# Retail Tech Trends 2026: A Global Perspective from LEAFIO AI Experts

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LEWES, DE, UNITED STATES, January 26, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Artificial intelligence is transforming retail faster than any previous technology wave. For LEAFIO AI—a global retail technology company with experts across North America, Europe & the Middle East, and Latin America—2026 marks the shift from AI that analyzes performance to AI that executes decisions.

To explore what's next, LEAFIO AI gathered an international panel of experts whose message is clear: retail is executed locally, but strategy is increasingly global.
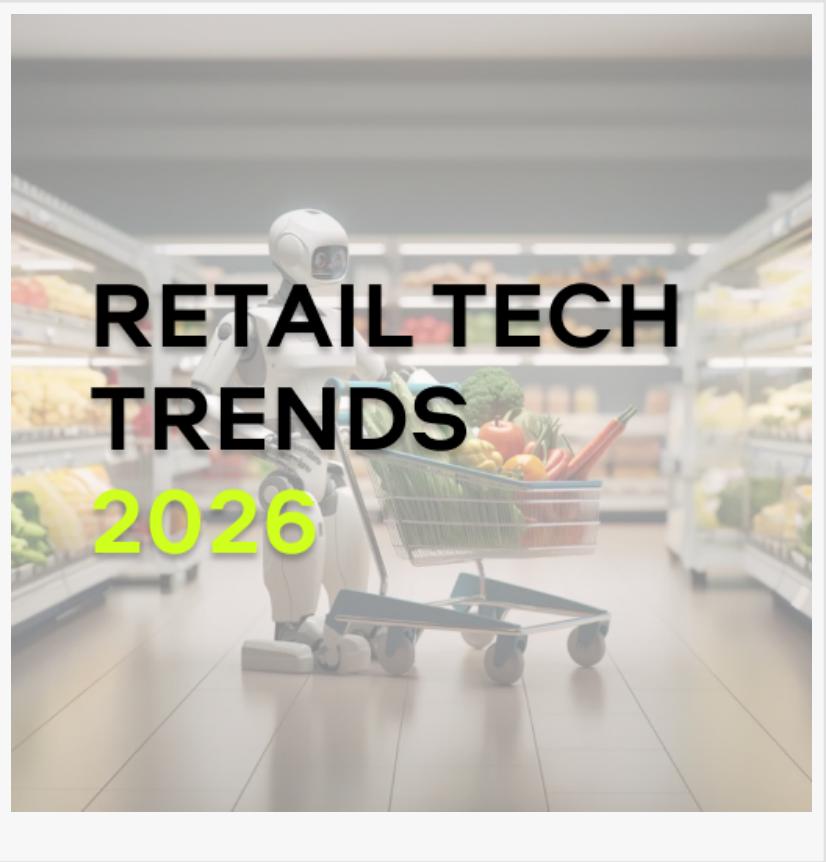


Global: Unified AI Retail Platforms Become the New Standard
Across markets, one trend is accelerating faster than any other: retailers are moving away from disconnected point solutions and toward unified AI-powered retail platforms. This isn't simply a technology preference — it's becoming an operational necessity. The State of Supply Chain Report 2025 found that 95% of surveyed executives cite tariffs as a primary disruptor, forcing rapid sourcing shifts and increasing compliance-driven complexity.

In such conditions, fragmented systems slow down reaction time. Unified platforms, by contrast, align inventory management, assortment planning, shelf execution, and promotions on a single data foundation — turning decision-making into a continuous loop rather than isolated tasks.

Victor Hart, Global Sales Manager, LEAFIO AI (USA)
"When inventory, assortment, shelf execution, and promotions operate on the same data foundation, results compound. Retailers often start with inventory optimization and expand into

planograms, pricing, and analytics. A unified AI platform turns isolated decisions into a continuous optimization loop."

Victor's observation reflects how transformation is happening in practice: retailers rarely attempt a full rebuild at once. Most begin with forecasting and replenishment, then expand into planograms, assortment strategy, and promotional planning.

Jane Medwin, Chief Revenue Officer & Co-Founder, LEAFIO AI Retail Solutions
"AI only becomes transformational in retail when it is connected end to end. Retailers don't need more tools; they need one platform that links planning with execution across inventory, assortment, merchandising, and supply chain. That's what makes AI actionable, scalable, and measurable."

From a leadership perspective, unified platforms are less about "consolidating software" and more about building a scalable operating model and a robust ecosystem.

North America: Agentic AI Moves from Insight to Action

North American retailers operate in an environment where scale, speed, and operational complexity leave little room for manual decision-making. In this market, AI is no longer evaluated by reporting capabilities — it is judged by whether it can act. The NVIDIA State of AI in Retail and CPG survey reports that 20% of retailers already use agentic AI, while another 21% plan to deploy it within the next 12 months.

Agentic AI signals a shift from "decision support" to decision execution — systems that detect patterns, assess constraints, and launch corrective actions in real time.

Brad Mitchler, VP of North America, LEAFIO AI
"In North America, retailers no longer want dashboards that explain what went wrong yesterday. They want AI systems that act in real time. In 2026, speed and autonomy will define competitive advantage."

Agentic AI can prevent out-of-stocks before they happen, rebalance inventory across locations, and align execution with local demand shifts. For large networks, this is increasingly the only way to scale without multiplying labor, exceptions, and operational risk.

Europe & Middle East: Platform Ecosystems and Partnerships

Retailers in Europe and the Middle East face complexity driven by fragmented systems, diverse store formats, and strict regulatory environments. That's one reason the region is increasingly shifting toward platform ecosystems and partner-driven scalability. Eurostat's Digitalisation in Europe, 2025 edition reports that more than 13% of EU businesses used AI in 2024, up from 8% in 2023, and adoption is rising fastest among large businesses.

Nicolas Greder, Partner Development Manager, LEAFIO AI (EMEA)
"In Europe and the Middle East, retailers increasingly favor platform-based ecosystems over standalone tools. Strong partnerships allow AI solutions to scale across regions while adapting to local regulations and market specifics — without fragmenting the technology stack."

Partner ecosystems allow local rollout while preserving a unified core: consistent data standards, shared analytics, and scalable innovation. For retailers expanding across countries, this prevents a familiar outcome — rebuilding systems market by market.

## Brazil: Predictive Supply Chains Enable Resilience and Sustainability

Supply chain volatility is now a permanent reality — and Brazil illustrates why predictive AI is moving from advantage to requirement. Sustainability is also a major business dimension. In a 2025 WWF Brazil initiative, estimates suggest the country wastes around 55 million tonnes of food per year, representing losses of approximately R$ 61.3 billion, while food insecurity affects 64 million Brazilians.

**Cecilia Flores Castillo, Retail Supply Chain Expert, LEAFIO AI (Brazil & LATAM)**
"AI systems analyze weather patterns, port congestion, supplier reliability, and geopolitical risks weeks in advance. What's new is sustainability — predictive supply chains reduce food waste, optimize transportation routes, and lower emissions by aligning deliveries with real demand."
Predictive supply chains reduce over-ordering, smooth delivery planning, and limit spoilage — especially in fresh categories. The result is resilience that can be measured in both financial and sustainability outcomes.

## LATAM: AI Enables Retail Optimization in High-Volatility Markets

Across LATAM, volatility affects not only supply chains but also store operations, category performance, and inventory planning. In such environments, rigid planning cycles are often too slow. The OECD Latin American Economic Outlook 2025 notes that financing for production transformation remains volatile and often shifts with political cycles and economic conditions, undermining long-term planning.

**Manuel Trevino, Retail Optimization Expert, LEAFIO AI (Mexico)**
"In LATAM, demand volatility is a daily reality. AI synchronizes inventory, assortment, and shelf execution. Retailers stop reacting to stockouts and overstocks — they anticipate them. That shift fundamentally changes performance."
AI-driven retail optimization recalculates demand signals continuously and adjusts execution accordingly. This improves availability, raises turnover, and stabilizes margin outcomes even under shifting market conditions.

## Global Expertise, One Retail Platform

With experts across North America, Europe & the Middle East, Brazil, and LATAM, LEAFIO AI combines international expertise with regional relevance. As AI becomes more autonomous, predictive, and interconnected, retailers that adopt unified platforms — backed by global experience — will be best positioned to lead in 2026 and beyond.

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