

# Virtual Shopping Accelerates Market Insight for Retailers

InContext Solutions Uses Nutanix Frame to Power ShopperMX

If you've ever watched "Mad Men," you saw a taste of what branding and advertising was like in the 1960s. In one episode, the charismatic Don Draper recommends setting up trial displays at grocery stores to demonstrate Heineken beer's suburban appeal. In the past, this was the only way you could test market a new product, get reactions to a changed brand, or try out a new retail concept. This remained the state-of-the-art in retail product research until InContext Solutions, founded in 2009, pioneered cloud-based virtual store simulations.

“Frame made it easier than ever for us to reach 5X more users by running our virtual stores directly in a browser, with no plugins or downloads needed.”

- Tracey Wiedmeyer, CTO at InContext.

## INDUSTRY

Retail

## BENEFITS

- 100% browser delivery backed by powerful cloud GPUs drove dramatically better results.
- Faster insights that let InContext's retail customers optimize their business in real time.

## SOLUTION

Nutanix Frame

- Frame's public APIs to deliver a seamless experience.

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## CUSTOMER OUTCOMES

### Virtual shopping speeds results

Instead of manufacturing real products and packaging to test in physical stores and measure sales effectiveness over a period of months, InContext ShopperMX™ virtual store simulations can achieve results in just days. Thousands of targeted consumers can walk through a fully immersive 3D virtual store and give instant feedback on what drives their purchase behavior. This gives companies like Walmart, Proctor&Gamble, and Coca-Cola the confidence they need to create winning in-store ideas and make smart business decisions based on real data.

### Bringing 3D apps to the masses isn't easy

InContext's innovative solutions earned them many accolades including the Who's Who in Retail ranking by EnsembleQ and being named one of "America's Most Promising Companies" by Forbes. However, achieving this success and rolling out their solution on a global scale to an extremely diverse set of consumers was no easy task. A detailed, realistic, interactive 3D model of a retail store, complete with thousands of products on shelves is extremely complex, but most end-users don't have the powerful GPUs needed to render such an environment. Furthermore, delivering the data for the models and the software needed to render them to users with limited bandwidth was an incredible challenge.

To reach users on multiple devices, InContext started by delivering their solution through a browser but required plug-ins to be downloaded and installed. While this got their solutions off the ground, it greatly limited their reach, since most virtual shoppers refused to install the plugins or simply couldn't do so on their devices. In addition, the performance of the solution depended greatly on the type of device the user had—which almost never had a GPU.

### Frame boosts results

InContext approached Frame in early 2015 and was thrilled to see that the combination of 100% browser delivery backed by powerful cloud GPUs drove dramatically better results. Customers can now reach more users in less time than ever before. This translates to faster insights that let InContext's retail customers optimize their business in real time.

### Frame APIs drive the future

InContext initially deployed their software on Frame without changes. While this drove instant results, InContext had a vision of an even more comprehensive workflow that combined native web-based workflows with Frame-hosted 3D graphics workflows. Today, InContext delivers a seamless experience for consumers participating in test marketing projects worldwide. Basic tasks such as qualifying users with a set of survey questions are delivered through native web apps that then flow directly into streamed 3D virtual shopping experiences running in Nutanix Frame. InContext was one of the first to use Frame's public APIs to deliver a seamless experience, blending Web software and streamed rich graphics software together in the browser.

"Frame has given us the flexibility to create workflows in the cloud that truly amaze," added Wiedmeyer. "If only Don Draper, could see what we can do today..."



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