

FIELD EXECUTION SOLUTIONS:

# BUILD OR BUY?

Retail merchandising execution is the machine that powers sales, consistent branding and an engaging customer experience. Without a way to make that happen, stores can end up looking like a haphazard neighborhood rummage sale.

The path to a bottom-line-friendly solution diverges at a single question: **build a solution, or buy it?**

While building an in-house solution reflects the entrepreneurial spirit in action, it can easily create a gold-plated machine with a taste for cash—rather than a well-oiled retail execution dynamo. Here's your chance to tour the production floor and discover just what went into Natural Insight's retail execution powerhouse and exactly what building one looks like.

## Build

## Buy

### 1. Development

Often, **building a solution from scratch is a bigger undertaking** than companies realize. Many find themselves buried in piling development costs with no end in sight.

- At \$1 per line of code, it would cost about **\$6 million** to develop a large-scale enterprise software project (not to mention other project costs).
- Companies would need to allocate IT and Operations staff to develop the solution, pulling them away from core functions. This team would need to provide ongoing system support **indefinitely**.

### 2. Implementation

It often takes **2-3 years** to design, code, test and deliver field execution software's core functionality alone.

### 3. Customization

- In-house software development regularly leads to **overcustomization**, meaning each feature is a custom design—far from an industry best practice.
- An organization's operational needs evolve over time. With limited IT resources, **features often end up outdated** by the time they are released.

### 4. Maintenance and Support

Without a dedicated support network, companies on homegrown systems leave troubleshooting, fixing and updating software to their internal teams.

- IT teams lose productivity time on ongoing maintenance.
- Operations departments depend on IT for all changes and requests, adding extra steps to even minor processes.
- **Less than 30 percent** of in-house projects stay within their budgets.<sup>1</sup> Ongoing maintenance will inevitably drive up project costs.

### 5. Research, Development and Advancement

- DIY-solutions often fall short when it comes to company and industry evolution; companies that rely on custom-built software often lack the resources to keep their solution relevant over time.
- Without consistent updates, software exceeds its lifetime value after **five years**.
- Constant product development takes its toll on IT productivity time, especially in areas notoriously difficult to perfect, like **mobile functionality, payroll integration and maintaining a current UI**.
- Innovations such as **GPS-backed employee check-in technology and photo-enabled visual reach** are often out of reach for companies that develop their own software since such features can take a year or more to create and perfect.

### 6. Community

Competition is a valuable motivator; however, friendly collaboration can be a great resource for industry updates and new ideas. Companies who build their own system lose out on valuable community insights, actually **falling behind competition** over time.

### 1. Development

The Natural Insight solution assists with mobile retail task and workforce management. Embedded quality control and detailed analytics make the software reliable and user-friendly for both managers and employees. What went into creating our robust solution?

- Natural Insight's software consists of over **6 million lines of code**.
- We offer a full-service solution built on **15 years of continuous development**.

### 2. Implementation

Natural Insight gets clients up and running in **1-2 months**.

### 3. Customization

- Natural Insight includes every core feature needed for effective retail execution; clients need only customize key elements to meet their unique needs.
- Natural Insight's onboarding process includes company-specific configuration. Our onboarding team has configured Natural Insight to meet **hundreds of companies'** unique needs.
- Our **15 years of experience** make us experts in custom configurations, resulting in perfectly fitted solutions for each client.

### 4. Maintenance and Support

Any functional and reliable solution requires ongoing maintenance.

- Natural Insight's support team is available to store and field staff **12 hours a day** Monday through Friday.
- Each client is assigned a client success manager who learns their business inside and out and helps them get the most out of Natural Insight.
- Our clients' IT teams can support projects and boost productivity unhindered by field execution software.

### 5. Research, Development and Advancement

Every dollar of our extensive research and development goes towards tailoring our platform to meet dynamic industry needs.

- Natural Insight issues **weekly updates and major releases** every quarter. These keep our software at the cutting edge of retail technology at no additional cost to our clients.
- Natural Insight's technology is always improving. Our constant investment in R&D keeps clients at the forefront of proven field execution trends with new functionality and client input.
- Natural Insight perfected its GPS-backed employee check-in process with photo-enabled visual quality control verification with continuous feedback and refinement from its inception. Backed by constant improvement and collaboration between clients and R&D, we maintain our product at the forefront of roven field execution trends.

### 6. Community

Our solutions come **built-in with a network of hundreds of like-minded retailers**, brands and merchandisers. Our **INSIGHT conference** and constant contact with a wide variety of businesses in the retail space keep our technology current and your ideas fresh.

- Natural Insight combines industry best practices with experience to create a cutting-edge solution – it's "win-win."

**Building a retail execution platform takes years of commitment and investment—even if one could overcome some of the sticky issues above. Request a consultation to see how Natural Insight delivers flawless retail execution for quick, incredible results.**

[Request a Demo](#)

<sup>1</sup> <https://assets.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/nz/pdf/July/projectmanagementsurvey-kpmg-nz.pdf>