



Derisking technology change

Spike hosted round table discussions with 15 retail tech leaders under Chatham House rules.

Thanks to all who took part, here's a snapshot of the discussion and our key recommendations.

4 killer questions



What are the common pitfalls of 'plug and play', and how to avoid them



Where do System Integrators fall short?



Derisking go-live: what are the core preparation steps?



Speed vs risk: where is the sweetspot?



Round table takeaways



Our round table tech leader audience outlined these key points as their major takeaways for further thought and action



Key recommendations



Plug and play

‘Plug and play’ can create more complexity than it solves.

- Run a session with your team to look at previous launches.
- Find the warning signs and build avoidance in to your new feature prioritisation.
- Educate business users on the true cost of adding more to your tech stack (design, dev, integration, QA, maintenance).
- Keep customisation under control.
- Challenge vendors on transparency to set realistic expectations.



System integrators

Make a clear distinction between traditional SIs and more modern build / test partners

- Manage and challenge the first, partner with and listen to the latter.
- Be clear on your vision when selecting partners, but use their expertise to shape and refine it.
- Build defect fixing into contracts, don’t pay extra.
- Don’t be afraid to change SI if they can’t meet your vision.



Derisking go live

Create/review your go-live readiness checklist

- What are the top three non-negotiables?
- Are your business users truly aligned?
- Have you properly planned and lined up key people to measure success in hypercare and fix problems?
- Extend testing to simulate real-world conditions including rehearsals of critical resilience scenarios.
- Use phased rollouts or dark launches to reduce risk.



Speed vs risk

- Consider slowing down as a way to save critical programmes or protect live trading.
- Create guard rails to allow you to say no without causing friction if key criteria are not met.
- Create a culture of continuous improvement to plan in time to fix broken tech and ways of working.
- Link future budgets to ROI from current projects to hold sponsors accountable and avoid pet projects.



Spike are Change Flow Maximisation Experts for Retail Technology

Retail technology is a high-stakes game. One wrong move can cost millions. Spike ensures your systems keep up with the pace of change, eliminating bottlenecks, blind spots and last-minute chaos.

We speed up everything in the test phases to make sure you move faster and that your platforms work and scale together. We give you clear info to make critical decisions, reducing costly delays, outages and unexpected failures.

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