

Artificial Intelligence in the Retail Market

BY ANNA DEMMLER

According to Matt Marshall of Venturebeat.com, outdoor clothing retailer The North Face recently launched a mobile app that lets their customers easily find items they are seeking by using Watson, the powerful artificial intelligence computer owned by IBM. The customer speaks openly to Watson in a question-and-answer conversation via their cell phone. Watson then automatically calculates the customer's needs and quickly shows items that fit his/her specifics.

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OVERALL MATCH: LOW

WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR	THIS JACKET IS BEST FOR
Freezing	Freezing
Snow	Heavy Rain/Snow
No Wind	High Wind
Skiing	Skiing/Snowboarding

JACKET FEATURES
HEATSEEKER WATERPROOF BREATHABLE HOOD PITZIPS

WOMEN'S HEAVENLY JACKET
\$270.00

WOMEN'S KIRA TRICLIMATE® JACKET
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LEAVE FEEDBACK

THE NORTH FACE

Photo Courtesy: The North Face



Photo Courtesy: Lowe's Innovation Labs

Consumers will also soon see LoweBots, a NAVii autonomous retail service robot by Fellow Robots, roaming the aisles of Lowes. LoweBots will be used to engage, talk with, and answer any customers' questions. LoweBots also possess store-level data, and can quickly say what is happening during a certain time at other Lowe's stores.

However, as of fall 2016, LoweBots are only in 11 stores throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, so Texas consumers may have to be patient!

Andy Narayanan spoke with REDNews:

The importance and utilization of AI (artificial intelligence) in retail.



Andy Narayanan, Vice President of Intelligent Commerce, Sentient

RN: How is AI improving consumer experience (CX)?

AN: AI is already improving CX at basically every step of the consumer experience. Smarter ads and ad buying help customers see products that are right for them. Chatbots help them get their questions answered when they're unsure of what they need. Visual search AI helps users find items without searching and browsing endless pages of results, which is especially powerful on mobile. AI optimized landing pages and site experiences are more personal and tailored to unique customer needs. AI is paving the way to truly a personalized web that reacts to us individually, giving us the information we want, the products we love to shop, and so much more.

RN: In what ways can marketers utilize AI in their business?

AN: If there's a tool in a marketer's toolbox, chances are AI will be improving it. Ads and email nurture programs are being infused with artificial intelligence to help marketers learn more about their customers and serve them more accurately. AI optimization, especially, is one that we feel has real legs. Instead of using legacy solutions like A/B testing, AI testing lets marketers try all their ideas, instead of just a control experience and a single test. It does this by leaning on the transformative power of genetic algorithms to evolve sites that convert better and provide cleaner, more streamlined experiences. AI won't

replace marketers though. Far from it. It will supercharge them and let a single marketer do the job of a whole department, all by himself. Moreover, all these AI applications will allow marketers to understand each individual customer and interact with them on a 1:1 basis.

RN: How important do you think AI is to the retail experience?

AN: Incredibly. I see AI as the biggest step in retail since, well, the internet. In addition to the improvements to CX I mentioned above, artificial intelligence is going to improve buying and inventory management, which will keep hot products in stock and help retailers know where the market is heading. Passed that, you'll even start seeing AI design products itself, using the patterns and trends to forecast what buyers will want next week, next month, and next year. Ultimately, AI reduces the friction between shopper and product at every level.