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## **TITLE: Promoting multichannel retailing key in Singapore's new industry roadmap**

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**The new Retail Industry Transformation Map aims to improve productivity to address headwinds, such as fewer business travellers and consumer shifts from brick-and-mortar to e-commerce.**

SINGAPORE: Promoting multichannel retailing will be one of the key thrusts of the Retail Industry Transformation Map, said Trade and Industry Minister (Industry) S Iswaran at an industry conference on Thursday (Sep 15).

The new retail industry roadmap aims to improve productivity to address headwinds, such as fewer business travellers and consumer shifts from brick-and-mortar to e-commerce.

The Retail Industry Transformation Map is the second industry roadmap, following the launch of the [Food Services Industry Transformation Map](#) last week.

Announcing the roadmap, Mr Iswaran said: "The Retail Industry Transformation Map envisions a pathway towards a vibrant future for our retail industry. It is not just about overcoming challenges but also how we can seize the exciting opportunities that lie ahead.

"All four prongs that I have outlined – boosting innovation, using technology to enhance productivity, reskilling our workers, internationalising our local companies – require strong partnerships and industry support. It is an effort that requires the collective will and effort of all stakeholders – industry, workers, unions and the Government – in order to succeed."

Through the roadmap, Government agencies such as SPRING Singapore and the Infocomm Development Authority can help retailers with the adoption of multichannel strategies, which will enable retailers to reach out and support end-to-end consumer needs online and offline.

Having an e-commerce presence will allow retailers to expand and tap overseas markets more easily.

The roadmap will also look to push out adoption of emerging technologies and for retailers to adopt manpower lean formats. Such technologies include robot assistants and radio-frequency identification (RFID) inventory management.

Besides building an online presence, retailers should also explore other technology innovations to stay ahead in a competitive environment, said Singapore Retail Association (SRA) President R Dhinakaran.

"The e-commerce platform on its own is not viable; they need to have a showroom or retail store as well as the e-commerce application ... out there it is very very competitive," he said.

"One has to be something innovative and something new and creative in order to get the attention of the prospective consumers."

With the transformation map in place, SPRING Singapore said it is aiming for a 1 per cent average annual productivity growth rate for the retail industry from now until 2020, while keeping manpower levels the same.

- CNA/ek