

WILDIX RECEIVES THE 2023 NEW PRODUCT INNOVATION AWARD

*Identified as best in class in the global UCaaS for
frontliners in retail industry*



Best Practices Criteria for World-Class Performance

Frost & Sullivan applies a rigorous analytical process to evaluate multiple nominees for each award category before determining the final award recipient. The process involves a detailed evaluation of best practices criteria across two dimensions for each nominated company. Wildix excels in many of the criteria in delivering compelling UCaaS for frontliners in retail organizations.

AWARD CRITERIA	
<i>New Product Attributes</i>	<i>Customer Impact</i>
Match to Needs	Price/Performance Value
Reliability	Customer Purchase Experience
Quality	Customer Ownership Experience
Positioning	Customer Service Experience
Design	Brand Equity

Match to Needs

The unified communications market is maturing quickly with the adoption of functionally robust cloud-based unified communications as a service (UCaaS). With maturation, solutions are evolving from catering to primarily horizontal use cases to addressing vertical and line-of-business requirements. In the business communications market, providers have traditionally catered to desk and office-based workers. As a

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result, frontline workers, those in direct physical contact with customers, have long been underserved. Task completion and workflows for campus staff, field services personnel, retail floor associates, and other desk-less workers are too often compromised. These workers have, by and large, been equipped with solutions designed for desk-bound employees or provided radios or other devices that are poorly, or not at all, integrated with their company communications and collaboration systems. The shortcomings of such a short-sighted approach include reduced productivity, safety, and ability to deliver efficient customer service. Often, frontline workers also lack timely, contextual access to information and business communications capabilities at the right time.

In annual Frost & Sullivan IT/telecom decision-maker surveys, improving customer experience ranks as a top-three investment driver. In the retail and wholesale industry, 84% of organizations report that improving customer experience is important, very important, or crucial when making investments in communications and collaboration solutions. Also significant, 79% of organizations in this vertical report that empowering frontline workers is important, very important, or crucial in communications investment decisions. However, business communications tools have by and large not been correctly tailored to frontliners in the retail industry. The primary factor preventing retail and wholesale organizations from meeting or exceeding frontline worker empowerment goals, reported by 35% of IT decision-makers in this vertical, is the lack of skills internally to leverage technologies effectively. Other key challenges include the cost of rolling out technologies to a larger number of employees and the limited availability of appropriate tools, both reported by 31% of survey respondents in retail and wholesale organizations. The issue is particularly concerning for brick-and-mortar retail operations, in which customer experience and loyalty are critical to compete with the convenience of e-commerce platforms and e-tailors. Brick-and-mortar retailers must continually pivot to align with evolving customer preferences, such as the recent surge in demand for in-store and curbside order pick-up capabilities.

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Positioning and Design

Core elements of the x-hoppers retail communication solution include digital cordless enhanced telephony (DECT) headsets with Wildix firmware for hands-free communication and integration with the Wildix cloud-based unified communications platform. Using the cloud-based retail communication software, all incoming calls can be routed directly to in-store associates' headsets to coordinate with teammates and quickly assist in-store and remote customers. The headsets are designed with intuitive tactile controls to answer and make calls, broadcast messages to teammates, control volume and mute—all with minimal user training requirements.

The solution additionally features innovative use of QR codes. Customers can scan QR codes to directly call store associates for assistance or access store e-commerce and product pages. QR codes can address multiple use cases and be placed in dressing rooms, at point-of-sale locations, or on product shelves to speed receipt of customer requests and provide associates with information on where to find the inquiring customer within the store.

Through Wildix-powered web real-time communications technology (WebRTC) or widgets, retailers can embed click-to-call and click-to-chat capabilities in their websites, enabling customers to seamlessly connect with retailer contact centers or in-store associates. Shop locations with slow foot traffic activity can leverage Wildix technology to enable store associates to handle overflow from contact centers or other shop locations. Leveraging Wildix cloud-based UCaaS solutions, shops with multiple locations can deliver consistent experiences for both associates and customers no matter their location.

Reliability

Each x-hoppers headset device connects to a wireless DECT channel, which separates communications traffic from the retailers' sometimes unreliable or overburdened Wi-Fi networks that are comparatively more susceptible to hackers. The DECT network is designed to cover over 100,000 thousand square meters, which is enough for virtually any store and even some malls.

The specialized x-hoppers firmware integrates with the Wildix UCaaS platform such that the devices are secured through the same communications and collaboration system the retailer uses for corporate needs. As such, the headsets are protected by the same security mechanisms as the retailer's other communications endpoints and can be monitored and managed through the same system administration utilities.



x-hoppers image provided by Wildix

Reliability also pertains to customer service capabilities. x-hoppers connects all associate headsets on a single voice channel, ensuring team collaboration to quickly resolve customer issues when needed. Store managers can dial into the single-channel broadcast at any time to monitor in-store communications and performance, including when workers join or leave the broadcast, and use call detail records (CDRs) for tracking volume, frequency, and interaction information.

Customer Purchase Experience

Local technology partners know their customers best, including the preferences, culture, and economics of their retailers' consumers. That is why it is optimal that Wildix solutions are sold 100% through the company's network of channel partners. Partners help retailers design their deployment strategies for in-store customer support, QR code placement for new or trending products, and potential trouble spots

such as dressing rooms, in-store and curbside order pick-up, and self-checkout. x-hoppers and Wildix UCaaS can also be localized or deployed as multi-lingual solutions in English, Italian, French, German, or Spanish, enabling retailers to further customize the experience to best serve their customers.

x-hoppers devices also provide a level of customization with headsets available in several wearing styles to address differing user needs, preferences, and environments, including mono/single ear with neck band, mono/single ear with headband, and mono with ear clip.

Wildix offers the x-hoppers Green Box demonstration kit to prospective customers. The kit is fully equipped with hardware and software required for a comprehensive trial, including six headsets (two of each wearing style), a multi-headset charger, necessary cables, plugs, x-hoppers keychain, and a small business DECT base station.

Green Box trial licenses included address differing retail roles:

- two each of the x-hopper BackOffice license for administrators and other non-customer-facing roles providing access to internal chat, meetings, and external calls
- six each of the SalesFloorHopper-AI license for in-store retail floor associates with full communications capabilities (chat, meetings, external calls), a website widget, CRM integrations, contact center event logging, an internal broadcast channel, and customer service AI prompts
- one each of the x-hopper SuperHopper-AI license for managers and supervisors that provides everything in the SalesFloorHopper license plus contact center stats, wallboard, and analytics.

Considering the many components, x-hoppers is unique among many frontliner solutions because of its customization capabilities, and because it is designed as a native application with tight integration with Wildix cloud communications platforms, not as a proprietary or third-part bolt-on. This effectively simplifies solution hardware and software sourcing and licensing, streamlines solution implementation and management, and tightens vendor support accountability for buyers.

Customer Ownership Experience

x-hoppers offers many value points compared to legacy two-way radio/walkie-talkie and paging solutions that retailers have traditionally adopted. The solution delivers discrete communication capabilities for store associates, allowing them to interact privately without distracting or disrupting customers with

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frequent radio bursts or overhead paging announcements. x-hoppers users can discretely notify teammates of spills and other safety hazards or alert security in the event of shoplifting attempts. The use of headsets also enables associates to manage their tasks hands-free, for example stocking shelves, taking inventory, retrieving in-store or curbside pick-up orders, or managing point-of-sale stations.

The analytics capabilities in x-hoppers deliver new insights to retail managers and shop owners. x-hoppers reports the number of people that have connected to

the system's broadcast, the number of interactions, the speed of response times and who responded. The system also automatically transcribes conversations conducted on the headsets to provide insights into how associates collaborate, identify issues, and create best practices. Analytics from QR scans may also be used to learn more about customer engagement, predict behavior, make data-driven decisions about the performance of product placement, and customize and optimize shelf space.

Supported by an in-house R&D team, x-hoppers continues to innovate with additional AI and analytics features planned for release in the next few months. In addition to the current AI theft detection, this includes automatic alerts for other AI-detected incidents such as spills, falls, and queue formation. Managers will also be able to see everything that has happened on the broadcast channel in a daily recap report and through posts in the associated chat, including QR code scans and short video clips of each AI alert.

In x-hoppers, buyers have opportunities to modernize and up-level their in-store customer experiences with faster, better associate responses, improve endpoint reliability and security, and gain new actionable insights to improve operations for increased sales.

Conclusion

In the online era, brick-and-mortar retailers must constantly find ways to improve their customer experience capabilities and optimize valuable shelf and floor space. x-hoppers for retail communication presents retailers with opportunities to modernize their operations and address numerous use cases with a single solution.

For its strong overall performance, Wildix is recognized with Frost & Sullivan's 2023 Global New Product Innovation Award for delivering compelling UCaaS for frontliners in the retail industry.

What You Need to Know about the New Product Innovation Recognition

Frost & Sullivan's New Product Innovation Award recognizes the company that offers a new product or solution that uniquely addresses key customer challenges.

Best Practices Award Analysis

For the New Product Innovation Award, Frost & Sullivan analysts independently evaluated the criteria listed below.

New Product Attributes

Match to Needs: Customer needs directly influence and inspire product design and positioning

Reliability: Product consistently meets or exceeds customer performance expectations

Quality: Product offers best-in-class quality with a full complement of features and functionality

Positioning: Product serves a unique, unmet need that competitors cannot easily replicate

Design: Product features an innovative design that enhances both visual appeal and ease of use

Customer Impact

Price/Performance Value: Products or services provide the best value for the price compared to similar market offerings

Customer Purchase Experience: Quality of the purchase experience assures customers that they are buying the optimal solution for addressing their unique needs and constraints

Customer Ownership Experience: Customers proudly own the company's product or service and have a positive experience throughout the life of the product or service

Customer Service Experience: Customer service is accessible, fast, stress-free, and high quality

Brand Equity: Customers perceive the brand positively and exhibit high brand loyalty

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Key Impacts:

- **Growth Pipeline:** Continuous Flow of Growth Opportunities
- **Growth Strategies:** Proven Best Practices
- **Innovation Culture:** Optimized Customer Experience
- **ROI & Margin:** Implementation Excellence
- **Transformational Growth:** Industry Leadership



The Innovation Generator™

Our 6 analytical perspectives are crucial in capturing the broadest range of innovative growth opportunities, most of which occur at the points of these perspectives.

Analytical Perspectives:

- **Mega Trend (MT)**
- **Business Model (BM)**
- **Technology (TE)**
- **Industries (IN)**
- **Customer (CU)**
- **Geographies (GE)**

