

The retail industry is in the midst of significant strategic change with greater consumer demands for personalization, flexibility and responsiveness and operational demands driven by competition in supply chain management, store operations and consumer analytics.

The idea that retailing is just store clerks, cash registers, and hand carts is the thing of the past. Retailing today is about deep strategy, rich insights and fast paced demands. Many of these advances are driven by technology as complex and far-ranging as one would find in the most sophisticated global manufacturers.

The **ri.lab** at the Terry J. Lundgren Center of Retailing, in cooperation with other key departments and colleges on the University of Arizona campus, is hosting a retail technology pitch competition. This competition is driven by a series of retail technology areas identified by Plug and Play Tech Center - a startup accelerator based in Silicon Valley - who is taking an active role in supporting this initiative.

In this competition, student teams drawn from across the campus and across different academic disciplines, will have the opportunity to work together in creating and then pitching solutions to these pressing retail challenges. This process will involve working with faculty and mentors across campus and from the Tucson business community. Teams may also end up with an opportunity to be invited to Plug and Play's Startup Camp in Sunnyvale, California where the sky would be the limit. Regardless, it is a wonderful opportunity for students to learn how to work across disciplines and how they can develop an amazing career in the **real** retail industry.

So, please join us at our **All Campus Information Session** where you can learn much more about this competition and how you can get involved. If you have any immediate questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Scott Hessell, Director, Terry J. Lundgren Center for Retailing at shessell@email.arizona.edu.

All Campus Information Session

To register for this information session, sign up at: <http://ri-lab-orientation-session.eventbrite.com>

Friday, October 7 @ 2:00pm
Lecture Hall 103 in McClelland Park
650 N. Park Avenue
(across from the Park Student Union)

Current Retail Issues and Emerging Retail Technology Solutions

Issue: *"last mile" delivery*

Consumers are increasingly demanding and desiring same day and next day delivery options from all retailers. The challenge is how to make this "last mile" of the supply chain more cost efficient and process effective.

Tech Solutions:

Advanced algorithms and analytics are being deployed across the entire order and delivery process. Google Express and startups such as deliv and shutl are using crowdsourced deliveries (think Uber for package delivery) to match a consumer's same day order with couriers based on availability, route, speed of delivery, and cost. Others are developing drones to make it possible to deliver small product orders over short distances. Given that Walmart has stores within five miles of 70% of the US population and 20% of Amazon's products fit this criteria, this is a huge opportunity in retailing.

Issue: *customer store engagement*

While online sales are growing, approximately 93% of retail sales still happen in the store. But, the store-based experience is changing rapidly as consumer expectations and demands change. Consumers want more personalization and a more engaging experience.

Tech Solutions:

Leading edge tech companies are developing technologies that help retailers engage consumers in new and exciting ways. For example, the Lowe's Holeroom utilizes virtual and augmented reality and advanced content delivery to allow customers to design their kitchen or bathroom within their stores and then see that design in full size. By zooming in to check textures and see the spacing and layout of their design at scale, this solution makes the design process more immersive and rewarding for customers.

