

Intelligent Retail and CPG Ecosystems, 2025

The RCPG industry is doubling down on customer-facing functions and product innovation, underpinned by cloud, analytics, and AI investments.

Authors:

Ashish Chaturvedi, Executive Research Leader
Krupa KS, Senior Analyst

“

As private labels and direct-to-consumer (D2C) models expand, the lines between retail and consumer goods are rapidly blurring. Forward-looking companies are seizing a greater share of the value chain to deliver consistent, personalized experiences to end users, set policies and pricing across the ecosystem, and unlock new revenue streams such as retail media networks.

Service providers that rise beyond traditional support roles are now both creating and capturing value through data-driven product innovation, omnichannel customer experiences, resilient operations, and immersive marketing and engagement strategies.

”



Ashish Chaturvedi

Executive Research Leader, HFS
Research

Contents

	Page
SECTION 01	
Introduction and the HFS retail and consumer packaged goods value chain	4
SECTION 02	
Research methodology	13
SECTION 03	
Executive summary and market dynamics	17
SECTION 04	
Horizons results: Intelligent Retail and CPG Ecosystems, 2025	27
SECTION 05	
Cognizant profile: Intelligent Retail and CPG Ecosystems, 2025	31
SECTION 06	
HFS Research authors	59

1

Introduction and the HFS retail and consumer packaged goods value chain

Introduction

HFS Horizons: Intelligent Retail and Consumer Good Ecosystems, 2025, assesses how well service providers are helping their **clients embrace innovation** and **realize value**. The study evaluates providers' capabilities across the HFS definition of the retail and consumer goods value chain based on a range of dimensions to understand the **why, what, how, and so what** of their service offerings.

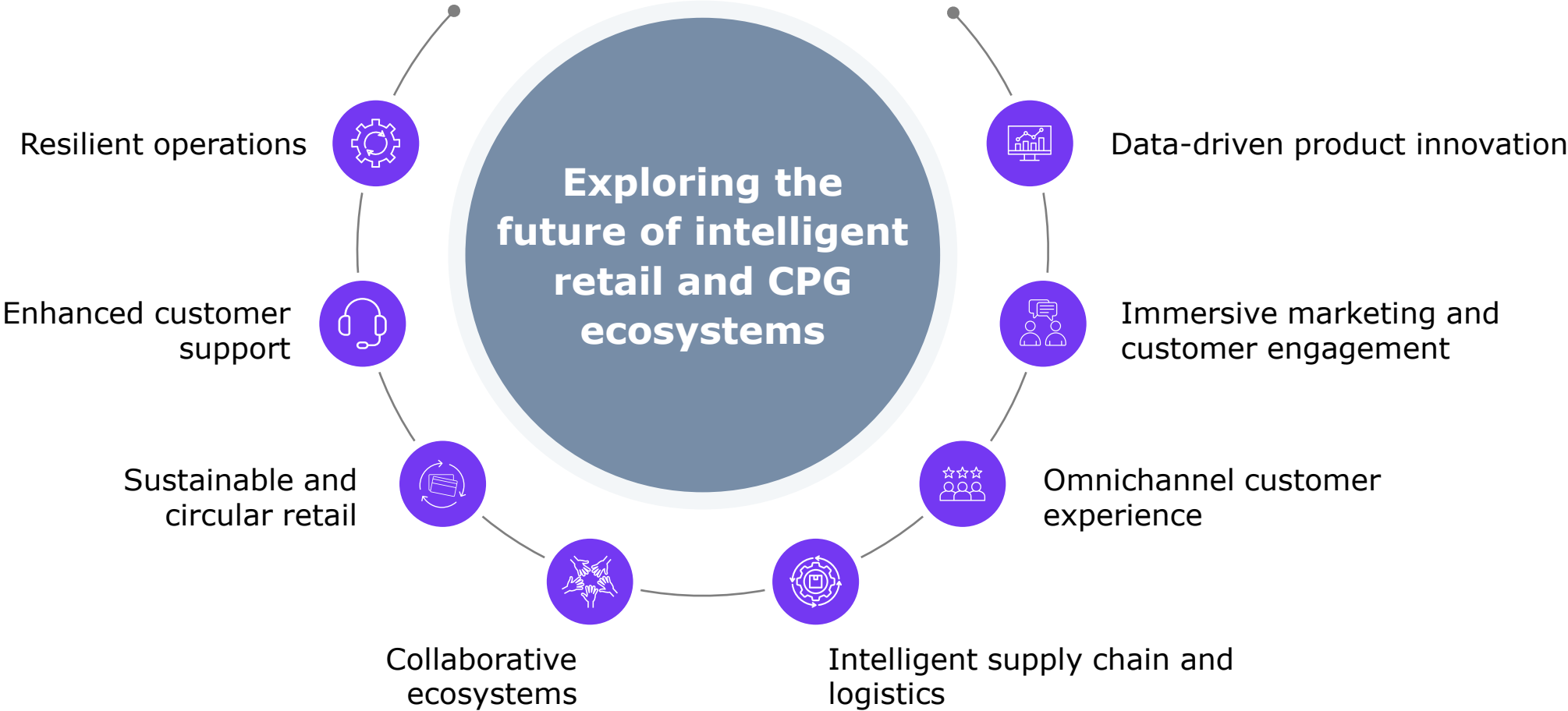
- **Horizon 1: Laying the foundation for digital efficiency** by leveraging technology to drive **cost reduction, speed, and operational efficiency** in specific functions across the value chain.
- **Horizon 2: Horizon 1 +** elevating the entire value chain by **creating integrated, customer-centric experiences** through data unification and seamless interaction across touchpoints.
- **Horizon 3: Horizon 2 +** building ecosystems that **unlock new business models, foster co-innovation, and create entirely new revenue streams**, with an emphasis on sustainability and collaboration.

This research highlights the **value-based positioning** for each participant across the three distinct Horizons. It also includes **detailed profiles** of each service provider, outlining their **provider facts, strengths, and development opportunities**.

Inclusion criteria: We invited diversified providers of business process services with established business lines focused on supporting enterprise needs for retail and consumer goods industry services to participate in this study. Participation guidelines:

- Annual retail and consumer goods industry services revenues (combined) of at least \$250 million or a 10% contribution to overall revenue
- An existing portfolio of services spanning our retail and consumer goods industry services value chain

The HFS retail and consumer packaged goods value chain, 2025



The HFS retail and consumer packaged goods value chain, 2025 (explained) – 1/3

1

Data-driven product innovation

Using advanced technologies to create products tailored to evolving consumer preferences and sustainability goals, ensuring quicker, smarter, and more targeted product development

- **AI:** Generative AI (GenAI) for ideation and product design
- **Digital twins:** Simulating product testing in virtual environments
- **Blockchain:** Providing traceability and transparency in sourcing materials

Example: Using digital twins to test a skincare product formula virtually before physical production

2

Immersive marketing and customer engagement

Leveraging technology to build deeper, more meaningful connections with customers by offering personalized and immersive experiences

- **AI:** Personalization of campaigns and customer segmentation
- **AR/VR:** Virtual try-ons and interactive product demos
- **IoT:** Delivering location-based, real-time data via connected devices

Example: Customers using an AR app to visualize how furniture fits in their home, with AI suggesting matching accessories

3

Omnichannel customer experience

Creating a seamless and consistent CX across online, offline, and mobile touchpoints, making every interaction frictionless

- **Computer vision:** Automated checkout and smart in-store systems
- **AI:** Predictive insights for synchronized online and in-store shopping
- **IoT:** Monitoring customer interactions for enhanced journey mapping

Example: Integrating a customer's online cart with their in-store shopping experience via a mobile app

The HFS retail and consumer packaged goods value chain, 2025 (explained) – 2/3

4

Intelligent supply chain and logistics

Transforming supply chain processes into agile, responsive, and transparent operations that can quickly adapt to demand fluctuations and external disruptions

- **AI:** Real-time demand forecasting and inventory management
- **Digital twins:** Simulating processes, assets, value chain
- **Blockchain:** Ensuring secure, tamper-proof product tracking; for example, using digital twins to test a skincare product formula virtually before physical production

Example: AI-driven warehouse robotics collaborating with blockchain to ensure secure and efficient fulfillment

5

Resilient operations

Building adaptive and responsive operational capabilities to withstand disruptions, manage risks, and ensure business continuity in a volatile market environment

- **AI:** Predictive maintenance and anomaly detection to minimize downtime
- **Digital twins:** Simulating operational scenarios for proactive risk mitigation
- **IoT:** Real-time monitoring of production lines and supply chain assets for early issue detection

Example: A food and beverage manufacturer using AI-powered predictive maintenance to detect potential machinery failures in advance, reducing unplanned downtime and optimizing production efficiency

6

Enhanced customer support

Delivering proactive, tailored, and efficient support through technology to improve customer satisfaction and loyalty

- **AI chatbots:** Personalized, 24/7 conversational support
- **Emotion AI:** Gauging customer sentiment for empathetic interactions
- **Computer vision:** Assessing product issues through customer-shared images

Example: An AI-powered chatbot for resolving a product defect by analyzing a customer-uploaded image and triggering a replacement

The HFS retail and consumer packaged goods value chain, 2025 (explained) – 3/3

7

Sustainable and circular retail

Fostering partnerships among various stakeholders in the value chain, leveraging technology to enable real-time collaboration and co-innovation

- **AI platforms:** Enabling data-sharing and ecosystem connectivity
- **Blockchain:** Building trust and secure interactions
- **IoT:** Connecting ecosystem players for real-time collaboration

Example: A shared platform that allows a consumer goods brand, logistics provider, and retailer to collaborate on real-time inventory planning

8

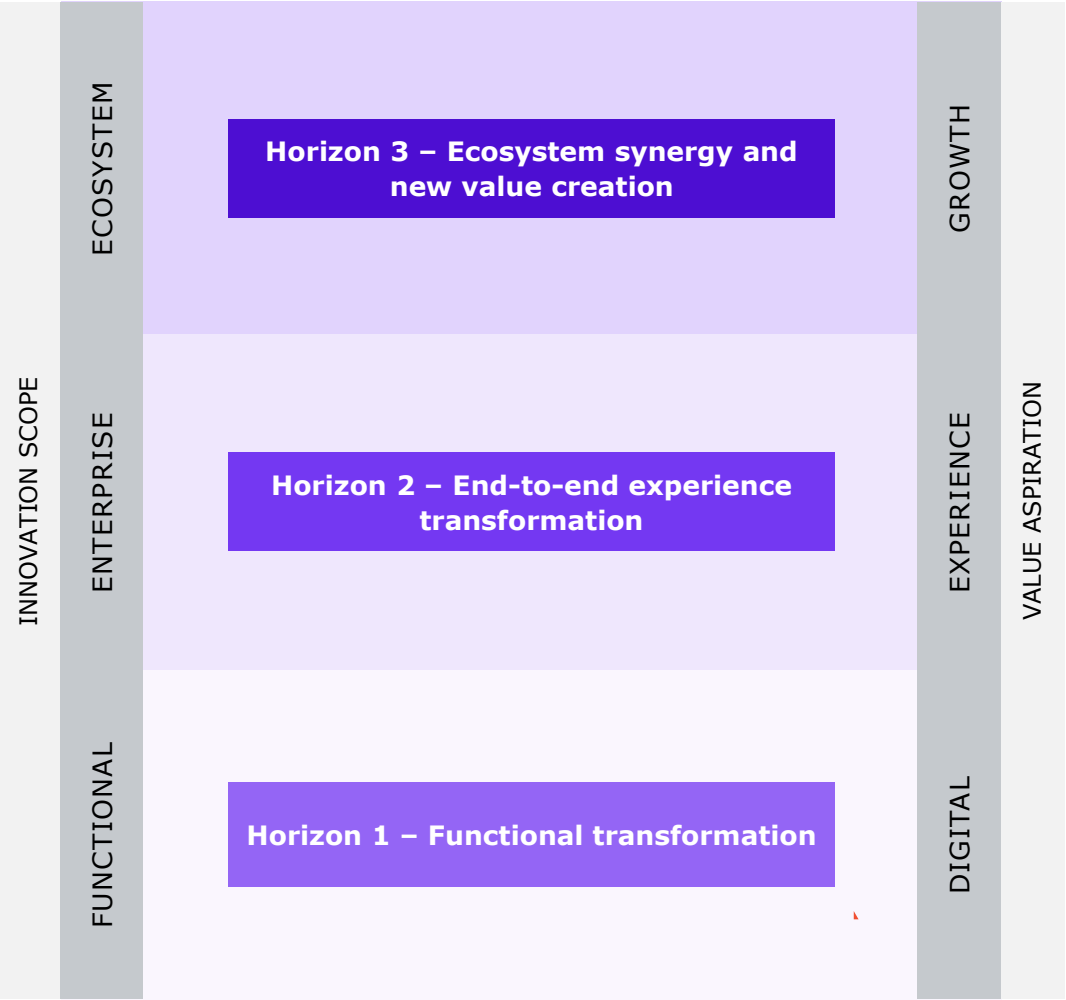
Collaborative ecosystems

Creating interconnected networks of suppliers, partners, and customers to drive efficiency, innovation, and agility

- **AI platforms:** Facilitating data-sharing for demand forecasting, inventory visibility, and supplier collaboration
- **Blockchain:** Building trust through transparent, tamper-proof records of transactions across the ecosystem
- **IoT:** Enabling real-time visibility into supply chain movements and production processes across partners

Example: A shared AI-powered platform where retailers, manufacturers, and logistics providers co-create demand forecasts and dynamically adjust production and distribution strategies

HFS Horizons for retail and consumer packaged goods service providers



Horizon 3 – Ecosystem synergy and new value creation

Horizon 2 + building ecosystems that **unlock new business models, foster co-innovation, and create entirely new revenue streams**, with an emphasis on sustainability and collaboration. Perceived as a thought leader with purpose-led relationships driving growth and innovation for clients.

Examples of applications:

- Collaborative ecosystems: Using AI-powered platforms to connect manufacturers, retailers, and logistics providers for shared data insights
- Sustainability: Leveraging blockchain to track and verify sustainable practices in sourcing, manufacturing, and recycling
- Immersive customer engagement: Integrating AR/VR for virtual shopping in the metaverse with real-time personalization powered by AI
- Driving co-creation and co-innovation with clients and the partner ecosystem

Horizon 2 – End-to-end experience transformation

Horizon 1 + elevating the entire value chain by **creating integrated, customer-centric experiences** through data unification and seamless interaction across touchpoints. A strategic partner to clients with performance-driven client relationships

Examples of applications:

- Marketing and engagement: Leveraging AI to provide hyper-personalized campaigns based on unified customer data
- Supply chain and logistics: Using digital twins to simulate and optimize delivery networks for faster response times
- Customer support: Deploying emotion AI to predict and address customer issues proactively

Horizon 1 – Functional transformation

Laying the foundation for digital efficiency by leveraging technology to drive cost reduction, speed, and operational efficiency in specific functions across the value chain. Primarily a vendor-client relationship with project-based relationships

Examples of applications:

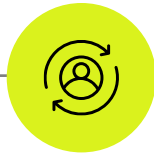
- Product innovation: Using AI for automating product design workflows and optimizing material usage
- Omnichannel CX: Integrating IoT to streamline in-store inventory tracking
- Supply chain: Implementing AI-powered demand forecasting to reduce excess inventory

Intelligent Retail and CPG Ecosystems, 2025 – Core focus



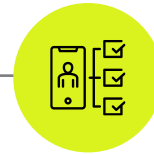
1

What role is AI playing in redefining customer engagement and commerce?



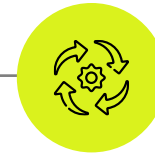
2

How are you helping clients with data and personalization?



3

How are you delivering and measuring seamless CX across channels?



4

How are you building intelligent supply chains and embedding sustainability?

Major HFS Horizons themes: Intelligent retail and consumer packaged goods ecosystems

Future of the retail and consumer packaged goods industry

How are AI and emerging technologies such as IoT and computer vision reshaping the value chain?

Changing industry complexion

How is the complexion of the phygital space evolving? How is it changing the nature of work for service providers?

Resilient and sustainable supply chains

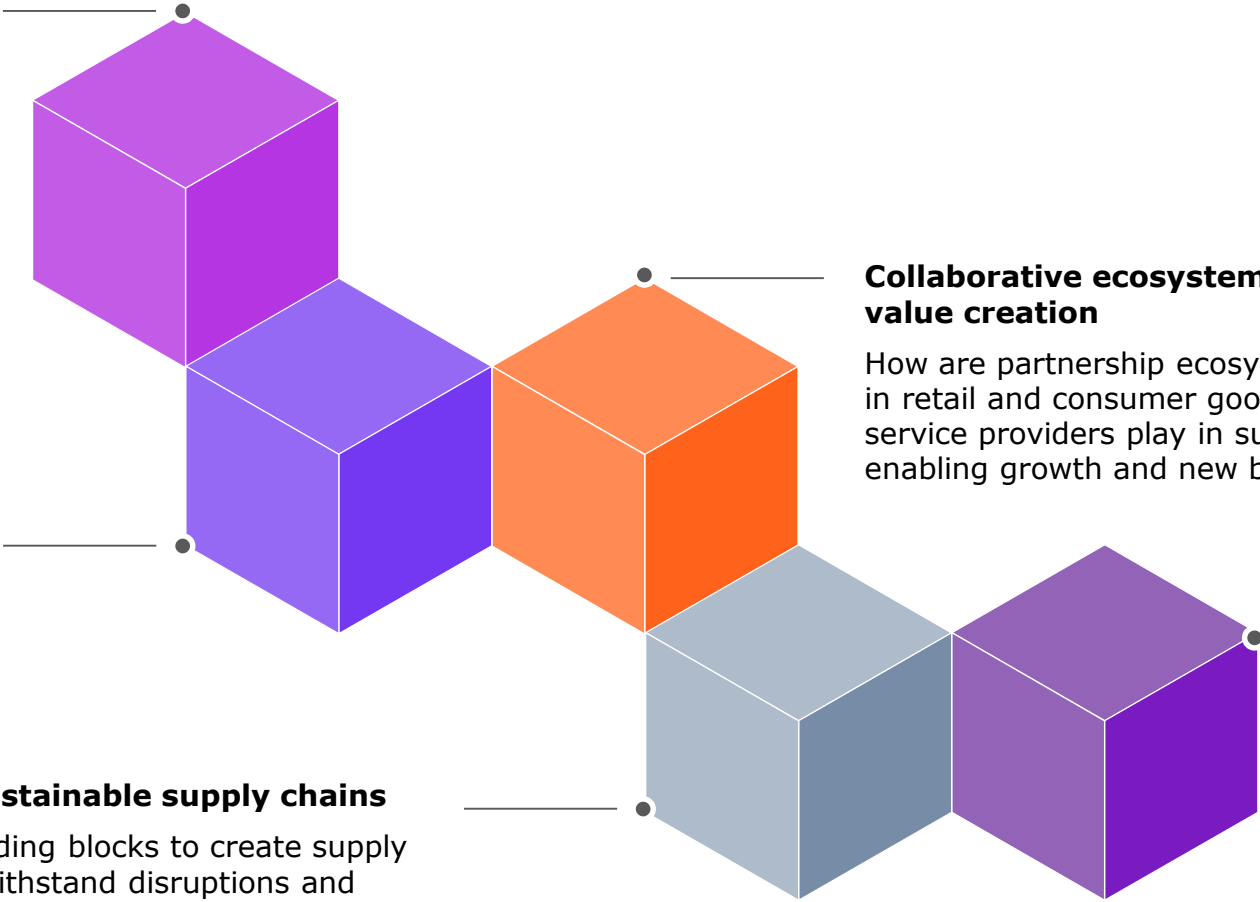
What are the building blocks to create supply chains that can withstand disruptions and align with sustainability goals?

Collaborative ecosystems and new value creation

How are partnership ecosystems evolving in retail and consumer goods? What role do service providers play in supporting and enabling growth and new business models?

Outcomes

What are the key outcomes providers are helping clients realize?



2

Research methodology

Service providers covered in this report

 **accenture**

 **Baringa**

Capgemini 

Coforge

 **cognizant**

Deloitte.

 **EY**
Shape the future
with confidence

HCLTech

 **hgs**

Infosys®

 **ITC INFOTECH**
Business-friendly Solutions

 **KPMG**

kyndryl

 **LTIMindtree**

MINDSPRINT

 **POMEROY**

**publicis
sapient**

 **pwc**

 **randstad
digital**

 **SUTHERLAND®**

tcs **TATA
CONSULTANCY
SERVICES**

**TECH
mahindra**



ttec™

**U
S
T**

WNS

wipro 

Note: All service providers are listed alphabetically.

Sources of data

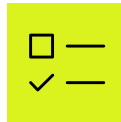
This Horizons research report relies on myriad data sources to support our methodology and help HFS obtain a well-rounded perspective on service capabilities of the participating organizations covered in our study. Sources are as follows:



Briefings and information gathering

HFS conducted detailed **briefings** with customer experience leadership from each vendor.

Each participant submitted a specific set of **supporting information** aligned to the assessment methodology.



Reference checks

We conducted reference checks with **44 active clients and 36 active partners** of the study participants via survey-based and telephone interviews.



HFS Pulse

Each year, HFS fields multiple demand-side surveys in which we include detailed vendor rating questions. For this study, we leveraged our fresh-from-the-field HFS Pulse study data featuring **15 service provider ratings from CX decision-makers at enterprises.**



Other data sources

Public information such as news releases and websites.

Ongoing interactions, briefings, virtual events, etc., with in-scope vendors and their clients and partners.

Horizons assessment methodology: Intelligent Retail and Consumer Goods Ecosystems, 2025

This research evaluates the capabilities of service providers across a range of dimensions to understand the **why, what, how, and so what** of their service offerings to support clients. Our assessment is based on inputs from clients and partners and augmented with analyst perspectives. The following illustrates how we assess your capabilities.

Distinguishing service provider characteristics				
Assessment Dimension	Assessment sub-dimension	Horizon 1 service providers	Horizon 2 service providers	Horizon 3 Service Providers
Value proposition: The why? (25%)	• Strategy for the retail and consumer goods market and vision for the future of the industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laying the foundation for digital efficiency by leveraging technology to drive cost reduction, speed, and operational efficiency in specific functions across the value chain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizon 1 + elevating the entire value chain by creating integrated, customer-centric experiences through data unification and seamless interaction across touchpoints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizon 2 + building ecosystems that unlock new business models, foster co-innovation, and create entirely new revenue streams, with an emphasis on sustainability and collaboration
	• Retail and consumer goods offerings aligned to top problem statements for the sector			
	• Differentiators – why retail and consumer goods clients work with you			
Execution and innovation capabilities: The what? (25%)	• Breadth and depth of services across the retail and consumer goods value chain and associated delivery capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional domain expertise for segments of the retail and consumer goods value chain • Industry-specific talent focused on key process domains or tech • Focused partnerships and strong PX • Limited industry-specific IP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive coverage across the retail and consumer goods value chain • Strong industry-specific talent pool across IT and operations domains • Range of industry-specific partnerships and strong PX • Strong industry-specific IP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive coverage across the retail and consumer goods value chain and beyond • Strong industry-specific talent pool across consulting, IT, and operations domains • Comprehensive industry-specific partnerships with strong PX • Strong industry-specific IP + JVs
	• Strength of industry-specific talent – hiring, training, and ongoing development			
	• Approach to and strength of ecosystem partners			
	• Industry-specific technology innovation			
Go-to-market strategy: The how? (25%)	• What are you actually selling to retail and consumer goods clients?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investments aligned to functional optimization outcomes • Optimization and point solutions • Target-focused personas and LOBs, majority tiers 2 and 3, geo-specific 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizon 1 + investments aligned to enterprise experience • Optimization and top-down transformation • Target range of personas and LOBs, tiers 1 and 2, broad geo coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investments aligned to Horizons 1, 2 and ecosystem enablement • Horizons 1, 2 + co-creation with customers and partners • Horizons 1, 2 + new value creation • C-suite coverage across LOBs and geos for tiers 1 and 2
	• Nature of investments in your retail and consumer goods business (M&A, non-M&A, R&D)			
	• Co-innovation and collaboration approaches with customers and partners, including creative commercial models			
	• Customer-targeting approach			
Market impact: The so what? (25%)	• Scale of retail and consumer goods business – revenue, clients, and headcount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven scale and growth driven by functional optimization focus • Top marks as an optimization partner across key retail and consumer goods functions (CX) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven scale and growth driven by Horizon 1 + stakeholder experience • Top marks as an enterprise transformation partner emphasizing stakeholder experience (CX+EX) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven scale and growth driven by H2 + ecosystem synergy • Top marks as a global growth partner driving new business models (CX+EX+PX)
	• Growth of retail and consumer goods business – revenue, clients, and headcount			
	• Proven outcomes showcasing nature of value delivered to retail and consumer goods			
	• Voice of the customer			

3

Executive summary and market dynamics

Executive summary (1/2)

1 What's happening?

- Traditional lines between CPG brands and retailers are blurring, with brands engaging consumers directly and retailers elevating private-label products to rival international ones. Global supply chain instability is pushing firms toward diversification for greater resilience. Retail and consumer goods enterprises are battling multiple fronts—margin pressure, shifting consumer preferences, operational complexity, and a relentless technology drumbeat. Yet, while the noise around GenAI, automation, and omnichannel disruption is deafening, executives are shooting sharper questions: What investments actually matter? Where should we double down now? What's worth betting on for the future?

2 Key observations

- The lion's share of tech budgets remains anchored in traditional strongholds: cloud computing (26%) and analytics (21%) collectively command nearly half of all enterprise tech spending. But the real surprise lies in the swelling appetite for new-age AI: GenAI (10%) and agentic AI (7%), which now outpace traditional AI (6%), are underscoring a dramatic pivot in enterprise AI adoption narratives. RPA and intelligent automation are still much alive (9%). Meanwhile, emerging tools such as blockchain and digital twins hover at the margins, but their moment may be approaching.
- 90% of IT and business services outsourcing spend maps to the eight domains of the HFS retail and consumer packaged goods value chain, with over 56% concentrated in just four areas: Data-driven product innovation, omnichannel CX, resilient operations, and immersive marketing and customer engagement.
- Investments that have clearly demonstrated business value and are now ready to scale include:
 - Personalization, driven by AI recommendation engines and GenAI content creation, is delivering double-digit uplift in revenue per user. Retailers leveraging tools such as Salesforce Einstein or Adobe Target are achieving higher conversion and loyalty.
 - Omni-fulfillment strategies—including buy online pickup in store (BOPIS), curbside pickup, and ship-from-store—are now foundational, supported by cloud-based inventory management and AI-driven demand forecasting. Enterprises mastering this coordination enjoy 30% higher customer lifetime value.
 - Micro-fulfillment centers are helping to meet the growing demand for same-day delivery in urban markets, while bonded warehouses are improving global cash flow and customs agility.
 - Data-fueled product innovations, such as private-label SKUs based on trending ingredients or unmet category demands, is cutting time-to-market and increasing launch success rates.

3 Retail and CPG service providers – the winners revealed

- The report evaluates 27 retail and CPG service providers. Of these, 11 are classified as Horizon 3 Leaders, 10 as Horizon 2 Innovators, and 6 as Horizon 1 Disruptors. Horizon 3 firms—Accenture, Capgemini, Cognizant, Deloitte, HCL, Infosys, Kyndryl, Publicis Sapien, TCS, Tech Mahindra, and Wipro—are recognized for driving collaborative ecosystems, immersive engagement, and co-innovation. Providers in Horizon 2—Coforge, EY, LTIMindtree, KPMG, PwC, Randstad Digital, Sutherland, TP, UST, and WNS, support end-to-end experience transformation. Baringa Partners, HGS, ITC Infotech, Mindsprint, Pomeroy, and TTEC are positioned in Horizon 1, focused on building digital efficiency foundations.

Executive summary (2/2)

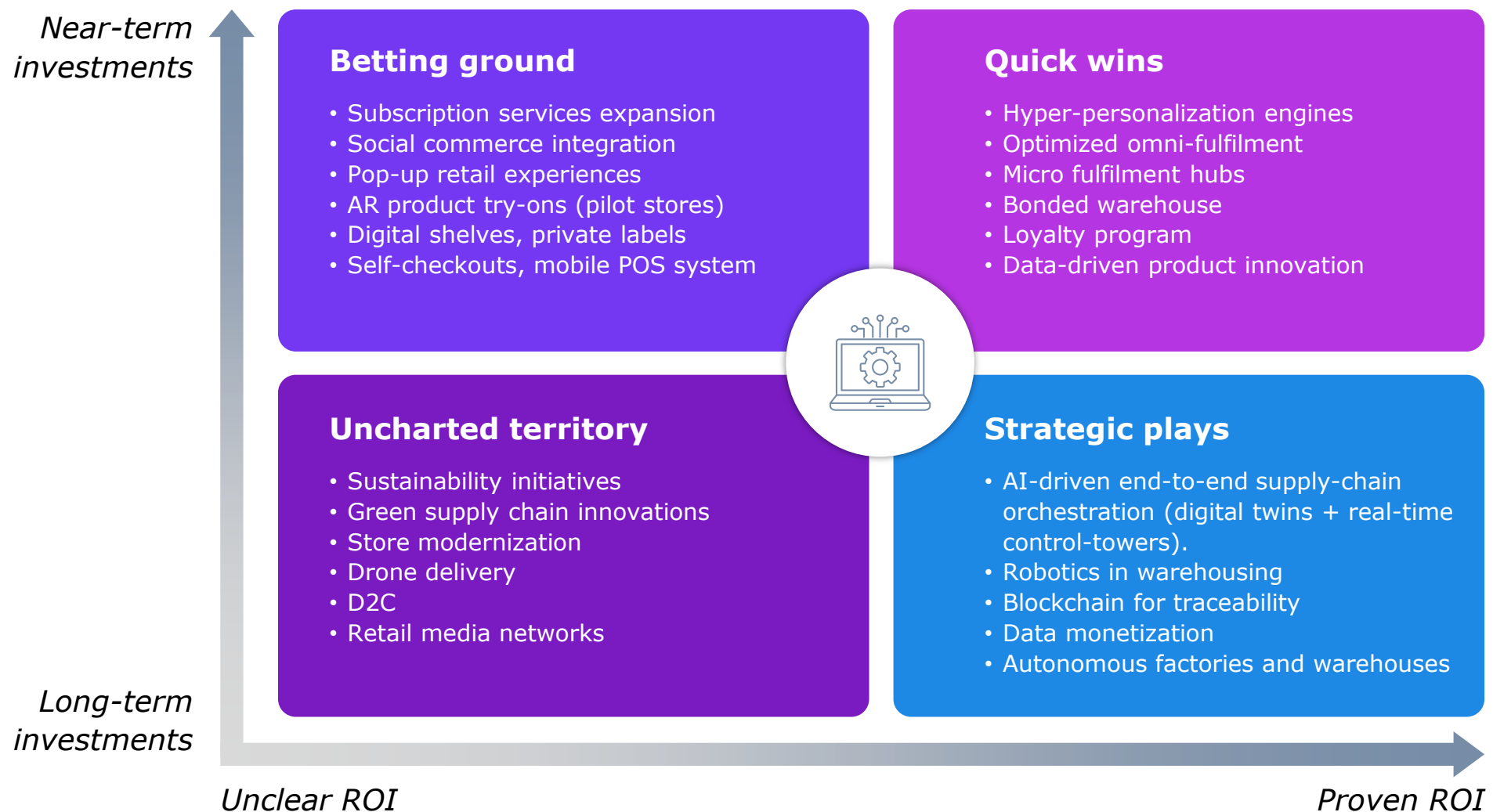
4 Voice of the customer

- We surveyed 44 active clients as part of the study. Clients consistently commended the providers' flexibility, collaborative spirit, and commitment to adding value. Strong partnership models, technical proficiency, and proactive engagement styles were commonly highlighted as key strengths that drive satisfaction and trust.
- The ability to deliver governance-led execution, scalability, and a problem-solving mindset makes them preferred partners across various engagements. Clients particularly valued the honesty, responsiveness, and domain understanding of delivery teams, reinforcing the perception of a client-centric culture.
- Despite these positives, some clients identified opportunities for improvement, including a need for stronger innovation, more value-added tactical execution, and consistent delivery across accounts. Proactively managing customer success, breaking down internal silos, and improving resource skillsets also surfaced as themes that need attention.
- Clients appreciate the providers' potential to support digital and operational transformation but expect more strategic direction and innovation to keep pace with evolving demands.

5 Voice of the partner

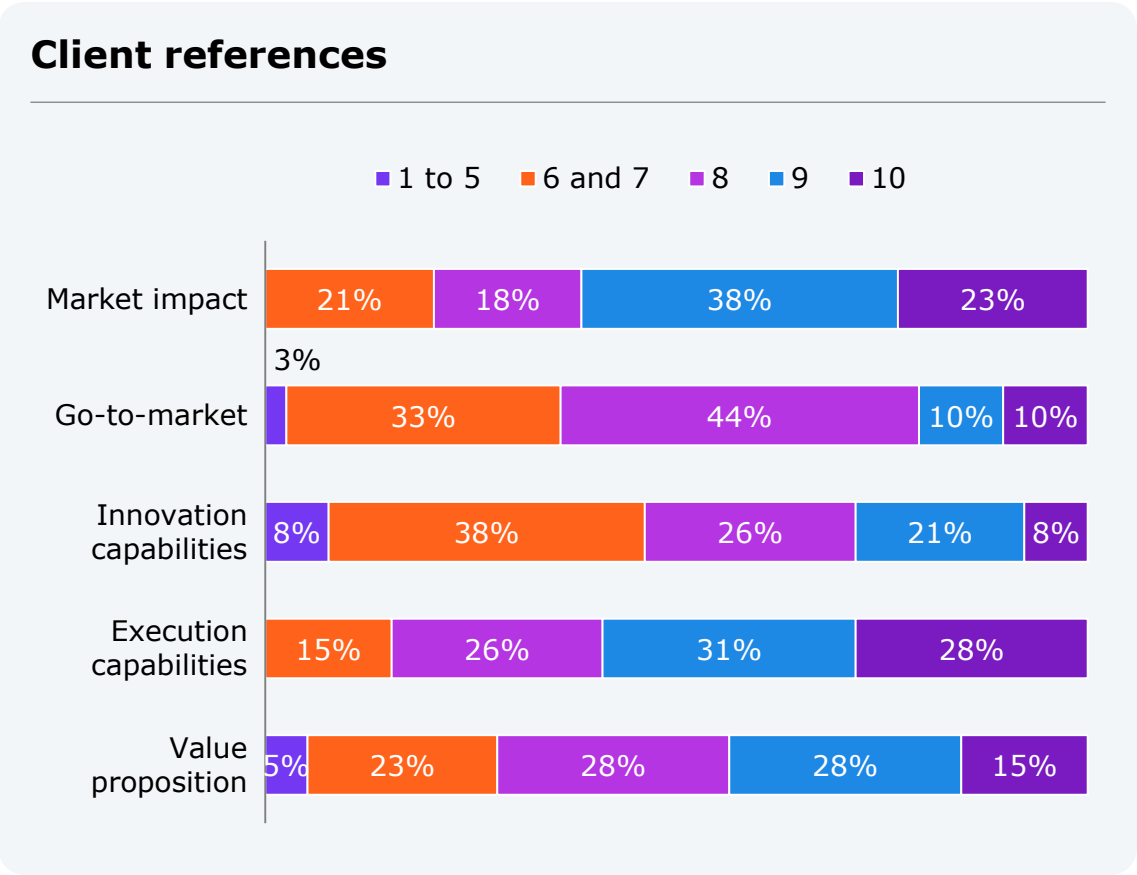
- We surveyed 36 active partners as part of the study. Partners highlight the providers' deep domain knowledge, AI and cloud innovation, and strong alignment with go-to-market strategies as standout strengths. The ability to match skills to client needs, apply analytical rigor, and maintain bench strength in strategic areas has earned consistent praise. Strategic traits such as global presence, industry involvement, and a clear vision for market leadership also contribute to the positive perception among partners. The integration and execution capabilities with hyperscalers are appreciated for enabling business transformation and scalability.
- However, partners also express a need for improving visibility of capabilities in go-to-market planning, marketing support for events, and global execution maturity. Specific asks include faster speed-to-market, enhanced executive engagement, and better resource deployment models. Some partners also point to the need for more transparency, co-marketing alignment, and accelerating customer adoption strategies.
- While the providers' growing strategic relevance are acknowledged, partners want more collaborative traction in business development, tighter integration with partner ecosystems, and better utilization of joint memberships and platforms.

Winning in modern commerce is a portfolio play – A 2x2 matrix for RCPG investments

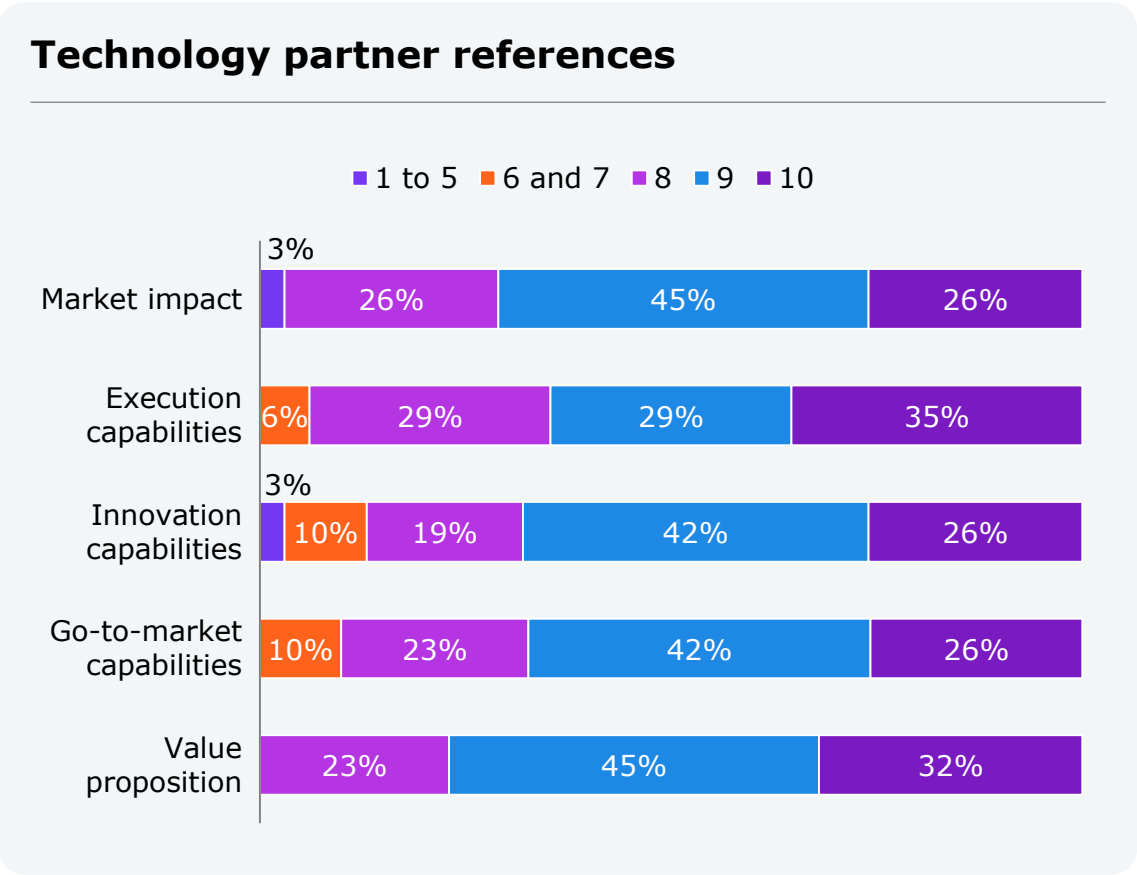


Clients question the innovation capabilities of providers, whereas technology partners remain all positive

Please rate the following parameters within 1–10 (1 being worst and 10 being best).



Source: HFS Horizons Intelligent Retail and CPG Ecosystems, 2025
Sample size: 44 customer references

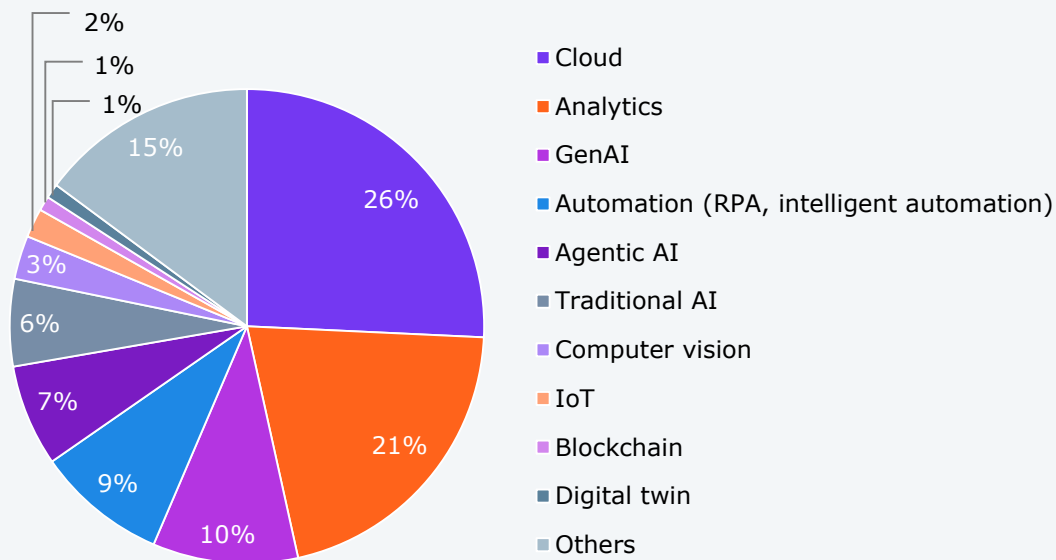


Source: HFS Horizon Intelligent Retail and Consumer Goods Ecosystem, 2025
Sample size: 36 partner references

GenAI has made its way to the top three technologies leveraged by the RCPG industry

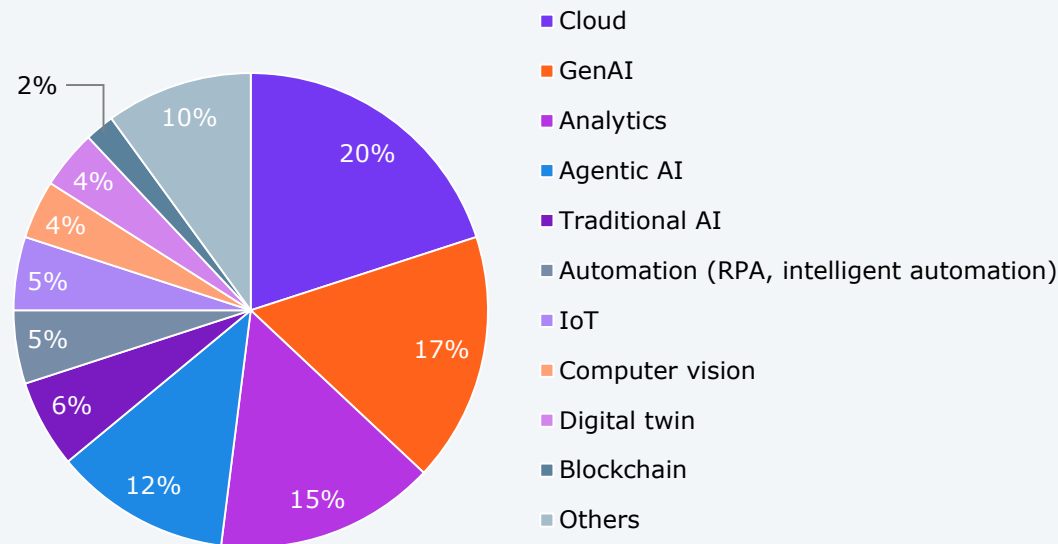
How is your current technology expenditure being allocated across the following technologies?

Client references



Sample size: 35 customer references
Source: HFS Research, 2025

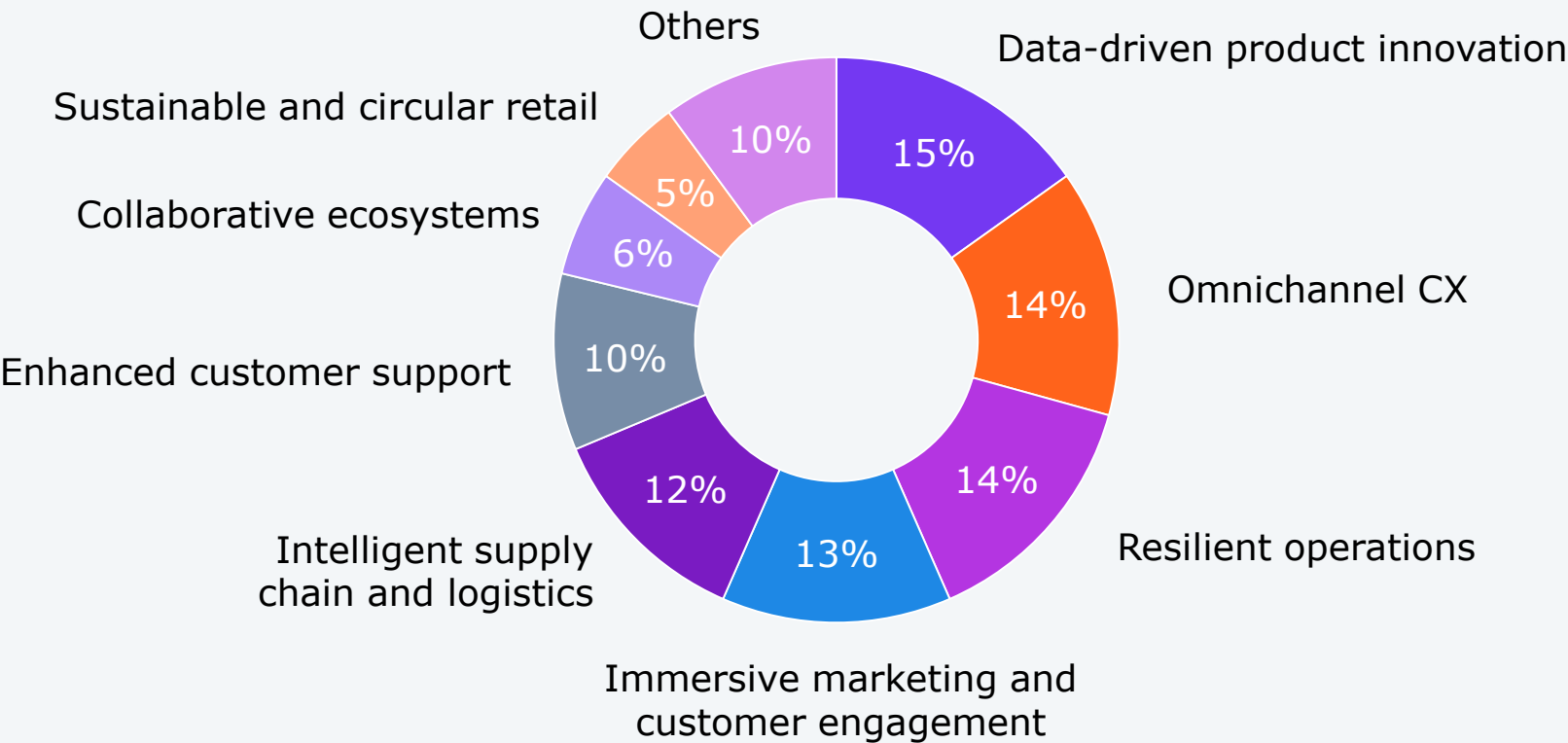
Partner references



Sample size: 31 Partner references
Source: HFS Research, 2025

90% of outsourcing spend aligns to HFS' eight strategic domains, with just four accounting for over half

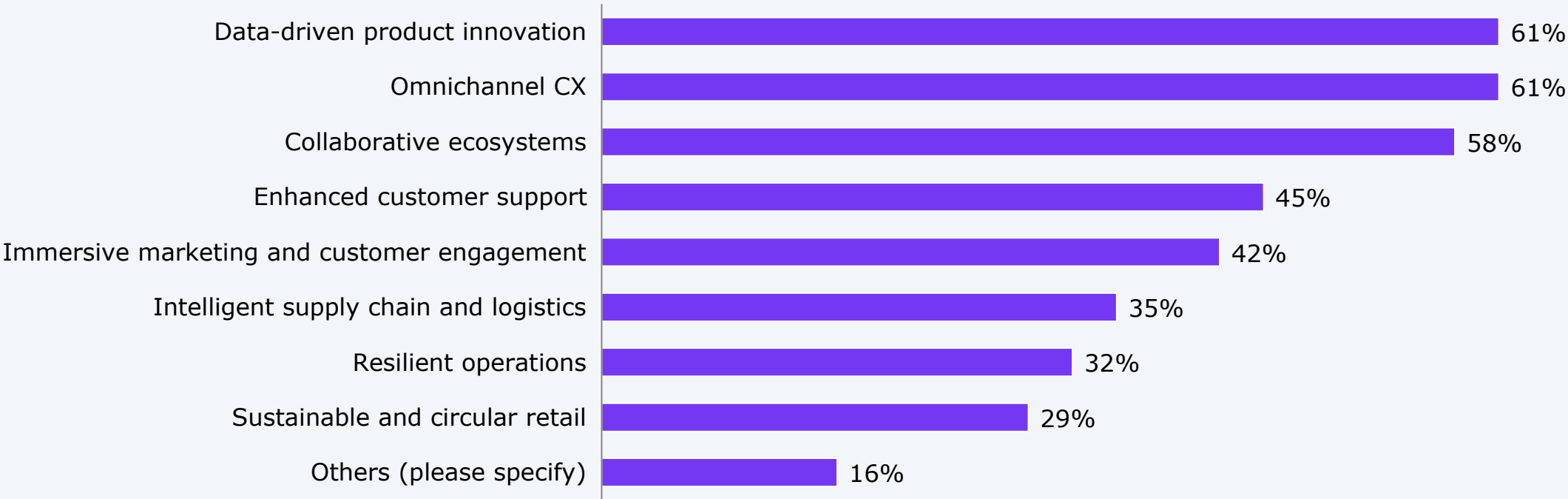
Please segregate your IT and business services expenditure by the following areas.



Sample size: 35 customer references
Source: HFS Research, 2025

Data-driven product innovation and omnichannel CX remain priority for the entire RCPG ecosystem

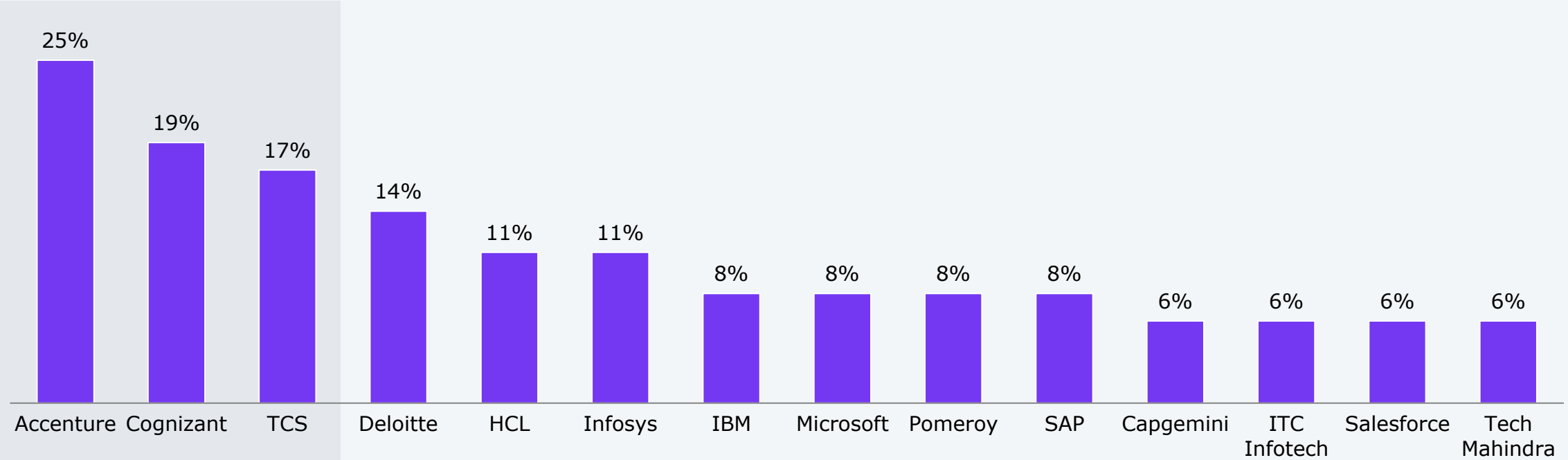
Which areas of the value chain are you engaging in with the provider?



Others (please specify)*: POS – payments experience, customer engagement; customer services solutions, agentic and agentspace, digital transformation, banking and finance
Sample size: 31 partner references
Source: HFS Research, 2025

Accenture, Cognizant, and TCS emerged as the top-choice provider partners for RCPG enterprise clients

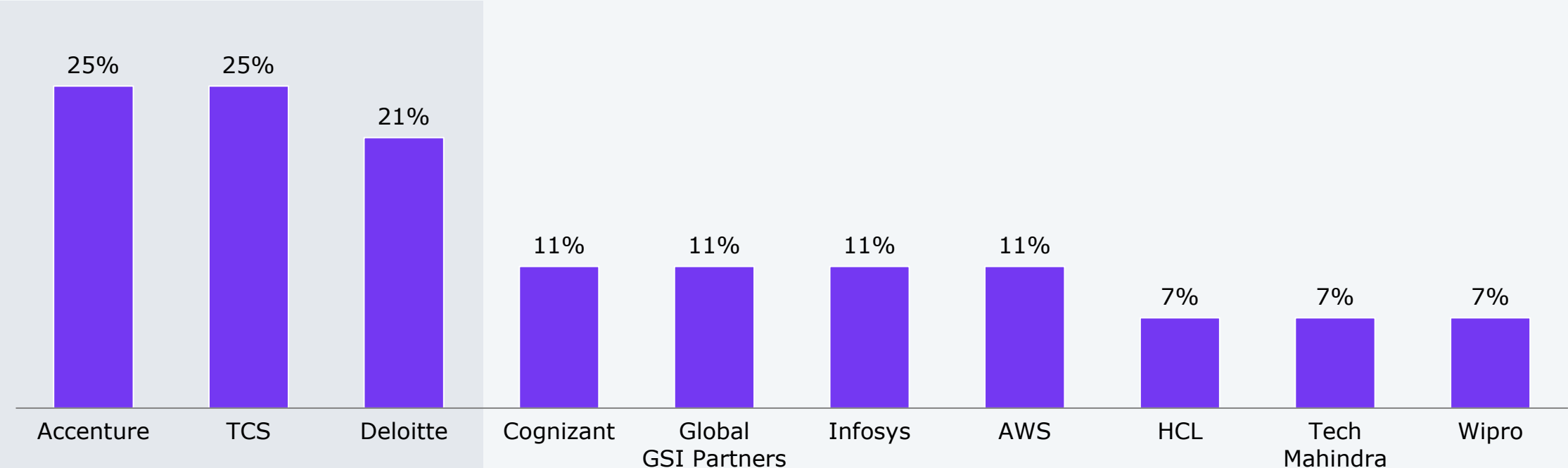
Name your top three strategic IT/business service providers (provider may/may not feature in the top three).



Sample size: 35 customer references
Source: HFS Research, 2025

Accenture, TCS, and Deloitte emerged as the top-choice provider partners for technology vendors in the RCPG industry

Please name your top three strategic IT/business service providers (provider may/may not feature in the top three).



Sample size: 28 partner references
Source: HFS Research, 2025

4

Horizons results: Intelligent Retail and CPG Ecosystems, 2025

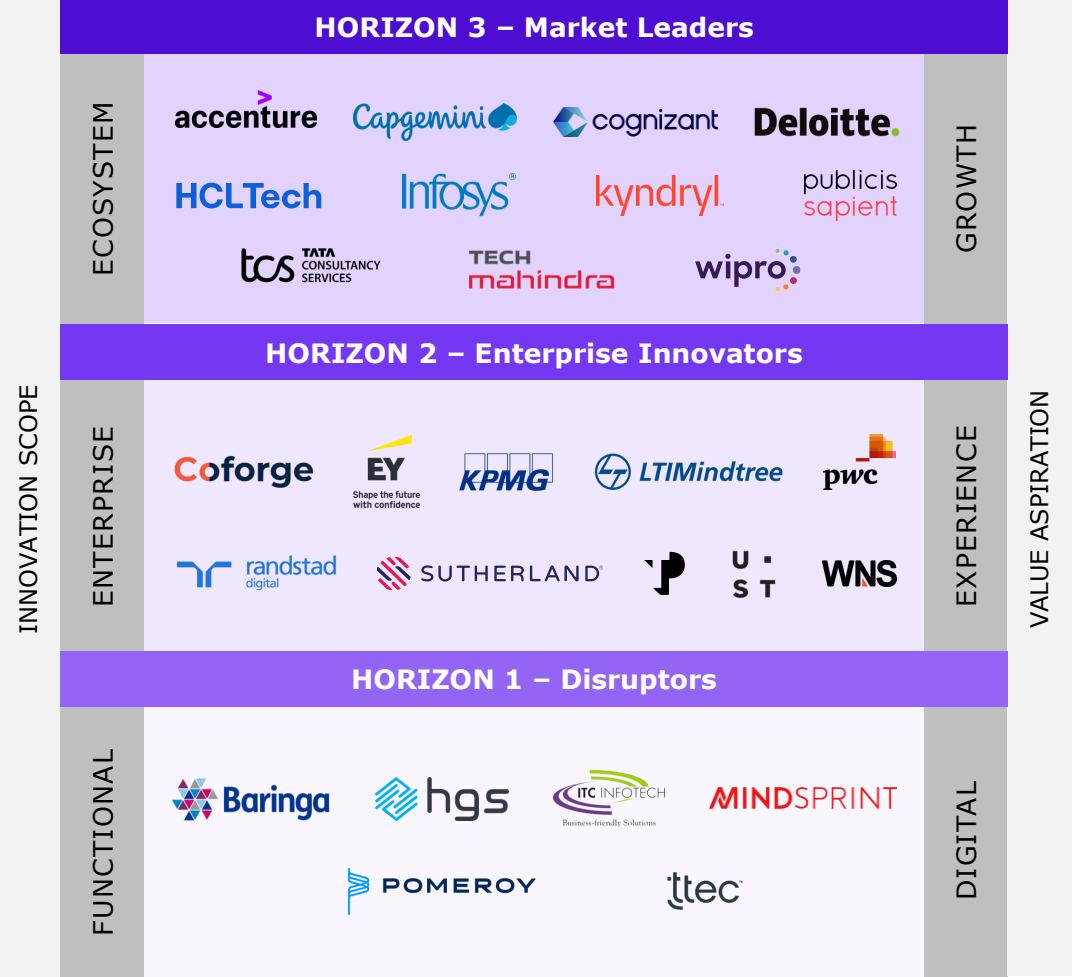
HFS Horizons: A summary of retail and CPG service providers assessed in this report (1/2)

Providers (alphabetical order)	HFS point of view
Accenture	Deep RCPG expertise, well supported by AI assets, strong platform strategy, and cloud partnerships
Baringa Partners	A specialty consulting firm that combines rich industry expertise with a pragmatic problem-solving mindset
Capgemini	Unlocks scalable impact through its deep sub-industry focus, global innovations, and pragmatic scaling model
Coforge	Offers an AI-led growth strategy through intelligent automation, domain-driven insights, and seamless collaboration
Cognizant	Penetrates the RCPG market with a focus on revenue growth management, supply chain, marketing, and omnichannel integration services
Deloitte	Focuses on high-value consulting-led unified commerce engagements
EY	Excels in change management projects with a focus on strong advisory, business model reinvention, and performance improvement strategies
HCLTech	Strong in account management with key offerings hinged on supply chain, commerce, and cybersecurity
HGS	A CX-first firm with a stronghold in cloud services, analytics, RPA, and cybersecurity solutions
Infosys	Plays across the RCPG value chain with deep expertise in cloud, platform modernization, trade promotions, and running operations
ITC Infotech	High focus on the CPG segment, with strengths in ERP, PLM, and customer intelligence platforms
KPMG	Strong in commercial tech but shines in RCPG engagements with change management and governance elements
Kyndryl	A leading provider of mission-critical enterprise technology services for RCPG with expertise in experiential commerce, omnichannel integration, and supply chain optimization
LTI Mindtree	Strong in RCPG commercial technologies and solutions, including sustainable supply chain strategies and omnichannel integration

HFS Horizons: A summary of retail and CPG service providers assessed in this report (2/2)

Providers (alphabetical order)	HFS point of view
Mindsprint	Deep experience in CPG with expertise in SAP, analytics, business processes, and cybersecurity
Pomeroy	Plays from the store floor to the cloud on the retail spectrum and focuses on endpoint scalable delivery
Publicis Sapient	Drives RCPG engagement with its agile delivery model, customer-facing unified commerce solutions, and industry partnerships
PwC	Focuses on advisory-led engagements with scope around supply chain optimization, trade promotions, and omnichannel experience
Randstad Digital	A strategic partner that can act as an extended team to provide specialized talent, advisory, and execution scale for RCPG clients
Sutherland	Asset-based offerings and a modular digital platform to address both operational efficiency and elevated consumer experience
TCS	Deep industry expertise, proprietary AI-led platforms, and scalable innovation ecosystems that accelerate business outcomes
Tech Mahindra	Leverages an integrated suite of next-gen technologies, deep vertical expertise, and unique synergies to accelerate intelligent, sustainable, and customer-centric operations
TP	Bridges the gap between brand-building and service delivery with full-scale marketing execution, influencer engagement, and omnichannel content campaigns
TTEC	Strong CX expertise and a global delivery model to optimize every interaction across the customer lifecycle—from acquisition to loyalty
UST	Domain-rich, GenAI-powered digital solutions that optimize supply chains, enhance CX, and accelerate innovation at scale
WNS	A specialist in embedding domain-led analytics, AI, and digital technologies into merchandising, supply chain, and customer engagement workflows
Wipro	Offers a robust portfolio of solutions to enhance CX, modernize platforms, build intelligent stores, and drive resilient supply chains

HFS Horizons: Intelligent Retail and Consumer Goods Ecosystems, 2025



Note: All service providers within a Horizon are listed alphabetically.
Source: HFS Research, 2025

Horizon 3 – Ecosystem synergy and new value creation
Horizon 2 + building ecosystems that **unlock new business models, foster co-innovation, and create entirely new revenue streams**, with an emphasis on sustainability and collaboration
Example applications:

- **Collaborative ecosystems:** Using AI-powered platforms to connect manufacturers, retailers, and logistics providers for shared data insights
- **Sustainability:** Leveraging blockchain to track and verify sustainable practices in sourcing, manufacturing, and recycling
- **Immersive customer engagement:** Integrating AR/VR for virtual shopping in the metaverse with real-time personalization powered by AI
- Driving **co-creation and co-innovation** with clients and partner ecosystem
- Perceived as a thought leader with **purpose-led relationships** driving growth and innovation for clients

Horizon 2 – End-to-end experience transformation
Horizon 1 + elevating the entire value chain by **creating integrated, customer-centric experiences** through data unification and seamless interaction across touchpoints
Example applications:

- **Marketing and engagement:** Leveraging AI to provide hyper-personalized campaigns based on unified customer data
- **Supply chain and logistics:** Using digital twins to simulate and optimize delivery networks for faster response times
- **Customer support:** Deploying emotion AI to predict and address customer issues proactively.
- Strategic partner to clients with **performance-driven** client relationships


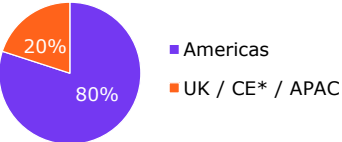
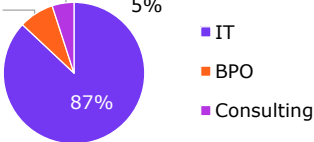
Horizon 1 – Functional transformation
Laying the foundation for digital efficiency by leveraging technology to drive cost reduction, speed, and operational efficiency in specific functions across the value chain
Example applications:

- **Product innovation:** Using AI for automating product design workflows and optimizing material usage
- **Omnichannel customer experience:** Integrating IoT to streamline in-store inventory tracking
- **Supply chain:** Implementing AI-powered demand forecasting to reduce excess inventory
- Primarily a vendor-client relationship with mainly **project-based** relationships

5

Cognizant profile: Intelligent Retail and CPG Ecosystems, 2025

Cognizant: Penetrates the RCPG market with a focus on revenue growth management, supply chain, marketing, and omnichannel integration services

<div> <div>HORIZON 3 – Market Leader</div> <div>  </div> </div> <div> <div>HORIZON 2 – Enterprise Innovator</div> <div></div> </div> <div> <div>HORIZON 1 – Disruptor</div> <div></div> </div>		<div>Strengths</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key differentiators: Cognizant’s RCPG offerings focus on six functional and strategic areas to help clients transform, leveraging a combination of data and AI engineering, omnichannel CX, supply chain expertise, sales enablement, a data-driven digital core, and sustainability initiatives. Technology innovation: With 35,000+ data and AI consultants and \$1 billion in AI investments, along with its consulting expertise, proprietary tools, and global delivery capabilities, Cognizant drives transformative outcomes for RCPG clients. The company has developed a comprehensive data and intelligence toolkit with 70+ assets and 20+ patents that support data quality, transformation, and advanced analytics for enabling smarter, data-driven decisions. Key Outcomes: Cognizant streamlined product development for a client by building a centralized data platform (CARA), cutting the time-to-market by 10%. It boosted online grocery fulfillment with advanced picking, micro-fulfillment, and last-mile delivery, driving 20% ecommerce growth and 96.5% picking accuracy. Client and partner reference kudos: Clients praise Cognizant’s scalability, competitive pricing, flexibility, and strong skill set. Partners value its strategic industry vision and deep domain expertise. 	<div>Development opportunities</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What we’d like to see more of: Further strengthen its ecommerce offerings. Continue investing in AI-embedded capabilities. Expand further in Europe, especially the Nordics and DACH. Opportunity in the next 12 months: Investing in platform-based AI services that can be shared and scaled across departments can create stronger revenue streams. Client and partner reference critiques: Clients find that Cognizant sometimes operates in silos and want more proactive idea-sharing. Partners expect a stronger focus on speed-to-market strategies.
<div>% of clients by major geography</div> 	<div>Revenue mix</div> 	<div>Mergers and acquisitions (2022–2024)</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AustinCSI (2022): A premier digital transformation consultancy specializing in enterprise cloud and data analytics advisory services OneSource Virtual (2022): A Workday services provider Belcan (2024): A leading global engineering research and development supplier Mobica (2023): An IoT software engineering services provider Thirdera (2022): One of the largest and most credentialed ServiceNow partners 	
<div>Partnerships</div> <p>AWS, Google, Microsoft Azure, Databricks, Snowflake, Informatica, SAP, Collibra, Talend, Syndigo, Reltio, Octopai, Alation, Anomalo, BigID, Adobe, Redpoint, Tealium, Solidatus, OneTrust, Securiti, Bigeye, NVIDIA, Cloudera</p>	<div>Key clients</div> <p>Number of retail and consumer goods clients: 220+ Key clients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An American multinational chain of coffeehouses An American multinational fast-food chain An American athletic footwear and apparel corp. An American grocery company An American convenience store chain An American multinational retail 	<div>Global operations and resources</div> <p>Retail and consumer goods headcount: 32,000+ Delivery and innovation centers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A robust global footprint with 100+ delivery centers worldwide Nearshore delivery capabilities: Europe, LATAM, APAC, and tier-2 cities in India Four innovation labs and experience centers: Texas, New York, London, Bangalore RCG practice that includes a dedicated Experience Lab in Chennai 	<div>Flagship internal IP</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cognizant® OrderServ: A digital food ordering solution designed to enhance CX by providing a seamless and personalized ordering process across digital channels Cognizant® Customer Concierge: Aimed to create Frictionless Shopping Experience in partnership with AWS Cognizant® Stores 360: A comprehensive store solution designed to streamline store operations, enhance employee productivity and improve CX

6

HFS Research authors

HFS Research authors



Ashish Chaturvedi
Executive Research Leader
ashish.chaturvedi@hfsresearch.com

Ashish Chaturvedi is an Executive Research Leader for HFS Research. He covers supply chain operations, the retail and CPG industry, and data platforms. He is an accomplished IT industry analyst, regarded as a top retail expert globally, and is featured regularly in various IT media publications. Additionally, he is a member of multiple industry associations, including RetailWire BrainTrust and RETHINK Retail. With more than 16 years of technology research experience, Ashish has authored over 100 research reports covering retail technologies, enterprise modernization, the platform economy, future supply networks, data platforms, and digital-driven growth.

Over the years, Ashish has advised several senior executives on digital strategy, product and service planning, next-gen technologies, and IT procurement. He has delivered several multidisciplinary research engagements, including provider and market intelligence reports, go-to-market workshops, white papers, podcasts, and research-based advisory.



Krupa KS
Senior Analyst
krupa.ks@hfsresearch.com

Krupa KS is a senior analyst for HFS Research. She supports the firm's research initiatives across several key categories: customer experience, retail and CPG, supply chain, and travel and hospitality. Her responsibilities include IT and business process outsourcing contracts data collection, and analysis of various service lines.

Before joining HFS, Krupa had several years of experience in business research and analysis with Excellence4U Research Services. As a member of the market research team, Krupa's responsibilities involved secondary research for company profiling, industry analysis, and competitive analysis. At Excellence4U, she also worked with the technology mapping team that learned about clients' businesses and how products were used by the target audiences, which helped her clients better understand the needs of their customers.

About HFS

- **INNOVATIVE**
- **INTREPID**
- **BOLD**

HFS Research is a leading global research and advisory firm helping Fortune 500 companies through IT and business transformation with bold insights and actionable strategies.

With an unmatched platform to reach, advise, and influence Global 2000 executives, we empower organizations to make decisive technology and service choices. Backed by fearless research and an impartial outside perspective, our insights give you the edge to stay ahead.



www.hfsresearch.com



[hfsresearch](https://www.linkedin.com/company/hfsresearch)



www.horsesforsources.com



www.horsesmouthpodcast.com