

What Happened?

Recapping the Craziest Holiday Shopping Season on Record

A RetailWire Webinar, sponsored by:



Al McClain

CEO, Co-founder, RetailWire

Al McClain has spent 30+ years in the retail, tech, and CPG spaces. Al's career highlights include sales and management stints with Luzianne-Blue Plate Foods, Bestfoods, Red Rose Tea, and Progressive Grocer (Trade Dimensions and Retail Insights divisions).

Al has also spoken extensively at industry events such as Shoptalk and for the National Grocers Association, the Institute for International Research, the Magazine Publishers Association, and the Category Management Association. He has written for publications such as Nielsen Wire, Loyalty Management and Forbes.com.

The retail industry's premier online discussion site.

The screenshot displays the RetailWire website interface. At the top, there are social media icons and a search bar. The main content area features three discussion cards:

- Has Barnes & Noble found its savior(s)?** (June 12, 2019) - 17 EXPERT COMMENTS. Includes a quote: "The retail graveyard is filled with well-known brands that have fallen victim to excessive debt loads and their own dated business practices."
- What does FedEx's break with Amazon mean?** (June 12, 2019) - 16 EXPERT COMMENTS. Includes a quote: "I suspect Amazon is placing unrecouable cost demands on FedEx. Glad they are going out."
- Kroger is high on the CBD sales opportunity** (June 12, 2019) - 11 EXPERT COMMENTS. Includes a quote: "CBD in retail is expected to be a \$2B business by 2022. Retailers who aren't already making moves to take advantage of this \$2B opportunity have missed the boat."

On the right side, there is a section for **IRI EARLY VIEW 2019: Consumer Food and Beverage Spending Trends**, with a quote: "Younger millennial spending on food and beverages is clearly outpacing older baby boomers and retirees." Below this is a **TRENDING** sidebar with categories like Consumer Marketing, Online Retail, Management Strategy, Products Brands, Human Resources, Operations, Customer Service, Category Management, Amazon, and Retail Tech.

At the bottom, there is a **RESOURCES** section with three featured articles:

- "Your POS should be a point of engagement"
- "IRI's Early View 2019: Consumer Food and Beverage Spending Trends"
- "See How Retailers Can Lead with Unified Commerce"

Uniquely engaging

Three active, in-depth online discussions each business day

Influential community

Mid to top management from a variety of retail disciplines

Collective thinking

Sharp editorial, plus the combined expertise of over 125 RetailWire BrainTrust panelists.

Today's agenda



Feature presentation

RESEARCH RESULTS: 2020 Post-holiday Season Review

- Amanda Nichols, Sr. Manager, Industry Marketing, UKG
- Rob Snyder, COO & Co-founder, SYRG



Panel discussion

- Amanda Nichols, Sr. Manager, Industry Marketing, UKG
- Rob Snyder, COO & Co-founder, SYRG
- Bob Phibbs, President/CEO, The Retail Doctor



Audience Q&A

Featured presenter

Amanda Nichols

Sr. Manager, Industry Marketing, UKG

Amanda Nichols leads the marketing practice for the retail, hospitality and food service industries at UKG (Ultimate Kronos Group), a leader in workforce management and HCM cloud software solutions.

In her role, Amanda has a keen eye on tracking and identifying trends that will shape the future of work. She regularly works with both clients and prospects to improve their workforce management and employee engagement strategies by mapping trends to business objectives.

Featured presenter

Rob Snyder

COO & Co-founder, SYRG

Rob Snyder is the Co-Founder of Syrg, a technology company pioneering Future Employee Relationship Management (FERM) which is revolutionizing the way frontline employees are recruited and retained.

Rob has an MBA from Harvard Business School and a background in technology, management consulting, and startups.



UKG and SYRG

What Just Happened? Recapping the Craziest Holiday Shopping Season on Record

January 27th, 2021

Amanda Nichols and Rob Snyder



Agenda

What Happened in 2020?

Recruitment Strategies

Workforce Impacts of COVID-19

Pros and Cons of Seasonal Employees

The Real Holiday Hero: Store Managers



Were retailers prepared for the 2020 holiday shopping season?

Not Exactly...

96%

said their stores faced hiring challenges related to **scaling their workforce**



65%

felt they **didn't have adequate headcount** to consistently meet shopper demand



60%

of retail store managers said they **never fully met** their hiring goals for the season



35%

said it was **more difficult** to meet seasonal hiring goals this year than last



What were the main challenges retailers faced?

Retail managers identified many recruitment challenges, including:

49%

Recruiting employees capable of performing many in-store duties

41%

Getting in front of qualified applicants

30%

Identifying top talent from a large pool of applicants

43%

Competition from other retail stores for talent

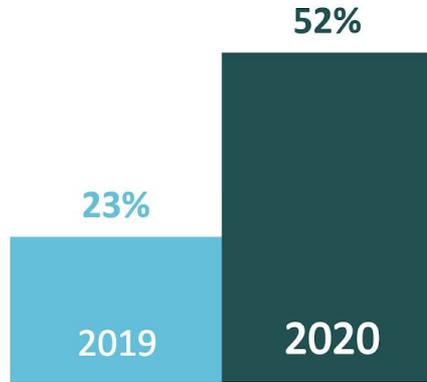
31%

Recruiting former seasonal employees

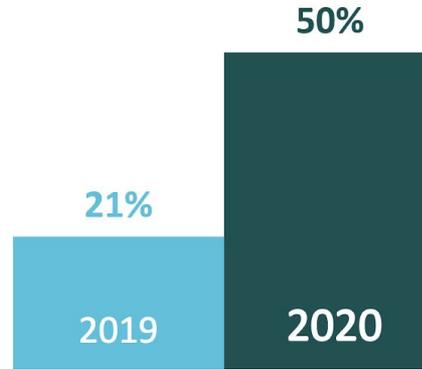
25%

Keeping candidates engaged

The retail technology arms race has begun...



Made a new investment in **talent acquisition technology** within the past 12 months

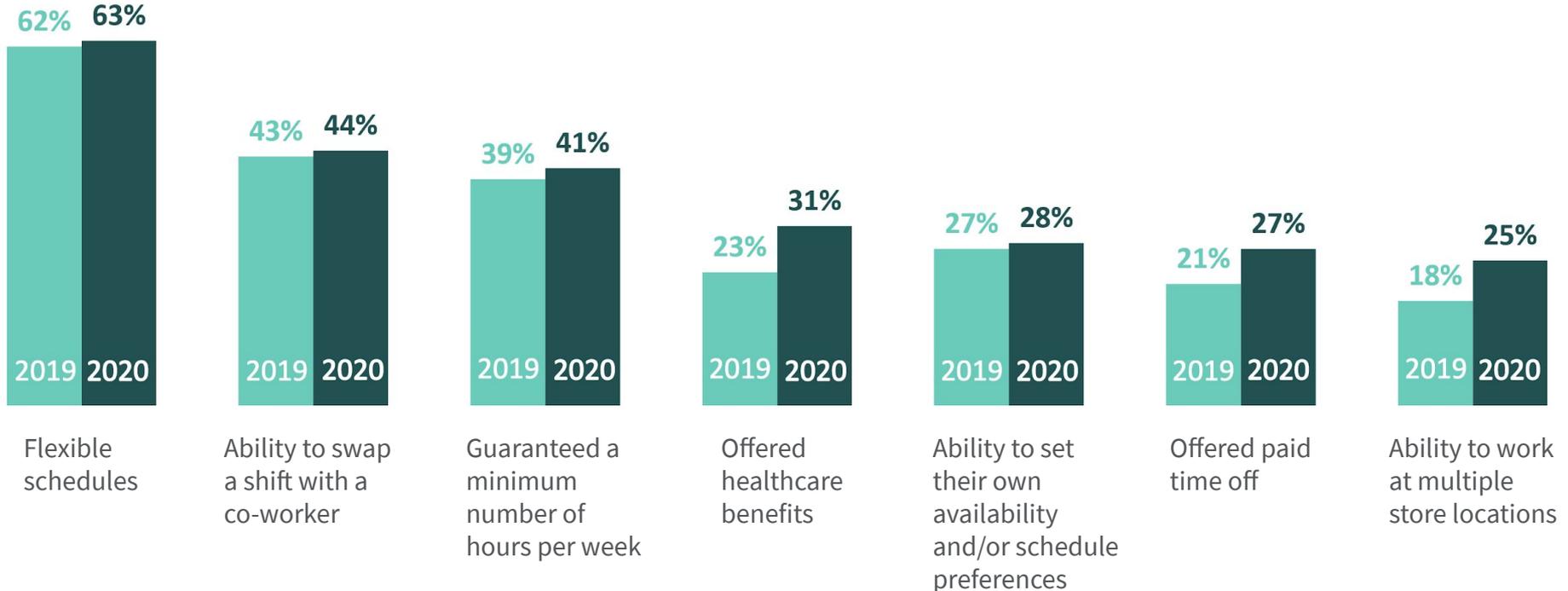


Made a new investment in **onboarding technology** within the past 12 months

Recruitment strategies focused on new candidate sources

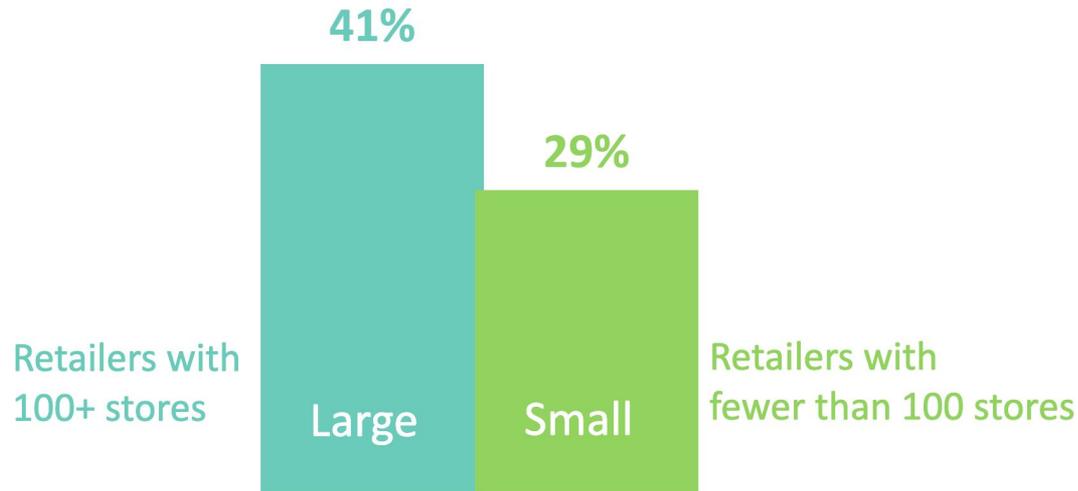


Benefits offered to attract seasonal employees

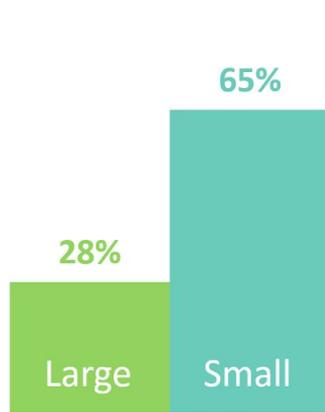


Large retailers found it more difficult to hire

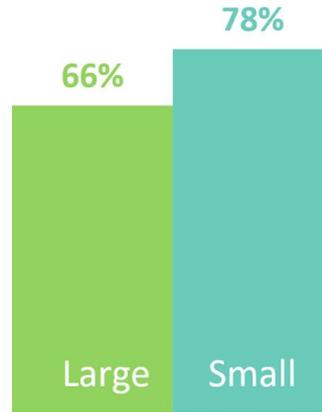
Percent of retailers who said it was more difficult to meet seasonal hiring goals



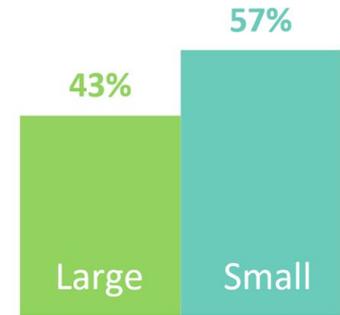
Smaller retailers quickly adopted new practices



Communicated with candidates via social media

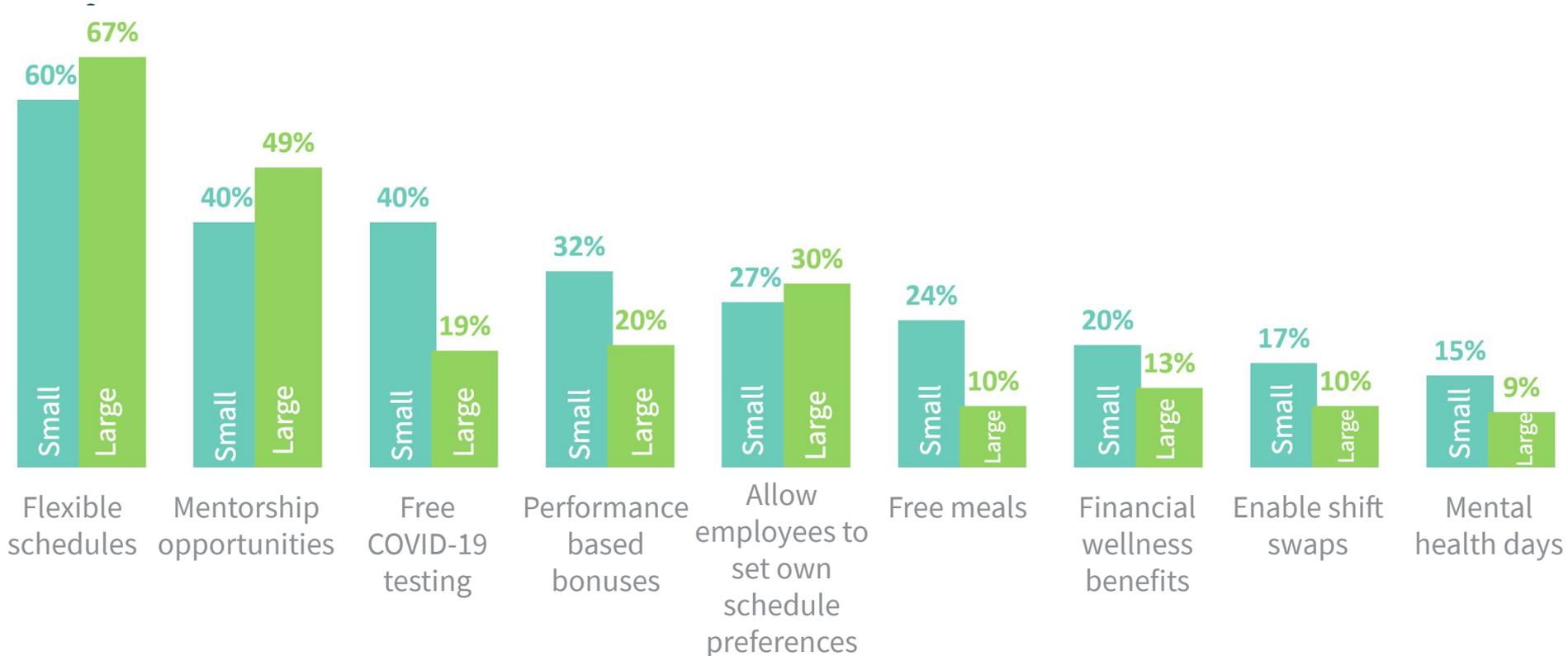


Proactively reached out to past seasonal workers to recruit them for the 2020 season



Communicated with candidates via text message

Different employee value props based on retailer



Retailers underestimated how stressful COVID-19 would be for their employees

72%

anticipated store employees would “often” feel anxious or stressed out about COVID-19 while at work...

...however, it turns out...

...81%

said store employees expressed these emotions at least once a month.

Also...

42%

of retail managers said store employees expressed feelings of anxiety or stress related to COVID-19 while at work at least 2-3 times a week

Retailers underestimated how stressful COVID-19 would be for their employees

Harder to retain

48%

said store employees quit at least once a month due to personal concerns about COVID-19

31%

of retail managers said employee burnout was more of a concern

29%

agree that store staff morale throughout the 2020 holiday season was generally lower than in prior years

The pros and cons of seasonal employees

the good...



The pros and cons of seasonal employees

...the bad...



The pros and cons of seasonal employees

...and the costly



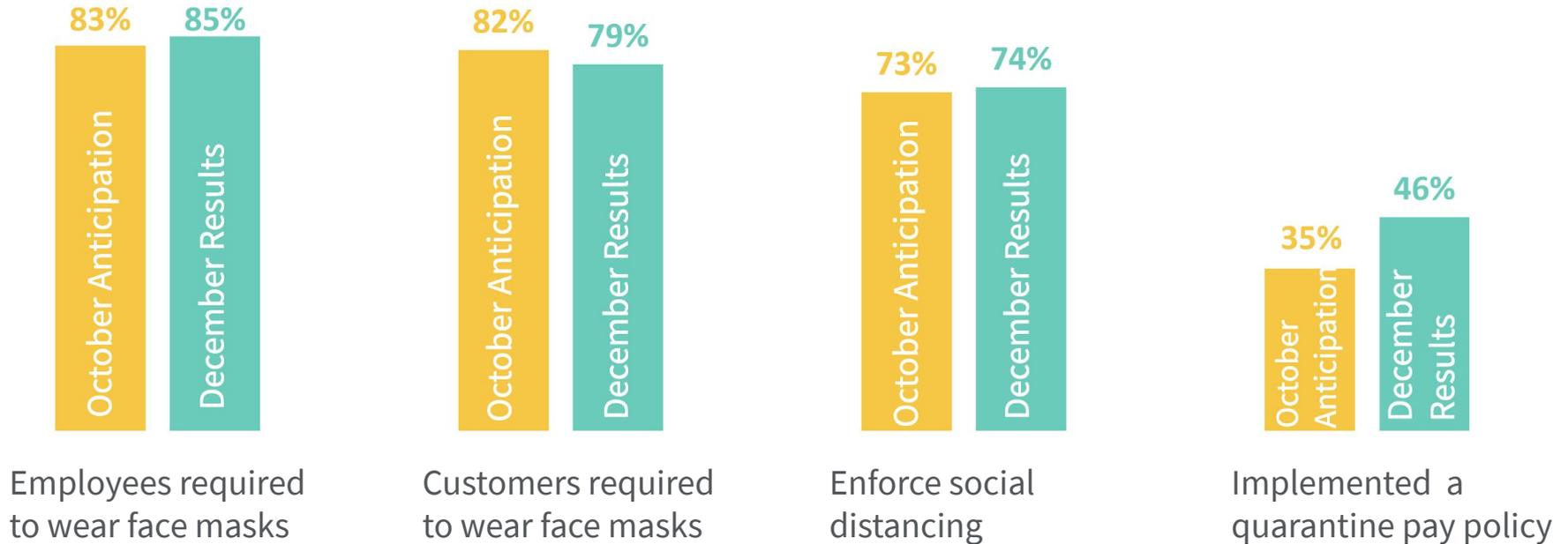
of retailers said unplanned absence meant stores paid out more overtime than expected



of retailers said unplanned absence meant stores paid out more overtime than expected

Retail store manager: the real holiday hero

There could be a hero in this story though: the store manager. The success of the 2020 holiday season falls on their shoulders. Just look at everything managers are required to enforce:



We are in a Technology Arms Race

Recruiting Top Applicants

- Meet them where they are
- Simplify the process
- Sell them: why you vs. competition?

Engaging Employees

- Give them flexibility
- Help them earn more money
- Make it easy

Enabling Managers

- Give them tools and structure
- Allow for flexibility
- Empower them to make smart decisions

Panel Discussion: How stores are dealing with hiring and staffing challenges



Amanda Nichols
Sr. Manager, Industry
Marketing, UKG

Bob Phibbs
President/CEO, The
Retail Doctor

Rob Snyder
COO & Co-founder,
SYRG

Al McClain
CEO, Co-founder,
RetailWire

Bob Phibbs

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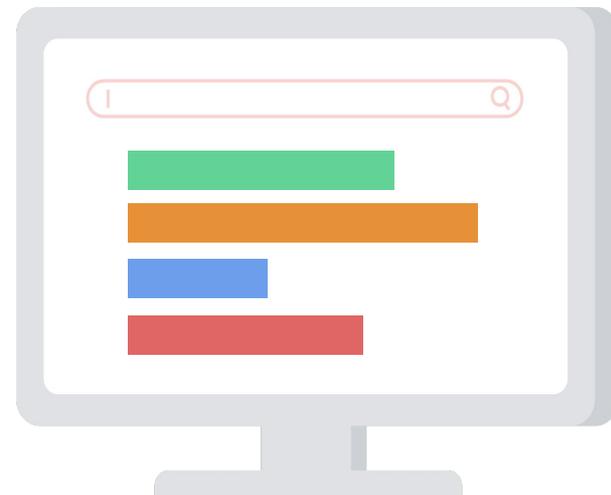
Bob Phibbs, the Retail Doctor®, is a Certified Speaking Professional (CSP), customer service expert, and founder of SalesRX, an online retail sales training platform that specializes in working with retailers and brands who want to sell their merchandise more profitably. He has helped thousands of businesses in hospitality, manufacturing, service, restaurant and retail since 1994.

Audience Poll

#1: True or false: The pandemic didn't really make holiday recruitment harder. It's been getting harder every year anyway.

Poll Results (single answer required):

Totally true	15%
Somewhat true	26%
Somewhat false	26%
Totally false	26%
No clue	7%



Panel Discussion: How stores are dealing with hiring and staffing challenges

#1: Recruitment rethink?

Has the pandemic made the challenge of finding good store workers harder, or are we just in denial about problems that already existed?

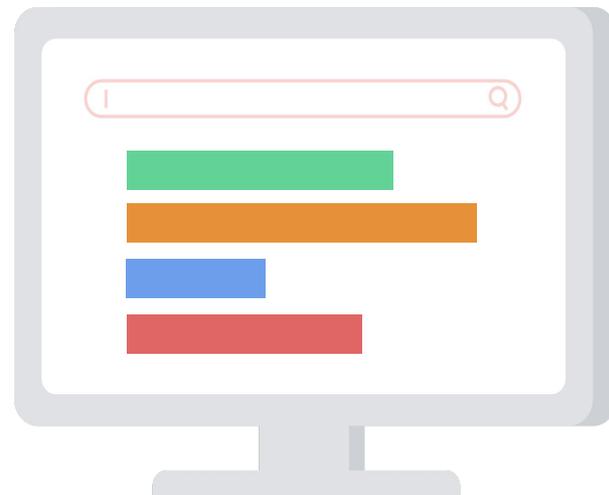
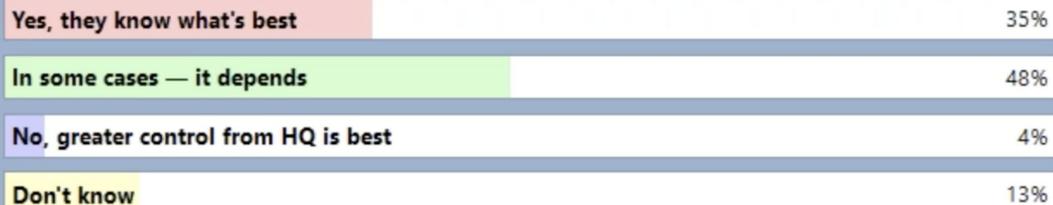
In what ways has the COVID-19 crisis focused retailers on how they must improve their recruiting methods?



Audience Poll

#2: Do you endorse giving big chain store managers more autonomy to make staffing decisions?

Poll Results (single answer required):



#2: Power to the Heroes

Retail managers stepped up big time during the pandemic. Do you endorse allowing them greater autonomy given the need to be more responsive to changing conditions?

How can technology help?

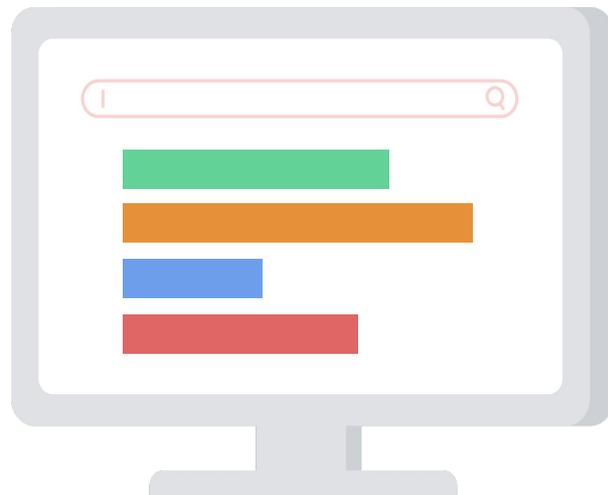


Audience Poll

#3: How was your anxiety level this past holiday season?

Poll Results (single answer required):

We cool. No problem.	15%
A bit rough but manageable	60%
Oof. Don't get me started.	25%



#3: How We Talk About Anxiety

Do you attribute reports of low employee morale during the holidays to COVID-19 concerns or tougher selling circumstances?

What recommendations do you have for helping managers and associates reduce stress?





YOUR QUESTIONS FOR THE PANEL.

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SYRG

Al McClain
CEO, Co-founder,
RetailWire

For more information...

UKG

Amanda Nichols: amanda.nichols@ukg.com

The Retail Doctor

Bob Phibbs: bob@retaildoc.com
(562) 260-2266

SYRG

Rob Snyder: rob@syrg.app

RetailWire

Al McClain: almcclain@retailwire.com
(561) 398-0613

Don't forget...

Download the complete report from UKG.

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Please stick around a moment longer...

