

# MALL OMNICHANNEL RETAIL INDEX 2021

Are Malls Embracing Digital Transformation Quickly Enough?



# Introduction

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**The traditional mall is evolving faster than ever – mall owners and operators are feeling the pressure to stay relevant to a new generation of ‘on-demand’ digital shoppers and improve performance while adapting to new retail business and leasing models. But are they moving fast enough?**

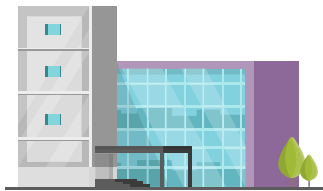
The COVID-19 pandemic forced retailers and brands to accelerate the adoption of digital and omnichannel capabilities such as curbside pickup. Most malls, however, are still stuck in the past. It is time for mall owners and operators to realize the value of digital transformation of their malls and meeting places and prioritize improving digital synergies with retailers.

The first ever global Mall Omnichannel Retail Index evaluates how malls are embracing (or not embracing) digital transformation across the entire customer journey to meet changing consumer wants and needs.



# How are malls meeting consumer demands for digital and omnichannel experiences?

We benchmarked 60 malls around the world to find out!



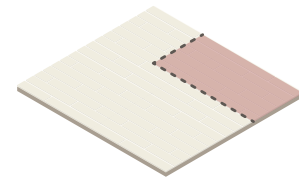
**60**

GLOBAL MALLS



**28**

COUNTRIES

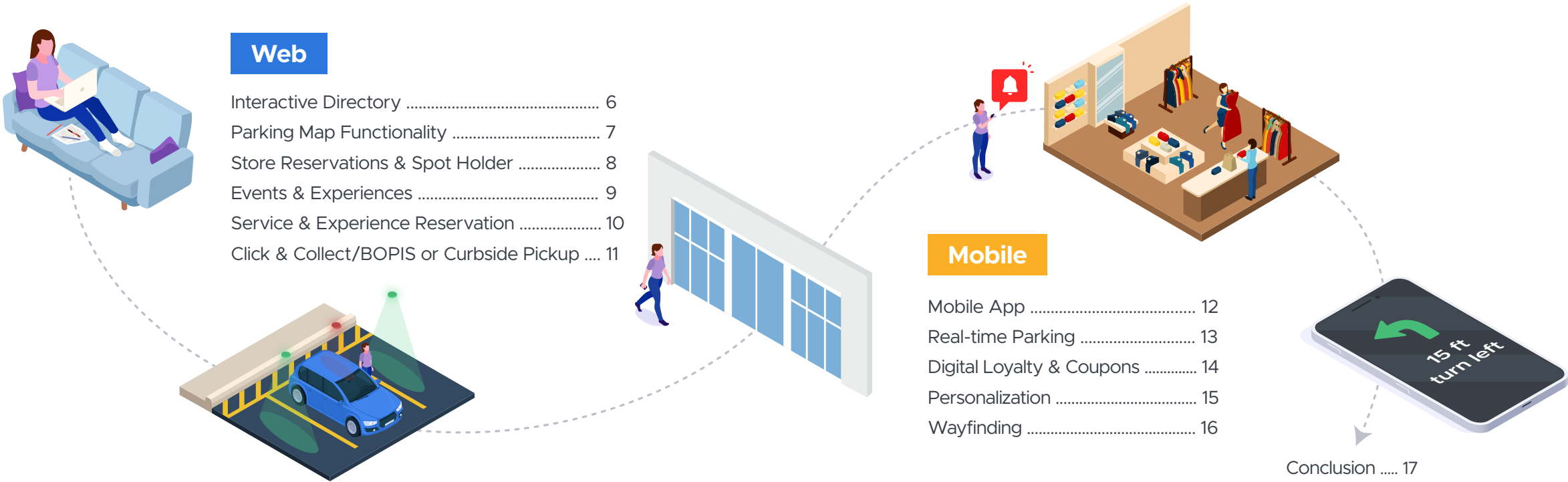


**10M m<sup>2</sup>**

GLA COVERED

Criteria benchmarked across overall offering, website, and mobile features and functionalities.

# What We Looked At



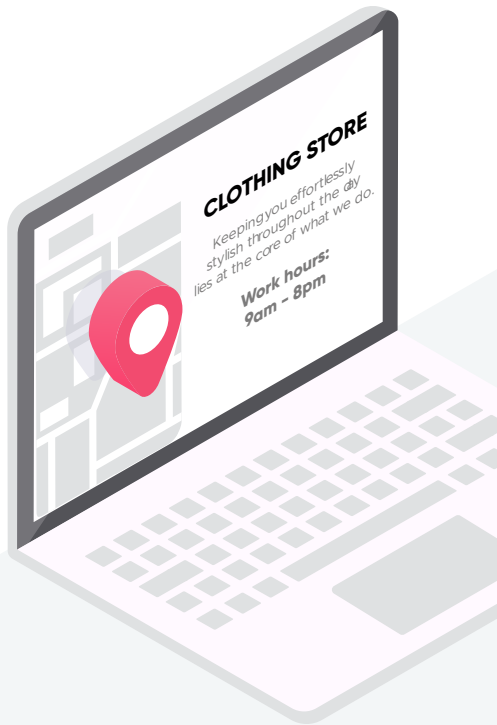
# Here's What We Learned: It's 2021 but most malls are still living in the past

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**The global Mall Omnichannel Retail Index reveals that most major mall properties are not equipped to cater to today's digital shopper. And, despite dark forecasts for the survival of the industry going forward, most are not showing signs of changing their approach.**

We're failing the customers; the industry must do better! From innovating outdated tenant business models to merging digital and physical retailing to bringing experiences into the mall, we must work together to reinvent the traditional mall business model. There's a lot at stake. Turn the pages and see how you stack up.

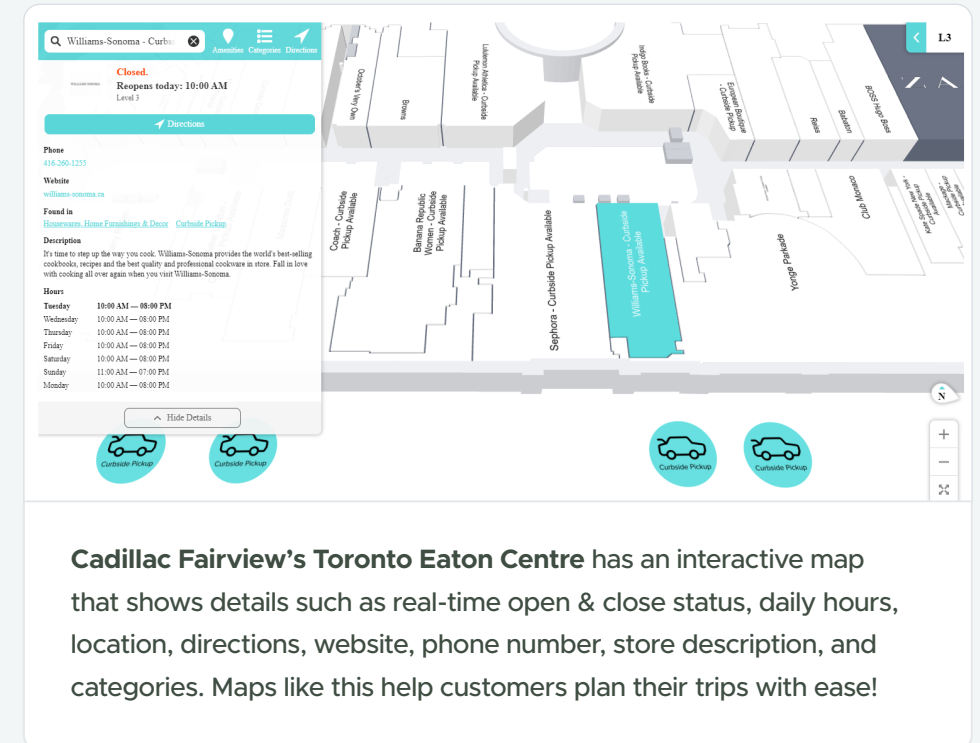
# Missed opportunities to engage shoppers even before they visit the mall



Just **37%** provide more information when users click or hover on a location on the digital map on the website (e.g., store hours, description, promos).

## ENABLE SHOPPERS TO EASILY PLAN VISITS TO THE MALL

Mall maps and directories should be more than just static illustrations and listings of tenants. Make it easier for shoppers to plan their visits with an interactive map that displays specific store details when clicked or hovered over. By making the experience more interactive and user-friendly, shoppers will be more likely to explore and stay on the site longer.



**Cadillac Fairview's Toronto Eaton Centre** has an interactive map that shows details such as real-time open & close status, daily hours, location, directions, website, phone number, store description, and categories. Maps like this help customers plan their trips with ease!


## Parking services on the website are missing the basics

**13%** include recommended parking locations/options based on store location (map, directory, or store page).


### HIGHLIGHT PARKING OPTIONS EVEN BEFORE THE SHOPPER LEAVES HOME


One of the first experiences the shopper has at the mall is finding a parking spot. If the shopper has specific stores in mind, helping them decide where to park even before they get to the mall can be the start of a great experience.

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 **Today** **9:00am – 5:30pm**  
Phone VIC stores for current hours (store hours may differ) ▼

 8488 6657

 [www.catworkwear.com.au](http://www.catworkwear.com.au)

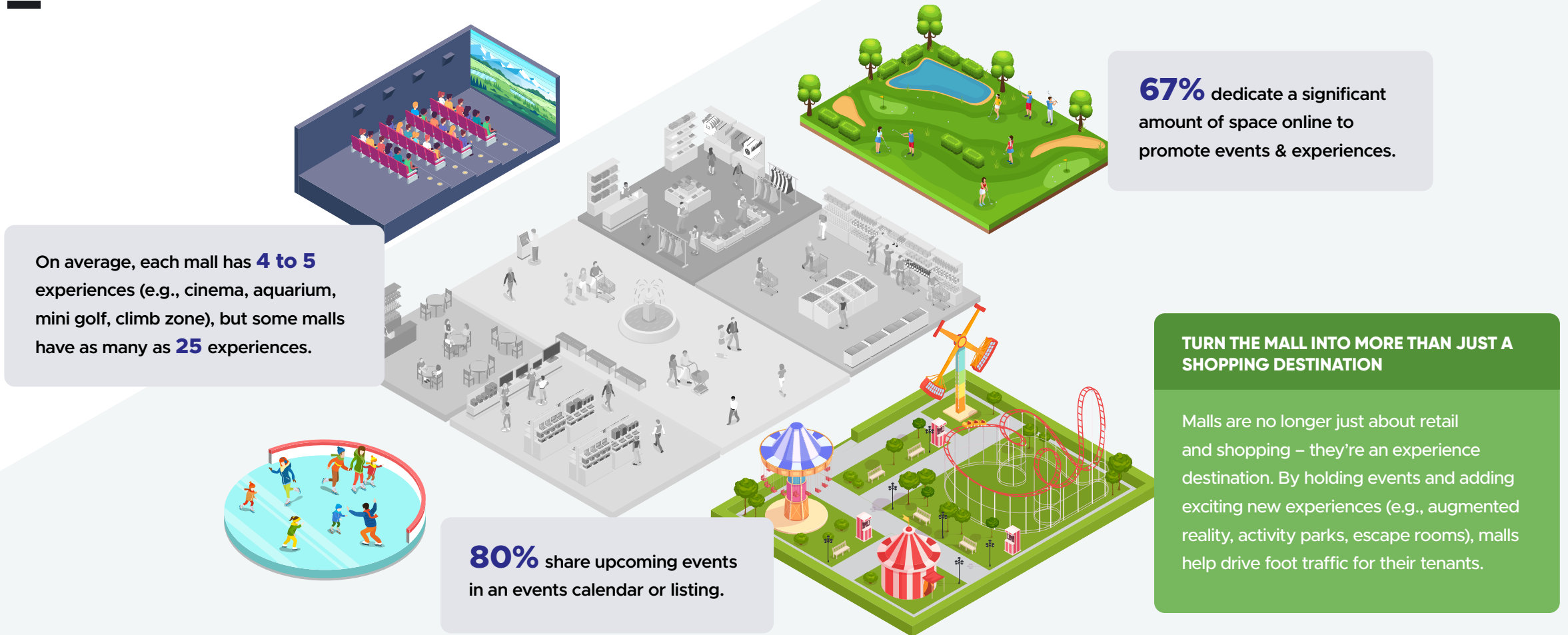
 **LEVEL 1**  
Near Chemist Warehouse

**See on map**

 Level 1, Blue Car Park, ANZ Underground

**Westfield's Fountain Gate** has store pages that show detailed information about where to park. Finding parking is already stressful (unless the mall has real-time parking information – see page 13), and parking far from the store you want to visit is frustrating. By providing store-specific parking information, customers can plan their full experience from door to store.

# Highlighting events & experiences online to drive mall traffic is now table stakes





# Malls miss the boat in helping stores with reservations and spot holding

Only **3 in 60** malls offer store reservation or store spot holder technologies.



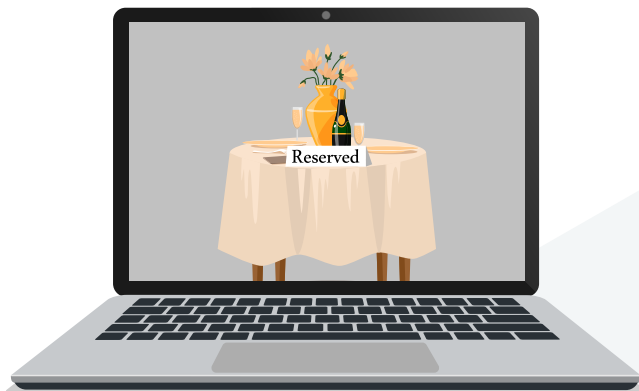
## DON'T ALLOW SHOPPERS TO WAIT IN LONG LINES

While some might be willing to wait in line to get into the hottest nightclub in town, few want to stand in line to get into a retail store in a mall. Spot holder technologies and store reservation systems can solve that problem.

It's surprising that malls have not rushed to adopt either functionality during the pandemic while social distancing and capacity regulations were in place.

People are time-starved and want to know they are guaranteed a spot before they go. This could become a differentiating feature as malls move to offer more experiences and value-added services.

## Disappointing adoption of service & experience reservation capabilities



**2 in 60**

malls allow shoppers to make dining reservations without going to a third-party site.



**9 in 60**

malls allow visitors to make reservations/buy tickets from event listings or a calendar.

### ENABLE SHOPPERS TO PLAN THE FULL MALL EXPERIENCE ONLINE

Dining and event reservation and ticket purchase capabilities should be table stakes by now. However, the adoption of centralized mall registration systems is disappointingly low. Instead, shoppers are forced to use one or multiple third-party apps or sites – a frustrating customer experience which also doesn't offer mall owners and operators valuable insights into what shoppers are planning.

By keeping customers on the mall website while they plan their dining reservations or book tickets for events, malls are able to collect data about shopper intentions and leverage those insights for marketing and loyalty purposes.

# Retailer adoption of Click & Collect/BOPIS and Curbside Pickup skyrockets, while malls fall short



**12%**

of parking maps highlight Click & Collect/BOPIS or Curbside locations.

## PICKUP OPTIONS

- ✓ Buy online, pick up in store
- ✓ Curbside pickup

**25%**

include directory capabilities that highlight or allow shoppers to filter tenants by Click & Collect/BOPIS or Curbside services.

## CATCH UP WITH CUSTOMER DEMAND AND PARTNER WITH TENANTS TO PROVIDE VALUE-ADD SERVICES

In retail, multiple delivery and order pickup options have become table stakes. According to [FitForCommerce's 2021 Omnichannel Retail Index](#), 95% of retailers offer Click & Collect services and 73% offer Curbside Pickup.

Malls MUST implement ways to help improve the customer experience by making it as easy as possible to pickup orders and assist tenants in offering seamless and convenient shopping experiences.

In today's retail reality, access to omnichannel services is a top priority and malls should be investing and making it as easy as possible for customers to find tenants that meet their needs and take advantage of the omnichannel services that they offer.



Liverpool's Perisur has a tab in their top navigation that is dedicated to stores offering pickup services. Beyond that, the listings offer a phone number that connects the customer to WhatsApp for questions or help placing orders.

## Mobile

# Surprisingly low adoption of obvious customer engagement tool



**100%**  
have a website.



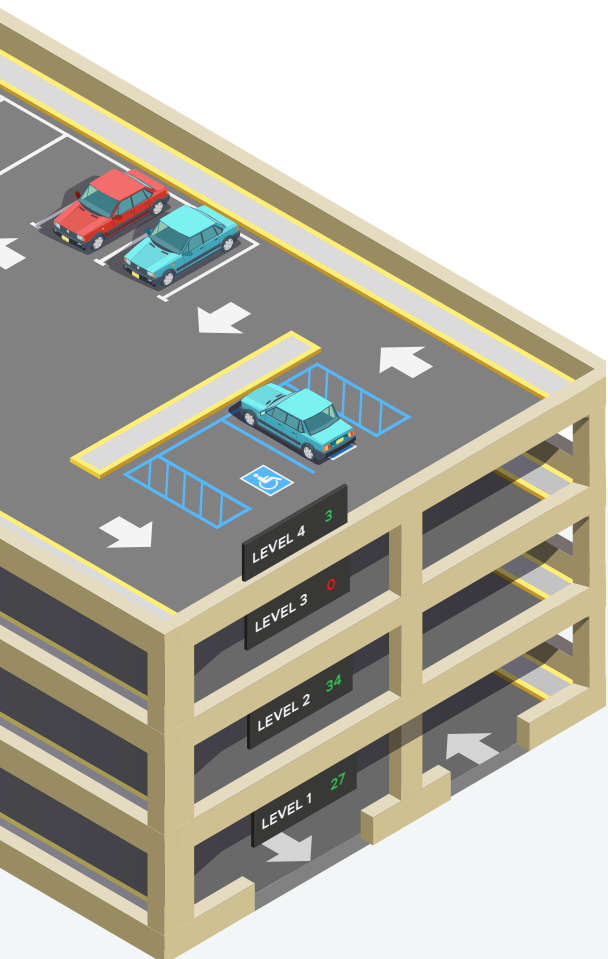
**38%**  
have a branded mobile app.

### DIFFERENTIATE WITH A KILLER APP

Those without a solid mobile experience are lagging behind in delivering optimal customer experiences and are missing out on collecting critical data and insights.

Mall owners and operators should consider adopting a mobile-first approach where the mobile app becomes the main digital vehicle for bridging digital and physical retailing. The app should be designed as a community hub that can be gamified by rewarding users for different actions. By combining useful and personalized information with interactive capabilities and loyalty program features, malls can collect invaluable data.

## Poor performance in helping shoppers navigate parking



Of the **38%** that offer a branded mobile app...

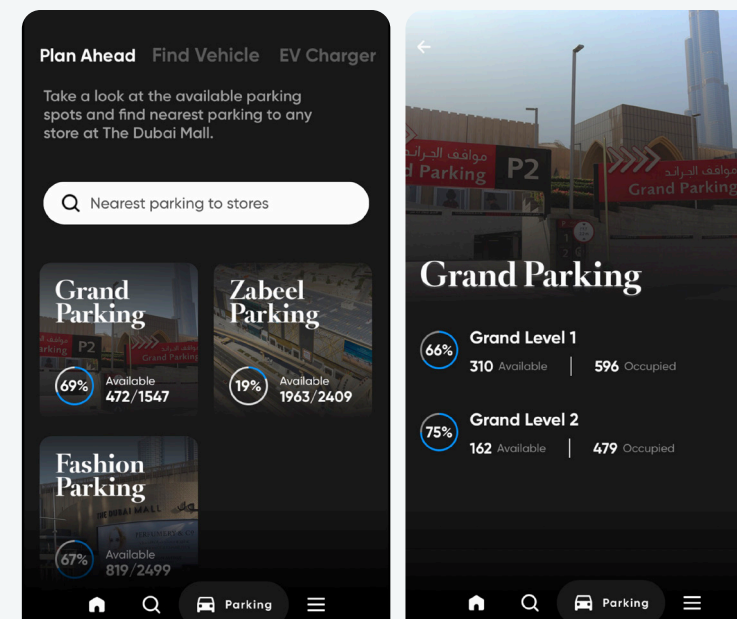
**35%**

include an interactive, real-time parking map that highlights available spaces or preferred spots based on selected destinations.

### PRIORITIZE ANYTHING THAT MAKES PARKING LESS PAINFUL

Easier parking is a critical aspect of improving the customer experience, however only one out of three malls include an interactive parking map in their mobile apps.

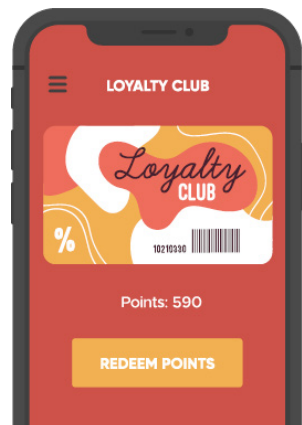
Malls that do invest in this capability are able to provide a differentiated experience that is sure to be noticed and appreciated by shoppers.



**EMAAR's Dubai Mall** offers interactive parking maps that show available spots in each parking location and even allow customers to search for stores to find the nearest parking location.

# Digital loyalty & coupons are table stakes, but adoption is still too low

Of the **38%** that offer a branded mobile app...



**74%**

offer a loyalty program.



**70%**

allow shoppers to view active offers & discounts.



**83%**

have promotions/e-coupons such as scannable barcodes that can be redeemed in store.

## LOYALTY SHOULD BE A NO-BRAINER

Remaining top-of-mind and keeping shoppers interested is important. So is collecting data about mall visitors to personalize experiences and delight shoppers.

Promises of saving money or getting deals are a great way to ensure shoppers will use the app frequently. Think of digital loyalty programs and coupons as a game – gamify the experience to engage users.

## Mobile

# Room for improvement in enabling richer customer engagement

Of the **38%** that offer a branded mobile app...

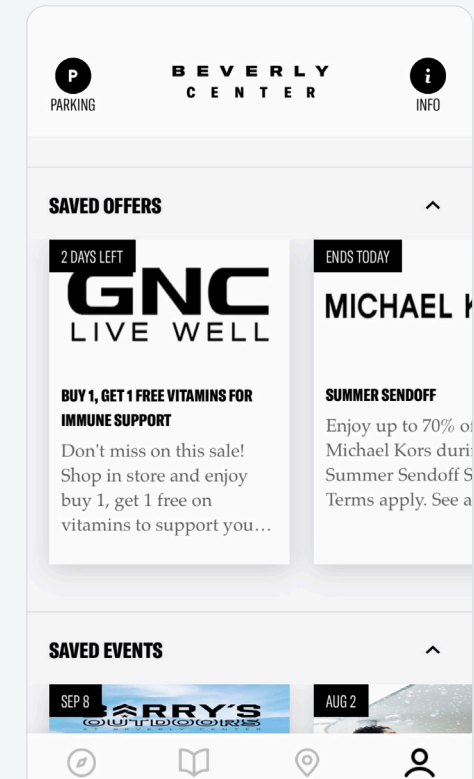


**65%**

allow shoppers to save preferences (e.g., size, favorite stores, email frequency) after creating a profile.

### PERSONALIZATION IS KEY

Delivering targeted, relevant, and personalized experiences is key to meeting and exceeding shopper expectations. Use the mobile app to collect data to personalize experiences but be mindful of data privacy regulations and shopper preferences. Use user preference data to personalize experiences and deliver targeted ads and deals based on personal preferences and shopping behaviors.



**Taubman's Beverly Center** has the 'heart' icon available for offers, events, and retailers shown on the app. Once clicked, the liked item gets added into the correct category (Offers, Events, or Retailers) in the easy-to-use Profile section. Extra points for the banners showing event dates (and even expiry dates)!

# Wayfinding is heading in the right direction

Of the **38%** that offer a branded mobile app...

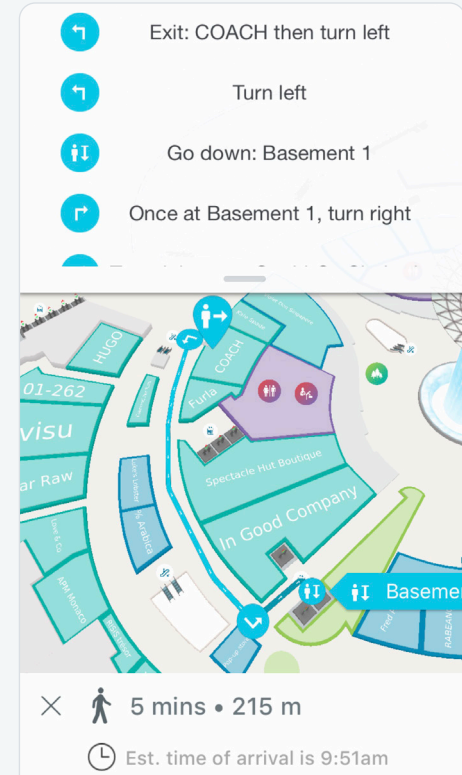


**83%**

offer wayfinding features to help shoppers navigate the physical mall (e.g., turn-by-turn navigation, click to show path).

## WAYFINDING INVESTMENTS WILL PAY OFF

Navigation and wayfinding is a critical component of a mall's app. It is a table stake capability so the adoption should be at 100%. The challenge is making sure that the feature is user-friendly and interactive.



**Jewel Singapore Changi Airport's** wayfinding functionality allows shoppers to see step-by-step instructions, a visual of the route from place to place, distance, and estimated time of arrival. The map is interactive and intuitive; a great example of enhancing the customer journey.



# Conclusion

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**As the Mall Omnichannel Retail Index reveals, malls still have a lot of work to do on the journey to meet customer expectations – and this benchmark only covers a few best practices from a long list of capabilities malls should focus on implementing or improving.**

As the world begins to recover from more than a year of lockdowns and a decrease in sales and foot traffic, malls must take the time to ensure they remain relevant and exciting. Crafting personalized experiences that are tailored to meet ever-changing customer wants and needs is essential in today's shopping environment.

By implementing or improving some of the technologies and capabilities mentioned in this report (e.g., Click & Collect/BOPIS or Curbside filtering, real-time mobile app parking information, reservation capabilities), malls have the power of improving the customer experience. Malls cannot afford to fall behind any further, the industry must do better!

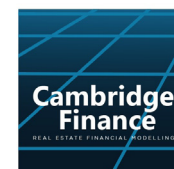
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### HOW DOES YOUR PROPERTY STACK UP?

**Find out!**

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