

Fitting Room Call Buttons Promise Better Service for Apparel Customers

By linking to a retailer's back-end systems, technology can monitor traffic flow and sales patterns and calculate sales conversion rates

For department store and specialty apparel retailers, one of the most pivotal areas of the store is the fitting room, where crucial decisions to buy or not buy frequently are made.

Recognizing the importance of the fitting room, retailers for years have talked about making them more aesthetically pleasing to shoppers, with better lighting, seating and extra space. Now Gap, Victoria's Secret and a handful of other retailers are turning to technology to improve the fitting room experience, by installing call buttons that enable shoppers to signal for help from sales associates when they need a different size or color.

Using Page-Alert, a fitting room service automation system provided by Houston-based Alert Technologies, retailers hope to raise customer service levels, elevate sales conversion rates and increase the productivity of store personnel.

"The call button is just part of a retailer's corporate service strategy. It's a tool that can be used to enhance the customer experience," says Marge Laney, president of Alert Technologies. "Retailers are looking for ways to build equity with customers. Making the in-store shopping experience more pleasing by adding a call button in the fitting rooms can go a long way toward building greater customer loyalty."

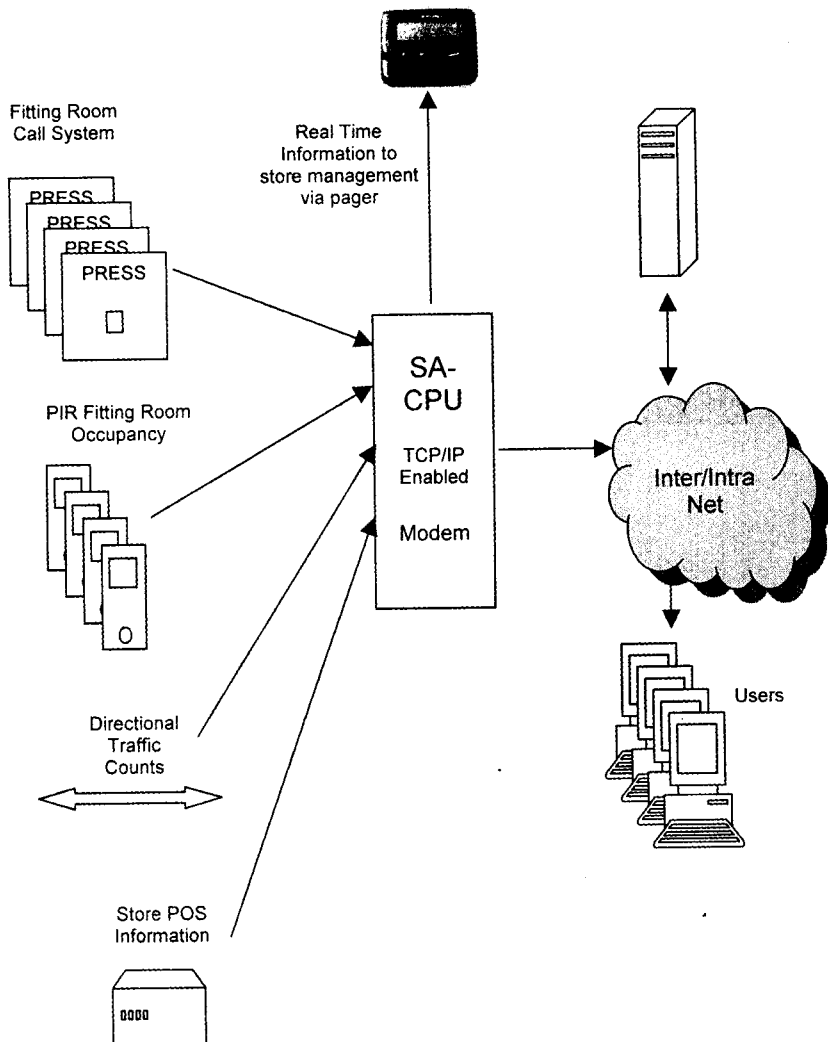
The idea is that if shoppers have someone to bring them a different size, or to consult with on how a new style is to be worn, they'll be more inclined to march out of the fitting room and up to the register to make the purchase. In addition, there are the dividends a positive in-store experience can pay. Shoppers like attention and when they get it, it's typically a memorable event and one they're anxious to replicate.

From a retailer's perspective, the advantages of installing a system such as this extend beyond customer service to

improved management of labor costs and more informed scheduling decisions. By linking to a retailer's back-end systems, Page-Alert provides a precise view of the quality and effectiveness of their sales and customer service, an account of traffic flow and sales patterns, and a means of calculating sales conversion rates.

Unlike some other types of in-store technology that scream for shoppers' attention, Alert's fitting room call buttons are simple and unobtrusive. Once the shopper presses the button, the paging system is triggered. Sales associates on the selling floor wear small paging devices that vibrate, signaling the need to attend

ADVANCED REAL TIME SOLUTIONS™ TECHNOLOGY



Advanced Real Time Solutions™ Technology allows store management to instantly assess and modify the customer service strategy based on the rate of inbound store traffic.