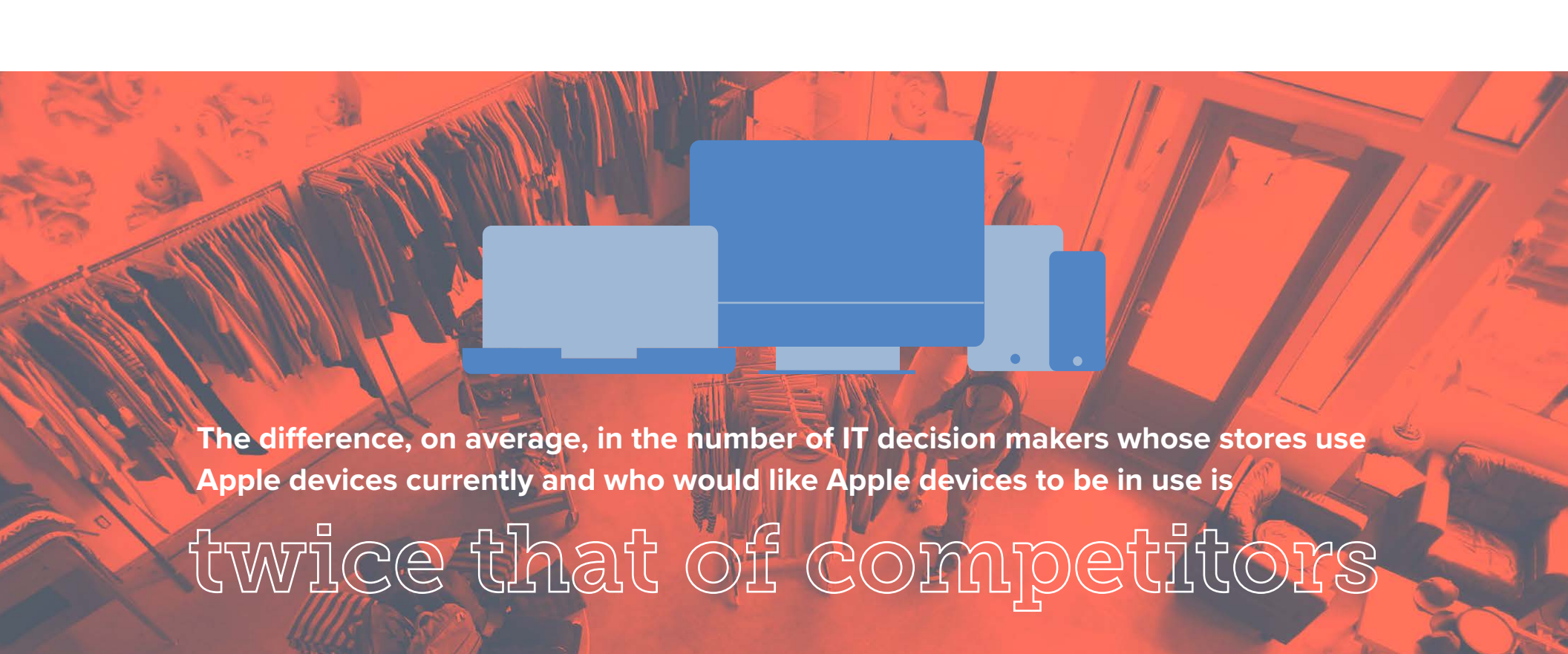**41%** Use only Windows and/or Android devices

10% Use only Apple devices

1% Don't know/don't use devices

The difference, on average, in the number of IT decision makers whose stores use Apple devices currently and who would like Apple devices to be in use is

twice that of competitors

Current use versus preferred use

The data appears to suggest that retailers use Windows or Android devices. However, when you ask retailers which devices they would prefer to use, the data tells a different story.

On all occasions, a higher percentage would prefer an Apple device compared to the proportion currently using them.

Benefits of Apple devices

99% of retail stores using Apple devices recognize the benefits of Apple – which may not be surprising. What is intriguing, however, is that 90% of retailers not using Apple devices also believe there are benefits of using Apple. This result reinforces the value of and demand for Apple devices.

Top benefits of Apple devices as stated by both Apple users and non-Apple users
(top multiple-choice answers)

	Apple user	Non-Apple user
Faster to implement	46%	34%
Increased durability	43%	33%
Easier to use *(which offers a better customer experience)*	43%	24%
Easier to connect with other devices	42%	23%
Better integration with existing systems	40%	24%
More secure than other brands	38%	26%

76% More than three-quarters of all respondents agree that Apple devices are better to use in the retail space than Android and Windows devices.

Problems with Windows and Android

Out of those that use both Apple and Windows/Android devices — and can adequately compare the platforms — the number was even higher: nearly 9 in 10 (87%) believe Apple devices are better for their use.

As a matter of fact, 82% of Android and Windows-using retailers have experienced problems with their mobile devices, such as:

Top reported problems with Android or Windows mobile devices
(top multiple-choice answers)

☑ **36% security issues**

☑ **22% access or device failures**

☑ **29% compatibility issues**

☑ **18% lack of durability**

☑ **28% disruptive/slow updates**

91% agree that MDM is beneficial for managing mobile devices in retail

Mobile device management (MDM) solutions

The right tool makes all the difference.

Not only do retailers around the world understand that an ecosystem-focused mobile device management solution is advantageous, they believe it will greatly impact the bottom line.

On average, respondents also believe they can save:

25%
in costs with MDM

24%
of time with MDM

... and there are a lot of reasons for these numbers.

MDM to the rescue

Nearly all (99%) retailers surveyed said their retail stores do use or would use an MDM solution, and here's why:

Mobile device management qualities most valued by retailers
(multiple-choice answers)

☑ **45% ability to configure devices for a specific use case (like point-of-sale)**

☑ **44% enabling devices to be user-friendly for staff and customers**

☑ **42% ensuring all employee devices are personalized**

☑ **42% ensuring all devices have up-to-date operating systems and software**

☑ **41% ensuring all departments are using the same brand of devices and functionalities**

☑ **41% easy way to keep devices charged**

☑ **40% ability to deploy company retail apps on all devices**

☑ **32% ability to remotely lock or wipe devices**

☑ **32% unlocking one device for many purposes**

With mobile technology implementation on the rise in retail, using an MDM is becoming increasingly important. Tools that are able to offer these features are likely to be the most desirable to retailers.

48% Nearly half report they are using more than one MDM, which is not an ideal state. In fact, 9 out of 10 (89%) wish they could use one solution for optimal streamlining and productivity.

MDM increases customer satisfaction
Although some more than others

Half (50%) of all respondents report they've seen a significant improvement in customer satisfaction since implementing mobile technology.

An MDM solution increases these chances. Those using MDM solutions are more than twice as likely to have experienced a significant improvement in customer satisfaction than those who don't use an MDM.
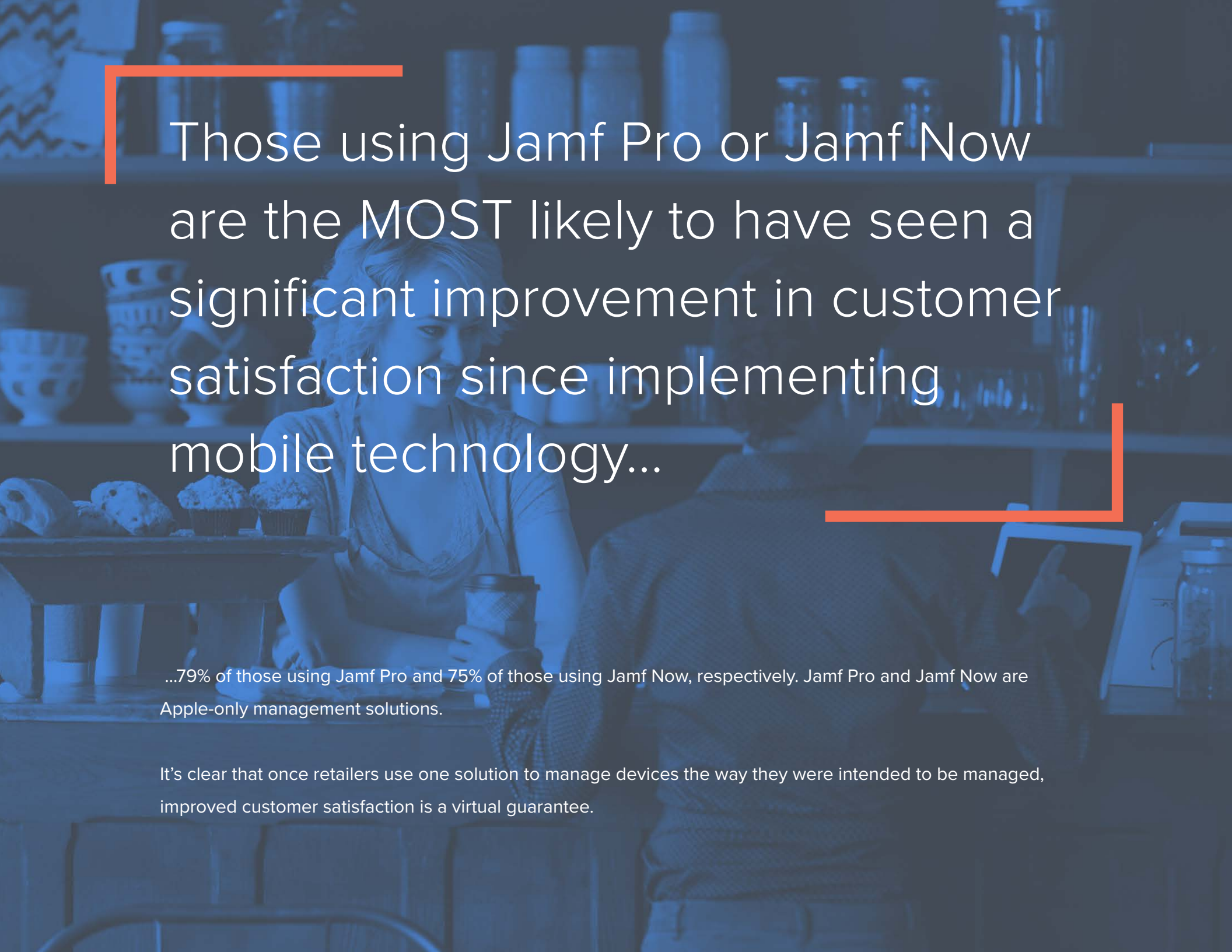
52% of respondents who are currently using an MDM solution report a significant improvement in customer satisfaction since implementing mobile technology

23% of respondents who are not using an MDM report customer satisfaction improvement

Those using Jamf Pro or Jamf Now are the MOST likely to have seen a significant improvement in customer satisfaction since implementing mobile technology...

...79% of those using Jamf Pro and 75% of those using Jamf Now, respectively. Jamf Pro and Jamf Now are Apple-only management solutions.

It's clear that once retailers use one solution to manage devices the way they were intended to be managed, improved customer satisfaction is a virtual guarantee.

The digital store experience
Mobile technology is the norm

**Retailers embracing digital transformation
in their stores expect to see these benefits:**

- ☑ **54% increased efficiency and productivity**
- ☑ **48% increased sales and revenue**
- ☑ **47% improved customer experience**
- ☑ **46% the ability to capture new customers**
- ☑ **38% a more digital-savvy brand image**

Key takeaways for the modern retail store
How digital transformation initiatives help

Nearly all (rounded to 100%) decision makers whose retail store(s) have or plan to have digital transformation initiatives say it will help them:
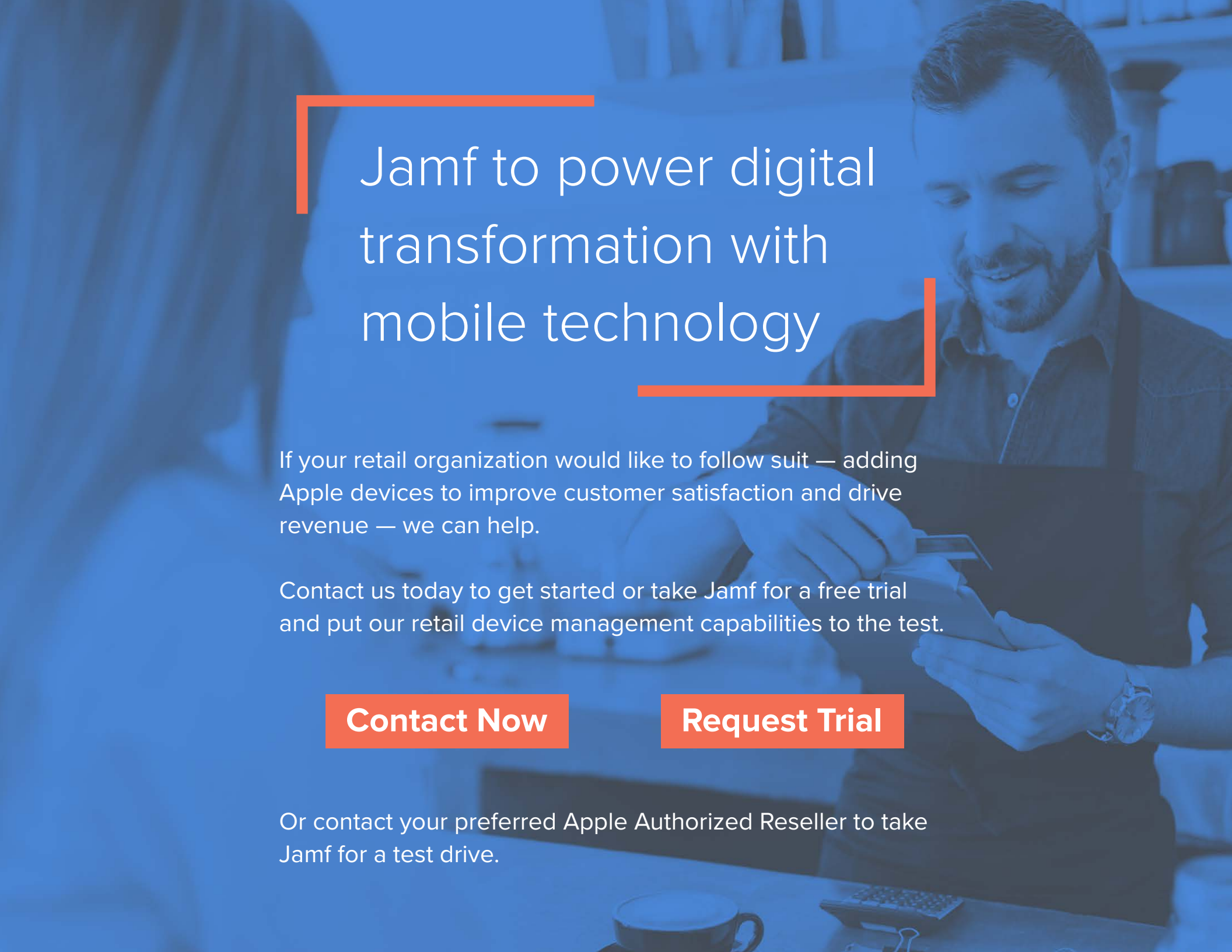
- ☑ **55%** increase sales and revenue
- ☑ **51%** offer a smoother customer shopping experience
- ☑ **48%** attract new customer groups
- ☑ **43%** allow for a more personalized customer experience
- ☑ **43%** allow for more automatic store transfers of products/merchandise
- ☑ **42%** make operations more fluid and frees up sales associates to focus on customer
- ☑ **41%** increase morale and motivation of sales staff
- ☑ **38%** help perceptions of their organization as an innovative brand
- ☑ **28%** onboard staff faster

How digital transformation initiatives can hinder retail stores

IT decision makers did report worries or present difficulties with their retail store(s) current/planned digital transformation initiatives. As a matter of fact, 87% have challenges they need to overcome:

- ☑ **43% having to update systems and ensure existing systems are ready**
- ☑ **35% trying to manage the digital experience across stores and devices**
- ☑ **34% technology overload for customers**
- ☑ **34% complication of operations**
- ☑ **31% difficulties in maintaining customer experience in the midst of change**
- ☑ **26% hard to measure the sales and revenue it might be bringing in**
- ☑ **25% staff aren't willing to accept change**

These existing or expected challenges must be met by a robust MDM solution to help these digital transformation initiatives run smoothly.

Jamf to power digital transformation with mobile technology

If your retail organization would like to follow suit — adding Apple devices to improve customer satisfaction and drive revenue — we can help.

Contact us today to get started or take Jamf for a free trial and put our retail device management capabilities to the test.

Contact Now　　**Request Trial**

Or contact your preferred Apple Authorized Reseller to take Jamf for a test drive.