



First impressions:



- Super easy to get to Excel, the Elizabeth Line rocks.
- Busy! Did someone say 15,000+ attendees? Certainly felt like it.
- Heavy queues at the start, seems not many took the pro tip to print your badge at home, learn that lesson for next year folks.
- Badges were hard to read name and company from and QR code tool was flaky to scan.
- In a modern tech-driven world do we even need badges and lanyards, what value do they really add? 🙄



The show:



- ****ing big! Real wow factor as you entered the hall and felt the buzz.
- Hardware, lots of it. Not really our bag but physical stuff drew attention, and it was cool to see the other side of retail tech to where we play.
- Startup zone interesting, hardly surprising largely AI-focused.
- Swag, some cool stuff around and nobody will be short of a pen for a while!
- The swag minesweepers were out in force, no idea what they'll do with their sackfuls of notepads, wish we'd air tagged some of our bags too see where they end up.



Social:




- Nice to meet Oliver Banks and Paula Macaggi F2F for the first time, follow both their podcasts!
- Clients, partners and friends galore - RTS certainly hits the spot as a great place to meet and chat.
- Wednesday's exclusive Commerce Futures dinner was ace - nice to sit down and reflect on the day and the industry with lovely people over great food and wine.



Retailer's thoughts:



- Big transformations painful and may leave your business behind. Smaller iterative projects offer faster learning, and success.
- Focus on consolidating and simplifying, not just transforming.
- The big guy overseas  will continue to disrupt, but that's beyond our control.
- Agentic AI promises overrated. There's much more to do before the industry is ready for it.
- People and partnerships are key to tech success.
- A good tech flow starts with clear requirements and needs testing to challenge and support.
- Consider the end-to-end change process, not just developing new software or adding new add-ons to bloated tech stacks.



Software QA really is a critical component:



- Question what you have, bring in help if you need to refocus.
- Our FLOW System resonated - people got it but we also learned where to clarify and evolve. Candid views most welcome.
- Nice to see some competitors exhibiting too - the bar is being raised on how we all help delivery quality.
- Definite value in bringing rigour not just dragging in the business to rubber-stamp.
- Counter that with one retailer telling me "oh no, we don't do a lot of that". Staggering.

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