

ACCELERATING RETAIL

True Religion will open 4 stores this year, bringing its US total to 61...**Target** will open 11 US stores in 10 states in July, adding to its goal of 30 in 2026...**Consumer Cellu-**



Target will open 11 stores in 10 states in July

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lar opened its 100th store. It plans to reach 120 locations by the end of 2026...**Casey's General Stores** will add 400 stores...**FAO Schwarz** opened a shop inside **Nordstrom's** NYC flagship. Schwarz will open stores-within-a-store in 8 US Nordstroms...**Birdcall** plans to add 100 restaurants in 6 states...**Einstein Bros. Bagels** will open 300+ US locations by 2030...**Barnes & Noble** will open 60 stores in 10 states in 2026. It opened dozens of stores in 2025... **Primark** will open its 7th TX store and 1st Indiana store. With the 2 openings, Primark will have 44 US stores. Saks Global wrapped up its bankruptcy, emerging as Exemplar Luxury Group...**Bass Pro Shops** will open its largest single-level location in Sayreville, NJ, as well as a store in La Mesa, CA...**In-N-Out Burger** will open 6 restaurants across 5 states. It currently operates 430+ restaurants in 10 states...**Freddy's Frozen Custard & Steakburgers** is on track to open app.60 restaurants in 2026 as it approaches 600 locations...**Trader Joe's** will open stores in 8 states, and plans 21 stores over the next 6 months...**Aritzia** opened 16 new and repositioned US stores. It currently operates 143 stores across North America...**Costco** will open 7 locations in August. It currently has 928 locations worldwide and plans 30+ warehouses annually... Tailored Brands, which runs **Men's Wearhouse**, **Jos. A. Bank**, **Moore's**, and **K&G Fashion Superstore**, has filed for an IPO, with plans to

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RETAIL OBSERVATIONS

Chris Cardoni, Contributor

OBSERVATION: Retail Technology Tales: A trio of tech stories caught my attention this month. Retailers and their customers are concerned about spam calls, the security of retail sites, and of course the continuing encroachment, and best uses, of AI.

First up, from **Retail Dive**, a piece about how retailers are taking action and making investments in these areas (*Retailers plan to invest deeper in AI, cybersecurity this*



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year: The majority of retailers already allocate more than \$50 million annually to technology, while 28% spend between \$100 million and \$250 million a year, Tatiana Walk-Morris, Contributor, Retail Dive.com, July 8, 2026): "More than half (52%) of retailers are pouring \$50 million or more into digital technology annually...[including] 28% who are allocating between \$100 million and \$250 million.

The majority (86%) of respondents said their tech enhancements are "frequently improving business value." Furthermore, most have realized between 31% and 40% of their total financial value from AI and other intelligence tech tools, per the report...AI has become a ubiquitous tool to help companies gain a competitive edge and drive future growth. While some retailers are diving headfirst into their AI integrations, others are balancing AI tools with human connection".

Next up, Chain Store Age explores the problem of AI fraud in AI-generated fake websites are eroding consumer trust — here's how (Dan Berthiaume, **CSA.com**, 7/7/2026): "The rise of fraudulent e-commerce sites based on artificial intelligence is a troubling trend for both shoppers and retailers. Although two-in- three (65%) surveyed consumers...are confident they can identify fake websites, an overwhelming 92% agree that the rise of AI-generated content is making it significantly harder to determine if a website is legitimate...In addition...

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KPP NEWS

New Leasing Business: VP of Retail Brokerage Rob Grady is handling handle for **850 Washington Street**, a free-standing retail property in Attleboro, MA. There is a 5,300 s/f subdividable space available at the property, which faces busy Route 1 between I-295 and I-95.



open 500+ stores over the next decade, starting with 20 this year...**L.L.Bean** will open its 1st GA store in Lula Hills, the redevelopment of North DeKalb Mall. It now has 70 US stores...**Hand & Stone Massage and Facial Spa** signed a development agreement to open 13 locations over the next 5-6 years. Hand & Stone has 650+ units in 36 states and Canada... **Ikea** will open 7 US stores through winter 2027.



Ikea will open 7 stores and close 2 small-format stores

Photo@salarko@123RF.COM

DECELERATING RETAIL

Ikea will close two of its small-footprint Plan & Order Point with Pick-up locations in August. It currently has 32 such stores in 14 states...**KFC** closed 300+ US stores in past year... **LA Fitness** will close 4 locations this summer.

NEW ENGLAND RETAIL

Davio's Northern Italian Steakhouse will close its Chestnut Hill restaurant this month...**Chipotle Mexican Grill** will open its 1st restaurant in Mashpee, MA...**HARIBO, Gymbo-ree, and Fabletics** are among new tenants at Wrentham Village Premium Outlets...**BRED Bar** will open this month in Kendall Square, Cambridge... Indoor tennis club **Court 16** will open this month at Allston Yards, its 1st Boston location and 2nd in the region; the other is in Newton...**REI** will close its Landmark Center location in Boston next month after 23 year, part of a round of shutdowns announced last year.

MONTHLY RETAIL SALES: COMMERCE DEPT.

Retail sales rose 0.2% in June, the Commerce Department said. Excluding gas stations, retail sales were up 0.7%.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce - commerce.gov

CONSUMER CONFIDENCE INDEX

The Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index® inched up to 91.2 in June, up from a revised 90.6 in May.

Source: The Conference Board - www.conference-board.org

Most retailers allocate more than \$50 million annually to technology

seven-in-10 (72%) have misidentified a legitimate site as an AI-driven scam simply because it was slow or glitchy...When a site feels suspicious...39% will completely abandon their purchase.

One-in-five respondents will immediately switch to a competitor when a site feels "off." More than half (53%) of respondents state they are unlikely to return to a website after a single suspicious experience, even if it turns out to be 100% legitimate. If a bad actor clones an organization's website, more than one in three (34%) respondents will trust the original brand less, and 28% will directly blame them for not preventing it...Overall, respondents rank the original brand as the number two entity responsible for protecting them - behind personal vigilance but ahead of Big Tech, AI creators, and government regulators".

Finally, I don't know about you, but I'm constantly plagued by spam calls (and texts, and emails), which has dramatically changed my phone habits (I just never answer). Another **CSA** piece explores how spam effects consumer phone response (*EXCLUSIVE: Here's how spam calls change consumer behavior*, Dan Berthiaume, **CSA.com**, 7/8/2026): "Fatigue from spam calls and texts is affecting shopper willingness to share information.

Data from a survey of 1,000 U.S. consumers conducted by privacy and identity protection service Cloaked...indicates respondents receive an average of 16 spam calls and nine spam texts per month. Robocalls ranked as the most bothersome type of unwanted contact...followed by spam texts (20%) and phishing emails (14%).

Unsurprisingly, more than half of respondents (55%) refuse to share their real phone number on social media due to spam, while 33% decline to do so while online shopping and 26% won't share their number with a rewards program...21% assume any unknown call is spam and completely ignore it. Altogether, around eight in 10 respondents rarely or never answer calls or texts from numbers they don't recognize.



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More than half of respondents (53%) have enabled their carrier's spam filtering feature, while 43% said they avoid giving their real number online and 41% had registered on the national Do Not Call Registry. Smaller percentages have reported spam to their carrier or the Federal Trade Commission (32%), used a call-blocking app (23%) or used a burner phone number (11%)...When given a list of 15 major carriers, tech companies, and government agencies, 42% of respondents said they trust none of them to responsibly handle their personal phone data".

Sources: Chain Store Age.com; Retail Dive.com

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