The State of Product Visualization in Furniture Retail

How furniture retailers are harnessing 3D visualization and augmented reality technologies to improve customer experience and drive sales

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Contents

Foreword by Fixtuur

by David Thomson
CEO, Fixtuur

The retail furniture industry is in a period of rapid evolution, driven by shifting consumer behaviors, rising digital expectations, and intensifying competition.

Where once we relied on showrooms and printed catalogs to inspire purchase decisions, today we have the tools to put an entire immersive catalog of products online — fully customizable, explorable, and visually rich — into the palm of the customer's hand.

This research confirms what we've long believed at Fixtuur: the future of furniture retail isn't just about selling products. It's about enabling customers to explore, personalize, and buy with absolute confidence, wherever they are.

We're seeing a clear shift. The retailers pulling ahead aren't investing in technology as a box-ticking exercise — they are adopting it strategically, focusing on delivering better experiences and driving meaningful results. They use visualization to build trust and bridge the gap between online exploration and in-store consultation. The outcomes are clear: higher engagement, stronger loyalty, and accelerated sales growth.

Yet while the opportunity is enormous, the path forward can feel complex. Many businesses still feel unprepared or overwhelmed by the thought of implementing 3D content, AR, or customization tools at scale. This is where Fixtuur empowers retailers, turning complexity into clarity and potential into performance. We make world-class visual commerce simple, intuitive, and scalable, giving brands the tools they need to inspire, convert, and grow.

This report, produced in partnership with London Research, shines a spotlight on the new standards customers are setting and the innovative brands that are rising to meet them. It makes one thing undeniably clear: visualization is no longer a luxury. It's a strategic advantage, and soon, it will be a baseline expectation.

I hope this research inspires you to reflect, rethink, and reimagine what your brand could achieve. Whether you are beginning your visual commerce journey or accelerating your next phase of growth, Fixtuur is ready to help you lead with creativity, confidence, and impact.

Executive summary

The State of Product Visualization in Furniture Retail, produced by London Research in partnership with Fixtuur, explores how furniture retailers are utilizing 3D visualization and augmented reality technologies to meet growing consumer expectations and to drive sales.

The research, based on a global survey of 100 furniture retailers, shows there is strong recognition within the sector about the importance of more engaging and personalized online experiences enhanced by easier customization and better visualization.

Almost three-quarters (70%) of furniture retailers strongly agree that the ability to customize furniture online is increasingly important to consumers, while around two-thirds (64%) strongly concur that 3D visualization is becoming a 'must-have' for furniture ecommerce.

AI leads the way in technology adoption (85%), followed by computer-generated imagery (CGI) (60%), virtual reality (VR) (59%), and augmented reality (AR) (58%). Tools such as 360-degree viewers, 3D room planners, and product or modular configurators are delivering numerous benefits for retailers, most notably improved customer engagement, brand loyalty, and sales.

An overwhelming 96% of furniture retailers who have deployed product visualization technology say that it has positively impacted their company's online sales, with 71% also recognizing improved in-store experience as a 'major benefit'.

The research identifies a segment of furniture retailer 'leaders' to compare what these companies are doing differently compared to their mainstream counterparts.

- Leaders – classified as those companies that significantly outperformed their competitors over the last 12 months – are more likely to be offering a fully integrated AR experience (64% for leaders vs. 45% for mainstream companies).
- Leaders are also more likely to have used AI, CGI and VR as part of their product visualization activities.
- They are also more likely to be planning to significantly expand their use of visualization technology in the next 12 months (90% vs. 59%).

Methodology

This research is based on a global survey of furniture retailers carried out online by London Research in February and March 2025. Around two-thirds of respondents (64%) are based in Europe, with most of the remainder (33%) in North America. The vast majority of respondents are at senior-manager level or above (91%), with C-level executives and heads of department accounting for 59% of the total. Respondents work across a range of business functions. For more details about the profile of survey respondents, please see the Appendix to the report.

Section 1

Introduction: The trends driving adoption of visualization technology

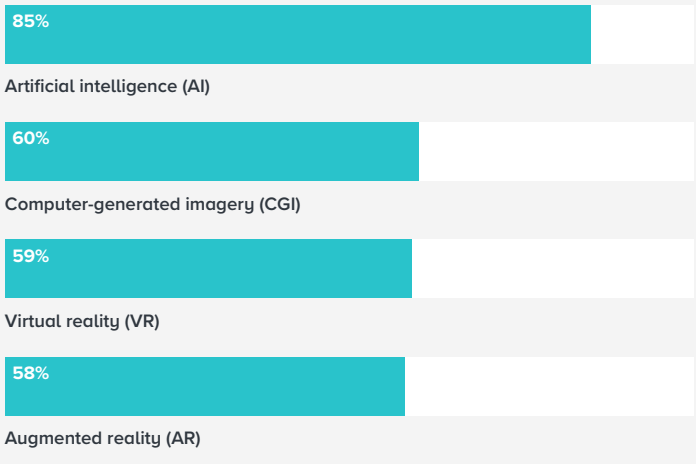
New technology is having a seismic impact on how furniture retailers are able to help customers visualize and get a more sensory experience of their products both online and in-store in a way that was previously not possible.

The use of technologies such as artificial intelligence, computer-generated imagery, virtual reality and augmented reality is now more widespread in this sector, as shown in *Figure 1*. The vast majority of furniture companies (85%) are now deploying AI for better visualization in some shape or form, while around six in ten companies surveyed have embraced CGI (60%), VR (59%) and AR (58%).

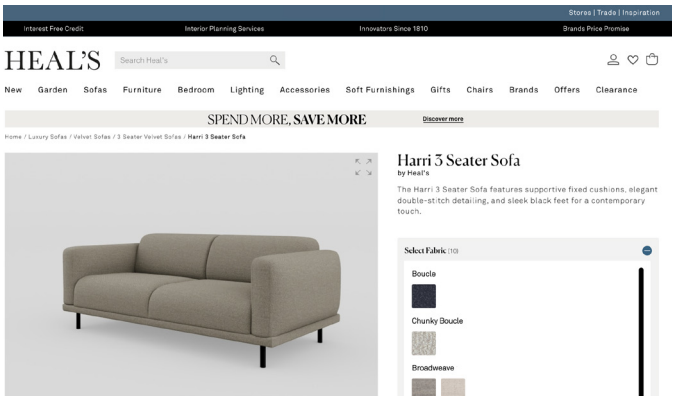
These technologies are now more accessible for companies looking to improve the customer experience, with tools such as 360-degree viewers, 3D room planners and product or modular configurators becoming more accessible, and affordable to deploy.

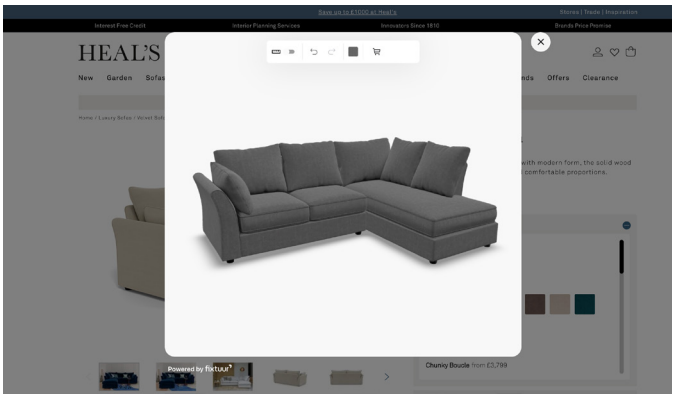
FIGURE 1

Which of the following technologies has your company used for better visualization of products either online or in-store?



> "We previously struggled to inspire shoppers, but with Fixtuur's configurator, customers can now see the product in their own space, and it's made a huge difference in how they engage with our furniture."
>
> Amy Martin
> Senior Ecommerce Upholstery and Furniture Merchandiser
> **Heal's**





Heal's is a great example of a furniture company that has embraced technology to bring its premium products to life for customers shopping online. Through implementation of a modular sofa configurator, customers browsing on their devices or computers are now able to get a 360-degree view of the company's sofas with different fabrics and finishes, and see how these items of furniture look in their living rooms. According to Fixtuur's Product Manager, Harriet Cairns: "*The goal was to make configuring complex furniture easy and enjoyable for both retailers and shoppers, allowing them to create custom furniture that suits their needs – quickly and effortlessly.*"

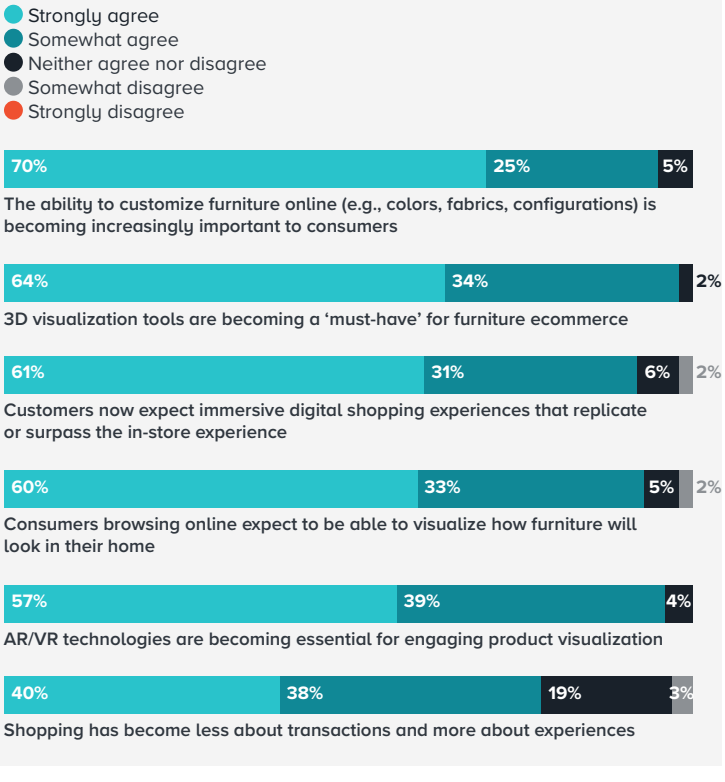
Figure 2 shows a range of trends that are driving adoption of visualization technologies by Heal's and other brands, and the extent to which furniture retailers agree they are having an impact. Almost three-quarters (70%) of companies surveyed strongly agree that the ability to customize furniture online – including colors, fabrics or configurations – is increasingly important to consumers.

This highlights the growing demand for personalization in furniture shopping, with most respondents also agreeing strongly that customers expect immersive experiences that replicate or surpass the in-store experience (61%), and that shoppers expect to be able to visualize how furniture will look in their own home (60%).

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of retailers say that 3D visualization tools such as those offered by Heal's are becoming a 'must-have' for furniture ecommerce, and this is reflected by the high levels of technology uptake seen in *Figure 1*.

FIGURE 2

To what extent do you agree with the following statements relating to ecommerce trends?



Section 2

The benefits and business case for visualization technology

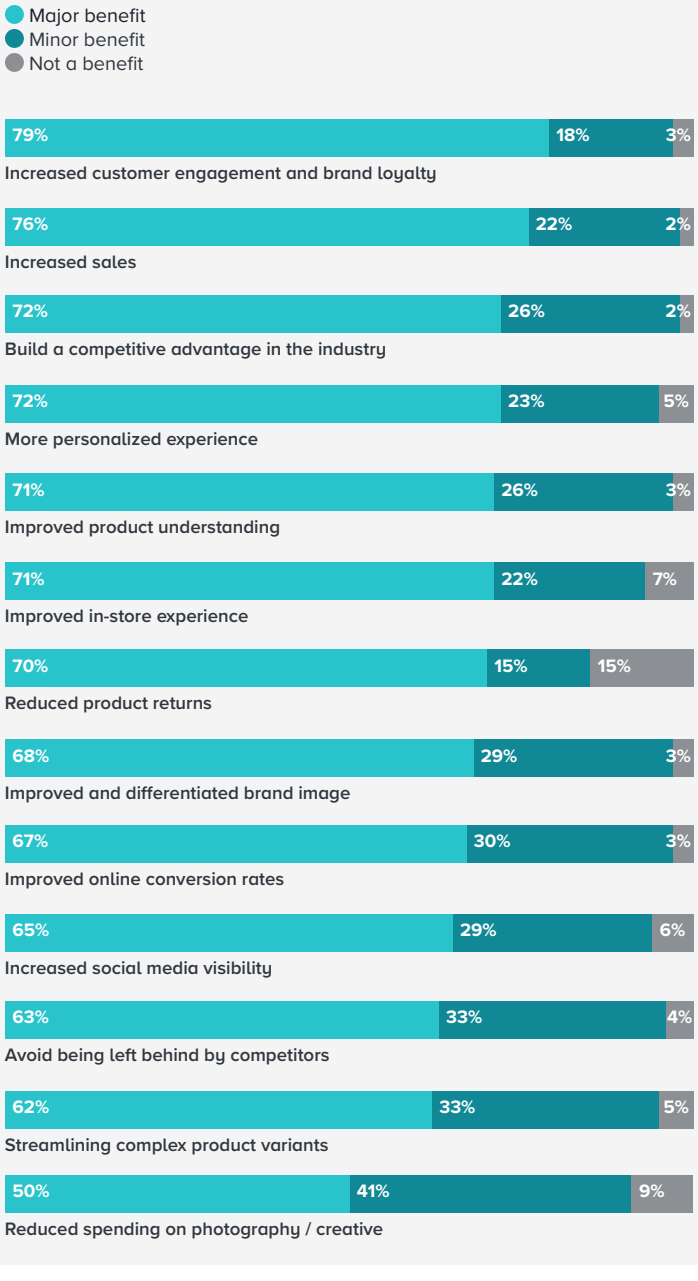
There are wide-ranging benefits for retailers investing in product visualization technology. 'Increased customer engagement and loyalty' is the most likely to be regarded as a 'major benefit', cited by 79% of the furniture retailer respondents we surveyed (*Figure 3*). This is closely related to the ability to provide more personalized experiences, which 72% of companies regard as a major plus point. An even more tangible benefit for any retailer is 'increased sales', which is a close second in terms of being regarded as a significant benefit (76%).

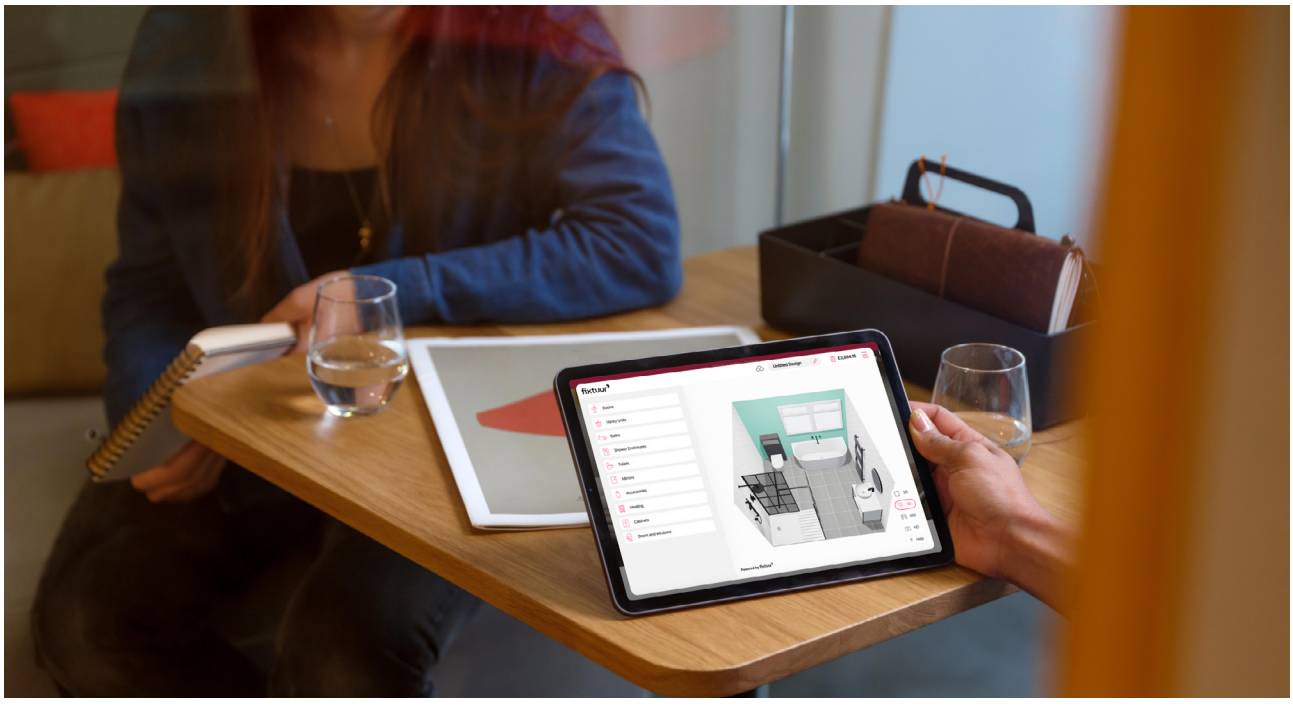
The high uptake of product visualization technology suggests that this is fast becoming table stakes for furniture retailers, and it was seen in the last section that capabilities in this area are viewed by retailers as a must-have. But companies also recognize that they can still build a competitive advantage by excelling in product visualization. Almost three-quarters (72%) of companies regard this competitive advantage as a major benefit.

While basic product visualizations are a must, there can be a tendency for retailers to overlook some of the other benefits of more advanced visualization technologies, such as streamlining complex product variants and reducing spend on photography and creative assets which can result in significant cost savings for businesses. Just under two-thirds (62%) and half (50%) of furniture retailers, respectively, regard these as major benefits. Increased social media visibility is another by-product of the technology, with 65% companies benefiting significantly from increased online mentions of their brand.

FIGURE 3

What do you see as the benefits of visualization technology for your business?





In-store benefits

Omnichannel retailers also need to factor in the positive effect on the in-store experience, something which is recognized as a major benefit by 71% of furniture companies. To illustrate this benefit, cross-departmental adoption has been notable at Heal's where the modular sofa configurator tool has been used by its in-store staff, the interior planning service and the trade team to assist with customer consultations.

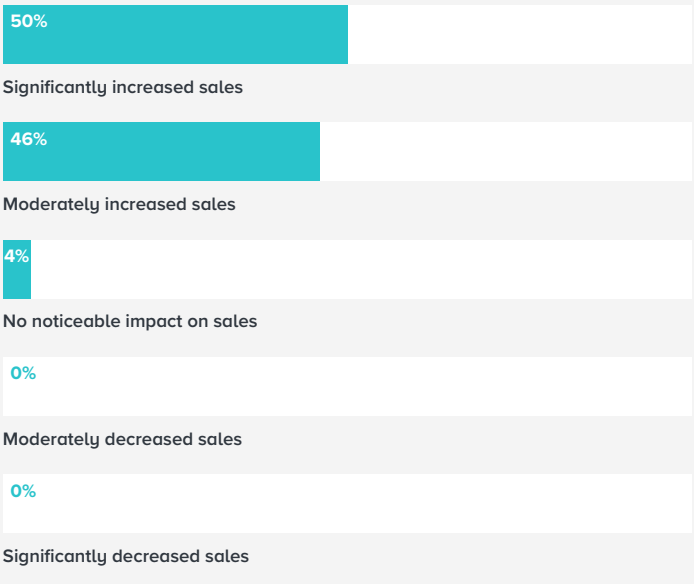
Other benefits noted by Heal's include increased page views on product pages with its modular configurator, higher engagement in terms of customers spending more time interacting with the tool and higher add-to-basket rates, which show that customers are more confident in their purchasing decisions.

And most importantly for any retailer, adoption of the technology has resulted in increased sales both online and in-store, most notably for modular sofas whereby consumers can configure the ideal customized sofa for their living space.

It is not just Heal's which has benefited from increased revenues. The overwhelming majority of those implementing advanced visualization technology report an increase in sales as a direct result of these capabilities. Exactly half of respondents report a 'significant' increase (*Figure 4*), and only 4% say there has been no noticeable change in revenue numbers.

FIGURE 4

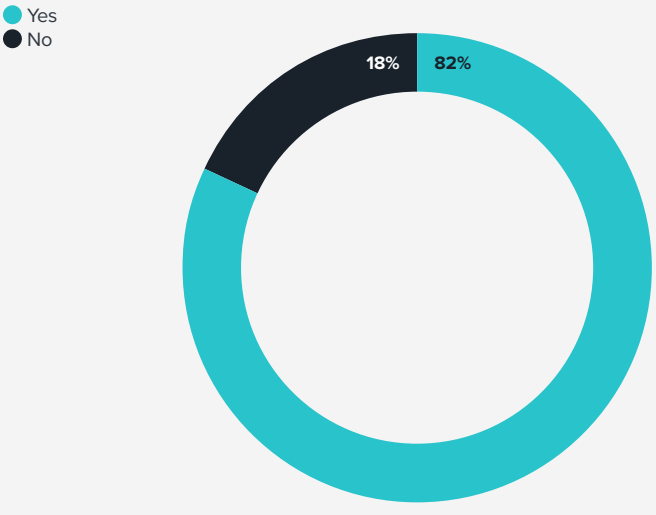
How has the use of visualization technology impacted your company's online sales?



Furthermore, more than four in five (82%) retailers are able to estimate the return on investment achieved from ecommerce visualization technology (*Figure 5*). Those that can do this report a generally positive return, with a significant proportion seeing returns in the 26% - 100% range. More than half of retailers (52%) report a return of at least 50% on their investment (*Figure 6*).

FIGURE 5

Are you able to estimate the return on investment you've had from your ecommerce visualization technology?

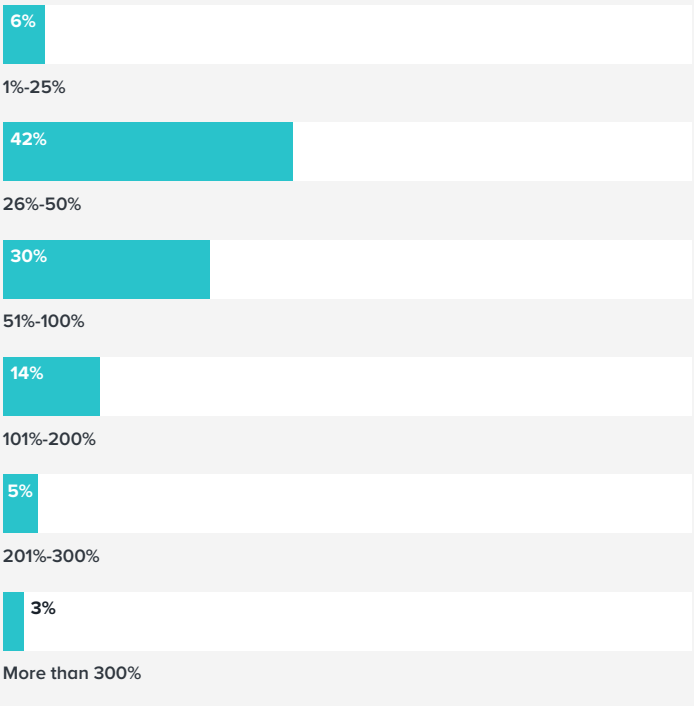


52%

More than half of furniture retailers report an ROI of at least 50% on their visualization technology investment.

FIGURE 6

What is the return on investment you've had from your ecommerce visualization technology?



Section 3

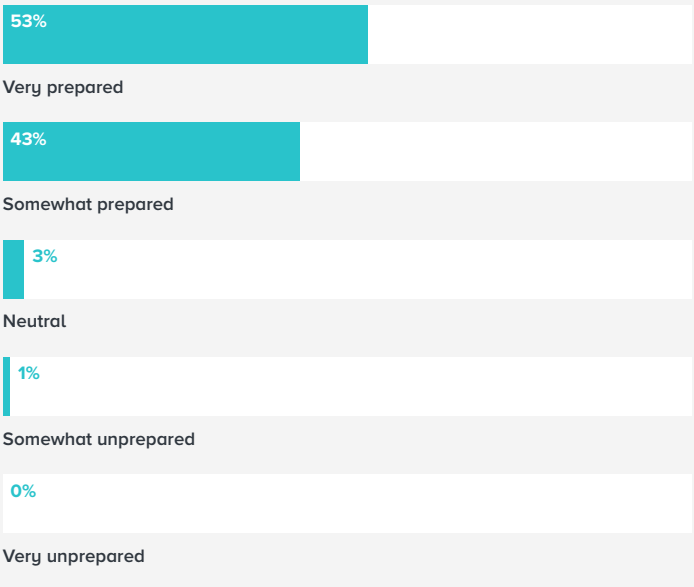
Level of preparedness and challenges

This section of the research looks at the extent to which furniture retailers are currently able to seize the product visualization opportunity, and the potential roadblocks to faster or more widespread adoption. Just over half (53%) of furniture retailers feel 'very prepared' to utilize the 3D digital technologies available, but there is still a significant portion (43%) that feel only 'somewhat' prepared (*Figure 7*). This indicates a lack of confidence among many companies in their ability to take advantage of the available technology to meet growing customer expectations.

The perceived level of preparedness for this technology is strikingly different for larger and smaller companies, defined as those with more or less than $100 million in annual revenues. Just under two-thirds (64%) of larger furniture retailers feel 'very prepared' compared to only 43% of smaller companies (*Figure 8*).

FIGURE 7

How prepared is your company to leverage digital technologies like 3D visualization to meet the evolving needs of furniture customers?



64%

Just under two-thirds of larger furniture retailers feel 'very prepared' for embracing technology that helps furniture customers.

FIGURE 8

How prepared is your company to leverage digital technologies like 3D visualization to meet the evolving needs of furniture customers?
(Breakdown by company size)

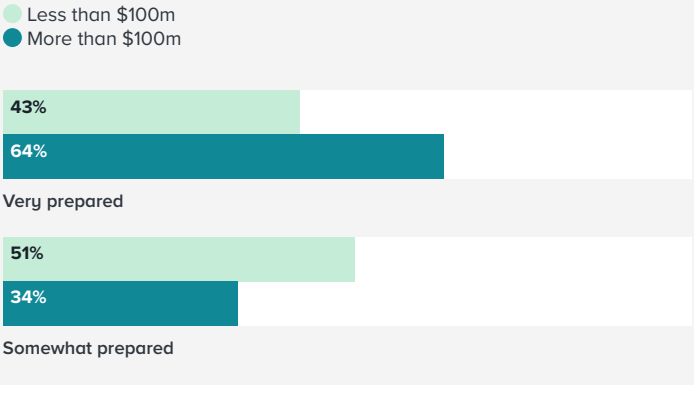


Figure 9 shows the challenges companies face in implementing or expanding product visualization technology usage. The most significant obstacles are the cost of implementation and integration with existing systems, cited by 46% and 44% of respondents respectively. The cost of implementation is something that needs to be factored into the business case for investment in this technology, but the returns reported by retailers suggest that this should not be a deal-breaker.

Retailers are correct to identify integration as a potential challenge because of the need to streamline the technology with existing software, such as e-commerce platforms, digital analytics, and digital asset management (DAM). The right technology solution can ease much of the pain of both implementation and integration.

FIGURE 9

What are the biggest challenges your company faces in implementing or expanding the use of visualization technology?

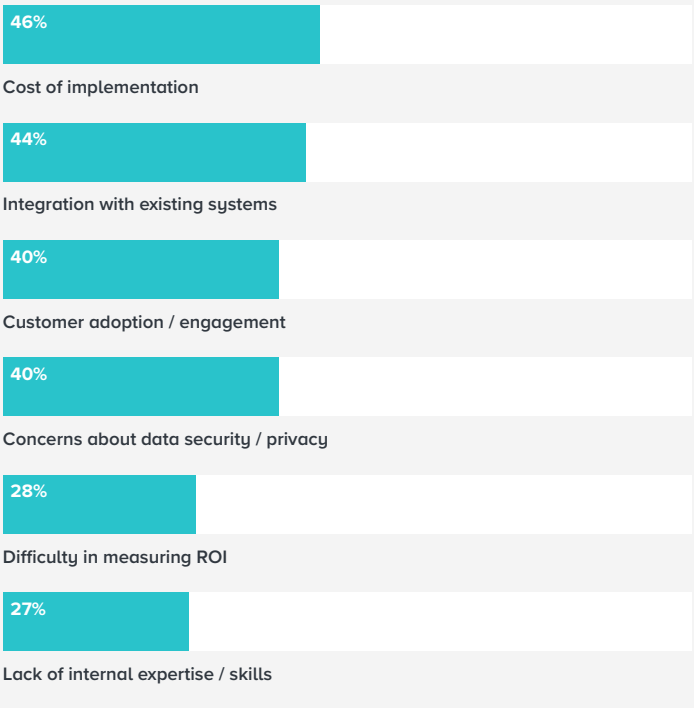


Figure 10 shows that integration of visualization technology is more of a concern for the larger companies surveyed. It is understandable that larger – and generally less agile – organizations will have more concerns around the ramifications for new technology implementation and how it will connect with the wider technology stack.

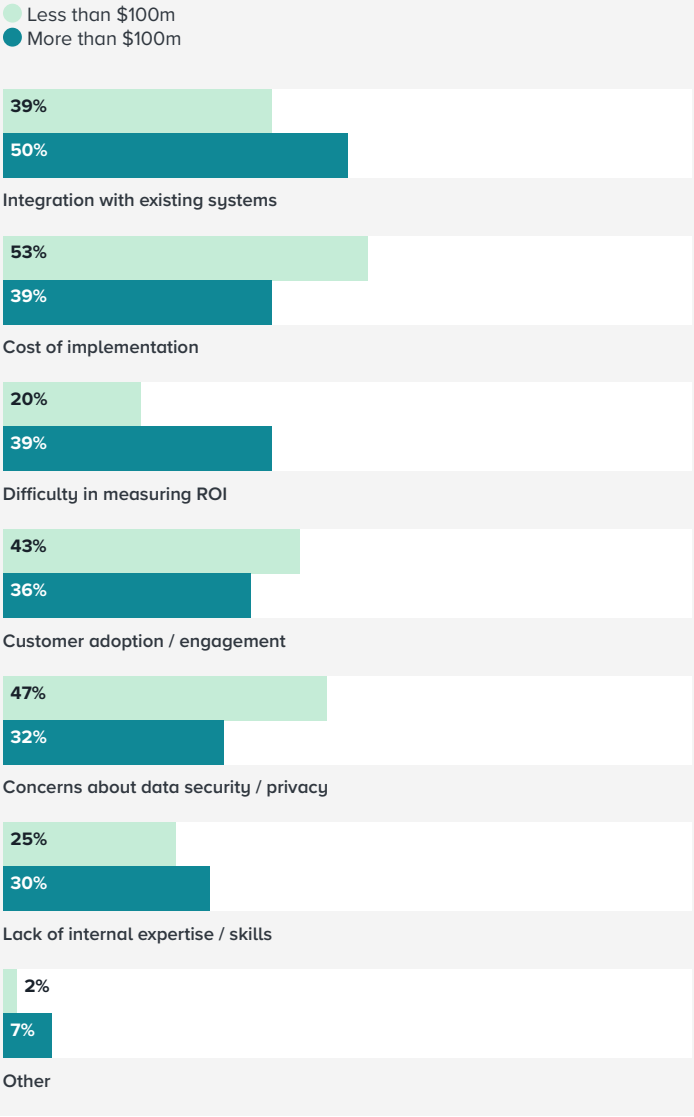
Another perceived challenge is customer adoption/engagement (40%). The use of computer aided design (CAD) technologies, 3D room planners and/or product configurators can sometimes be too complex for consumers to undertake with confidence. In the example of Heal's, this was a concern they were able to mitigate through user testing before their modular sofa configurator was rolled out. "*Initial user testing of a product can be slightly nerve-racking; however, from the first test, it confirmed our instinct that we had designed a tool that was intuitive, with users coming first, demonstrated by the positive feedback from testers*," said the company's Product Manager, Harriet Cairns.

50%

Integration with existing systems is regarded as the most significant visualization technology challenge for larger furniture retailers.

FIGURE 10

What are the biggest challenges your company faces in implementing or expanding the use of visualization technology?
(Breakdown by company size)



Section 4

Ecommerce leaders are making the right technology investment ... and choosing the right vendor

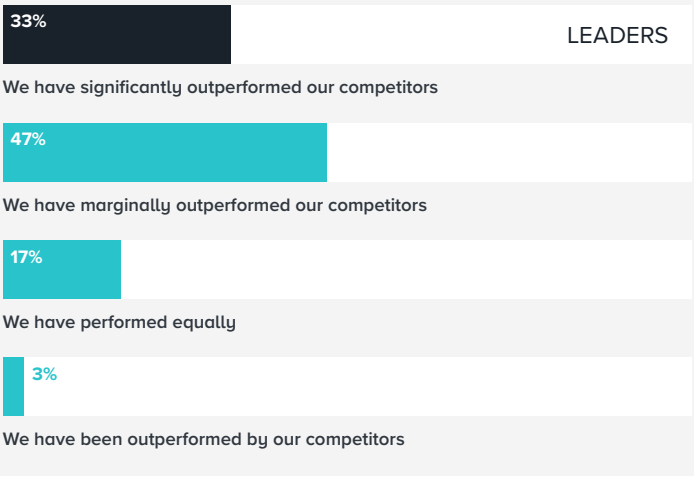
As part of this research we identified a group of furniture retailers who were significantly outperforming their competitors so we could analyze what they are doing differently to other companies classified as 'mainstream' organizations (*Figure 11*).

33%

A third of the furniture retailers taking part in this research were classified as ecommerce leaders.

FIGURE 11

Thinking about the last 12 months, how do you rate your company's ecommerce performance compared to competitors?



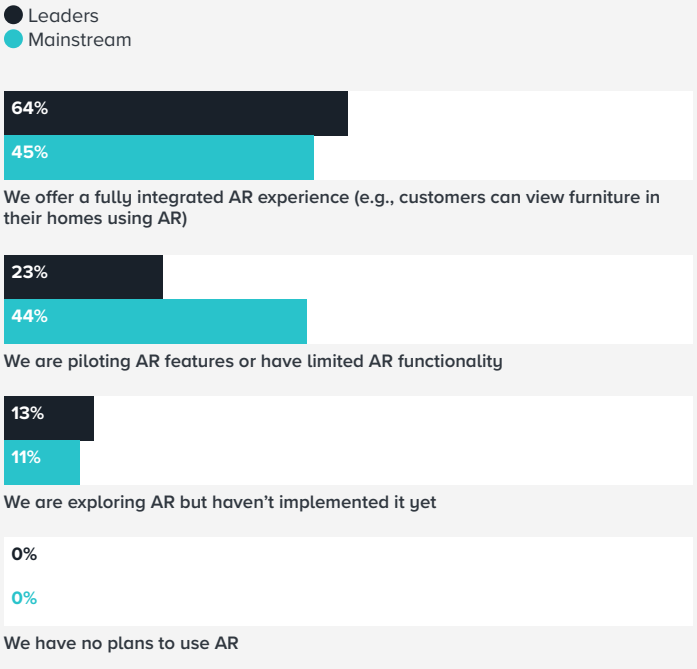
Leaders are significantly more likely to be offering a fully integrated AR experience, enabling their customers to visualize products in their living spaces (64% for leaders vs. 45% for mainstream companies, *Figure 12*). Leaders are also more likely to have used AI, CGI and VR, as shown in *Figure 13*, though the gap between leaders and mainstream furniture companies is more pronounced for virtual reality (74% vs. 52%) than it is for AI (90% vs. 83%) and CGI (65% vs. 58%).

Having experienced benefits from their existing investments already, such as an increase in sales, leaders are also far more likely to be planning to significantly expand their use of visualization technology in the next 12 months (90% vs. 59%, *Figure 14)*.

In this study, none of the respondents told us 'we have no plans to use AR', signaling that providing an 'in-home' AR experience is now table stakes in furniture retail.

FIGURE 12

What best describes your company's current use of augmented reality (AR) in the furniture shopping experience?

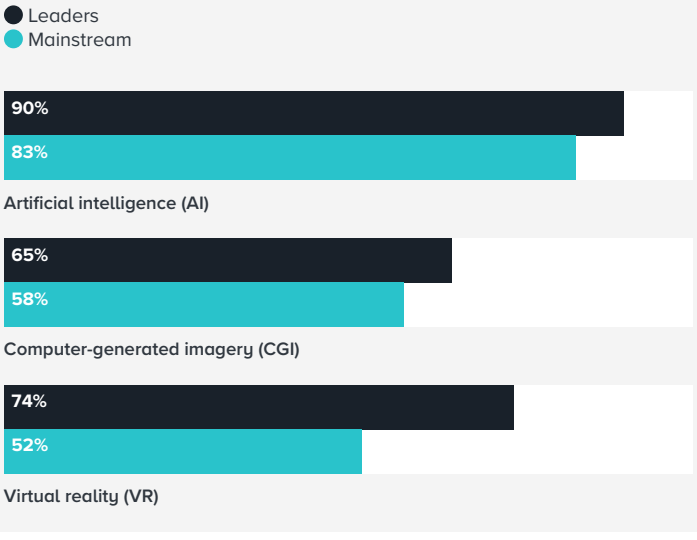


64% vs. 45%

Ecommerce leaders are more likely than their competitors to offer a fully integrated AR experience.

FIGURE 13

Which of the following technologies has your company used for better visualization of products either online or in-store?



Core vendor capabilities

Success with ecommerce visualization ultimately comes down to the retailer's choice of technology and vendor. *Figure 15* shows what respondents regard as the most important capabilities when assessing a supplier of ecommerce visualization technology. Data, analytics, and reporting, along with the ability to scale across markets, are tied as the most important capabilities, cited by 44% of respondents. Integration across ecommerce platforms is just behind at 43%, and this is consistent with 'integration' being seen as one of the biggest challenges.

Other important capabilities include an intuitive interface for consumers (42%), seamless and fast set-up (38%), an intuitive interface for the ecommerce team (34%), and mobile-friendly solutions (33%). It is important that companies prioritize seamless integration, user-friendly interfaces, and mobile optimization when selecting a visualization vendor, though each brand will have its own criteria for assessing their fit with a particular supplier.

44%

Data, analytics, and reporting, along with the ability to scale across markets, are seen as the most important capabilities for suppliers specializing in visualization technology.

FIGURE 14

Does your company plan to expand its use of visualization technology in the next 12 months?

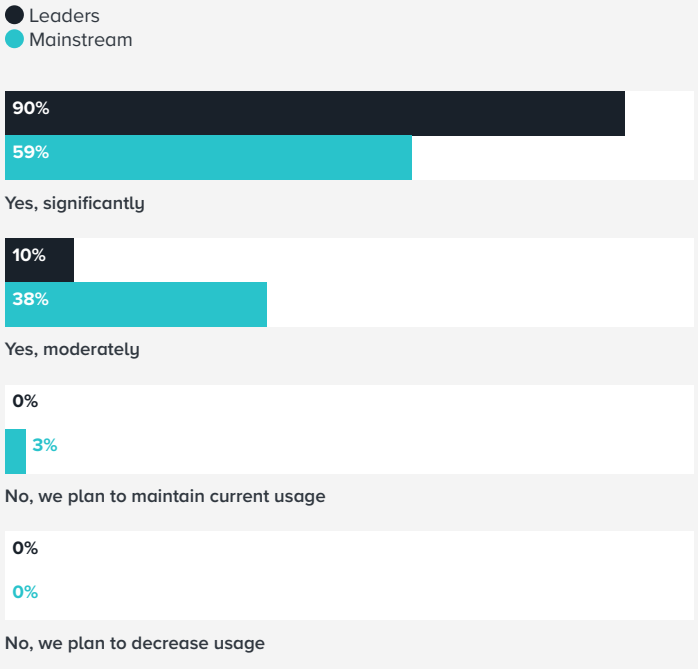
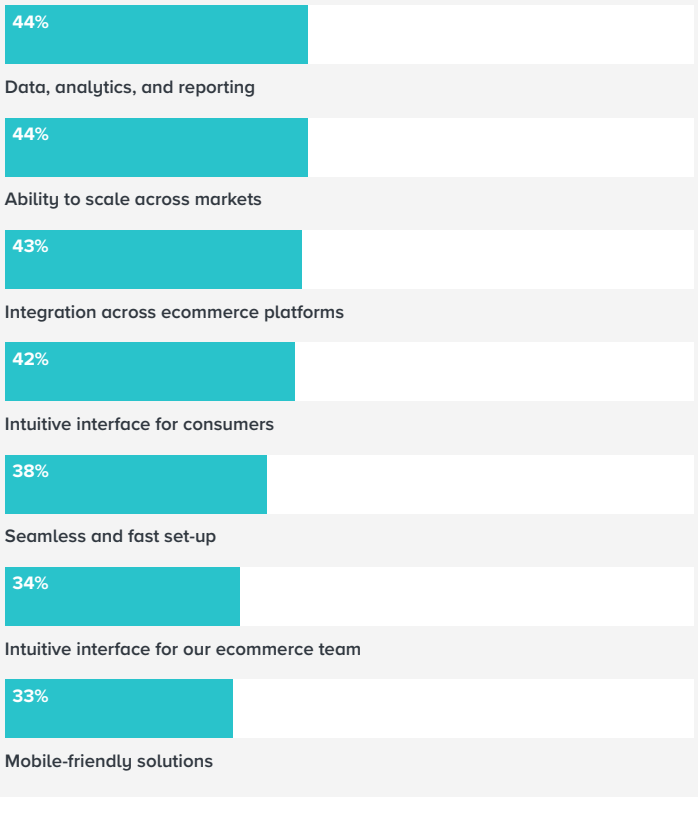


FIGURE 15

What do you regard as the most important capabilities when assessing an ecommerce visualization vendor?



Section 5

Recommendations

Five strategic recommendations for furniture retailers seeking to enhance product visualization:

Prioritize the customer experience.

While advanced visualization technologies have been emerging for some time, many can fail to provide the ease-of-use or advanced customer experience that are needed to make them effective. It's important therefore to invest in visualization technologies that have a proven record of enhancing the customer's online shopping experience. Focus on features that allow customers to customize products, visualize them in their own homes, and experience immersive shopping journeys.

Embrace personalization and customization.

Recognize the growing importance of online furniture customization by implementing solutions that allow customers to personalize and customize products to their preferences, driving engagement and sales.

Know your customer.

Use a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research to understand what is going to add value and enhance the user experience for your customers. Conduct focus groups and carry out user testing to understand what is going to work best.

Build the business case for investment.

In order to get the right level of investment for advanced product visualization (e.g. 3D room planners and modular configurators) you need to create a compelling business case which quantifies as accurately as possible both the tangible and intangible benefits. These benefits can range from better customer engagement to increased sales, less returns, and reduced costs for photoshoots and creative assets.

Choose the right vendor.

Carefully evaluate potential vendors, prioritizing those with strong integration capabilities, user-friendly interfaces (for both customers and staff), scalability, and robust data analytics and reporting. Prioritize seamless integration of visualization technologies across all ecommerce platforms to ensure a consistent and smooth customer experience across all touchpoints.

Appendix
Respondent profiles

FIGURE 16

In which region are you based?

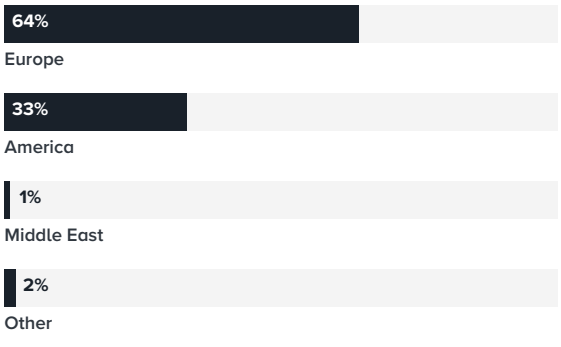


FIGURE 17

What is your annual company revenue?

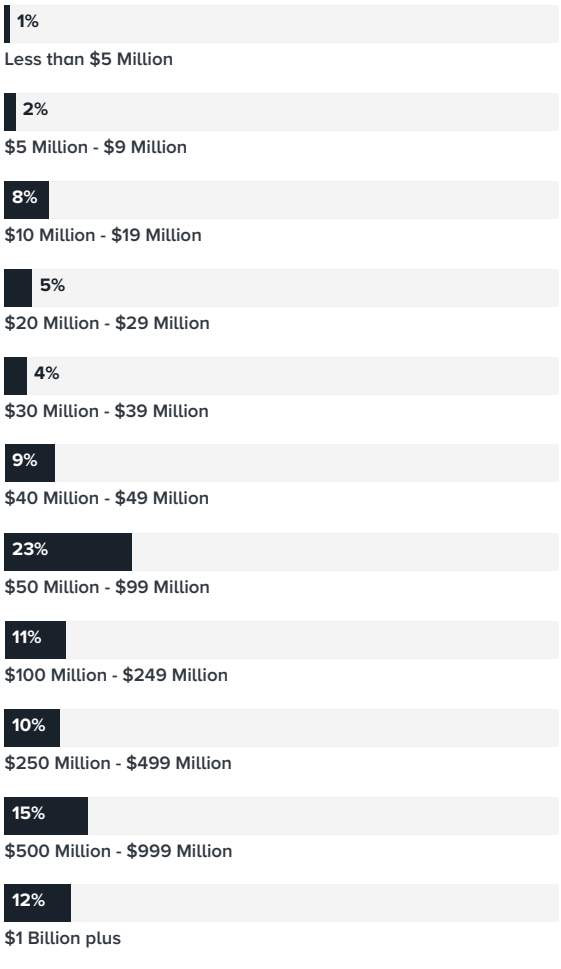


FIGURE 18

What is your level of seniority within the business?

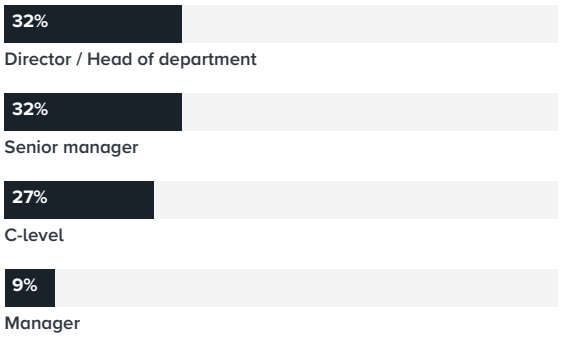
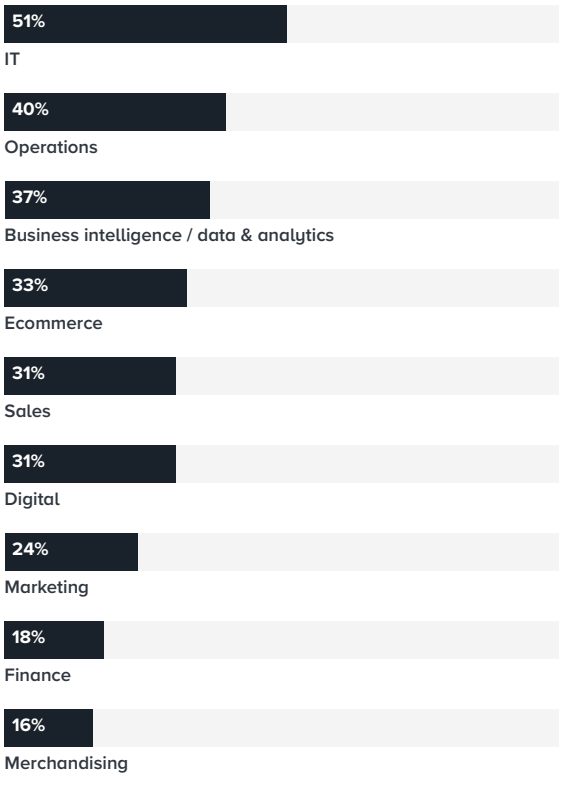


FIGURE 19

What job function or functions do you work in?



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London Research produces insight-driven content for B2B professionals, helping them make better, more informed decisions. Our clients are typically market-leading international technology businesses and global agencies. We help them tell compelling stories based on robust research and insightful data points.

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fixtuur

Fixtuur is a leading visual commerce platform helping retailers unlock the full potential of 3D visualization, augmented reality, and product configuration. Designed to be scalable, intuitive, and simple to implement, Fixtuur equips furniture brands with the tools to deliver engaging, personalized shopping experiences that inspire confidence and drive results. By bridging the gap between online exploration and in-store consultation, Fixtuur turns complexity into clarity, empowering retailers to grow with impact.

Learn more

About the author

Linus Gregoriadis
Director, London Research

Linus is Co-Founder of London Research and a renowned tech industry analyst who has spent more than 20 years producing content for industry giants such as Adobe, Microsoft, Oracle and Salesforce. He has overseen the publication of hundreds of research-based reports, and is a sought-after speaker for webinars and events internationally.


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