DashTosh

Deep Innovation Report

Executive Summary

DashTosh reimagines the high street as an active, real-time digital discovery zone.

By providing a live, perspective-mapped digital twin of BCP's shopping corridors, it connects independent merchants directly with local foot traffic.

This dossier outlines how the platform can foster inclusive, sustainable town centre regeneration and bridge physical and digital retail experiences by 2030.

The Better Everyday

What if navigating your local town centre felt as active and instantly responsive as browsing a digital marketplace?

DashTosh is an interactive digital twin platform and mobile companion designed to revitalize physical high streets. It connects independent merchants with active foot traffic in real-time, displaying live crowd density and instant localized promotions.

Imagine strolling down Boscombe high street on a crisp afternoon in 2030. Your screen displays a beautifully perspective-mapped view of the shops ahead, highlighting a warm bakery with surplus fresh pastries. You do not have to wander aimlessly or hunt online to find which local spots are active.

People want to support local independent businesses but struggle with convenience, visibility, and unpredictable high street opening hours. Currently, shoppers rely on fragmented search engine listings or outdated social media pages, which often fail to show real-time offers. This friction leads consumers to default to major online retailers, leaving local shops quiet.

This real-time discovery model could change what people expect from other physical spaces, like community hubs and markets. Visitors might expect real-time updates on active workshops, live library events, or food festival stalls nearby. This shifts the expectation of the physical town centre from static to responsive.

Who It Could Matter To

Bringing real-time high street discovery to life depends on understanding the distinct needs of shoppers, independent owners, and community organizers.

The Time-Poor Local Parent\nThey are a busy parent in Westbourne who wants to support local traders but has very limited windows to run errands.

They open DashTosh during a brief thirty-minute school-run gap to find nearby shops with immediate stock or quick deals.

They get to complete their errands efficiently, trusting they will not find closed doors or wasted trips.

The Independent High Street Merchant\nThey are a small-batch boutique owner in Boscombe who struggles to compete with large chains and online advertising costs.

They use the merchant dashboard to launch a quick, half-price promotion on slow-moving inventory during a quiet afternoon.

They instantly attract nearby shoppers, turning a quiet trading hour into a profitable, high-footfall afternoon.

The Seasonal Creative Event Organizer\nThey are a local freelance creator hosting micro-exhibitions and pop-up markets in Bournemouth town centre.

They need to broadcast live, changing events to passersby who might otherwise walk straight past their venue.

They gain visibility among nearby pedestrians, ensuring curious visitors can find and access their temporary gallery space.

What This Could Change for BCP

By mapping real-time footfall and local offers, DashTosh can reshape the economic vitality of BCP's distinct high streets.

The platform directly leverages BCP's established digital and tech sector, using local expertise supported by the Silicon South network. This allows the tech to be built and maintained locally, aligning with BCP Council's sustainable regeneration ambitions.

It could build year-round economic resilience for independent retailers in seasonal areas like Poole Quay. By giving merchants a direct tool to attract winter foot traffic, it reduces reliance on peak summer tourism.

As independent shops gain regular traction, vacant high street units might become more attractive for short-term creative pop-ups. This could eventually turn empty storefronts into dynamic community spaces, boosting overall high street variety.

While tech-savvy shoppers and modern merchants benefit, older residents or less digital-literate business owners might feel excluded. BCP would need to decide how to provide physical support or training to ensure equitable access.

Who Must Connect

To build a functioning real-time high street network, digital innovators, local businesses, and town stewards must coordinate.

A local independent app developer could lead platform operations, relying on a partnership with Bournemouth & Poole College to supply creative talent. This gives students real-world design experience while keeping development costs manageable.

High street business associations in Boscombe and Westbourne would shape the interface to ensure it meets real merchant workflows. They would keep the onboarding process simple and relevant for busy owners.

Property owners and BCP Council would provide access to lamppost-mounted sensors or existing footfall monitoring infrastructure. This connection feeds accurate, anonymous crowd-density data directly into the DashTosh digital twin.

Independent merchants would pay a modest, flat monthly subscription once the platform drives proven footfall. This predictable revenue stream would fund ongoing technical maintenance and hosting fees without relying on intrusive advertising.

The missing link is the connection between the app developers and the busy, fragmented local trade associations. The developer must make the first move, presenting a simple, working prototype to trade leaders to earn their trust.

Why This Fails

Even the most elegant retail platform will falter if it fails to address everyday high street friction.

Silent dashboards occurs when busy merchants find updating another app too time-consuming, leading to blank maps and stale promotions. The early warning sign is a high sign-up rate followed by zero active deals published after the first week.

Empty streets occurs if shoppers find too few active deals, leading them to delete the app, which in turn discourages merchants from posting. The early warning sign is a steady drop in daily active app users despite active merchant marketing.

Digital blind spots occurs when poor mobile reception or GPS drift on the high street prevents shoppers from receiving accurate proximity alerts. The early warning sign is users repeatedly force-closing the app while standing directly outside participating stores.

One Experiment to Start

Before building a full digital twin, the platform must prove that real-time digital prompts can actually change physical behavior.

The critical uncertainty is whether shoppers will alter their physical walking routes based on immediate, location-based digital notifications. If people ignore real-time alerts, the entire digital twin model falls apart.

Run a single weekend test using physical signs and simple SMS alerts along one busy block in Westbourne. Partner with three local cafes to offer an exclusive, real-time discount code sent only to registered participants walking nearby.

Keep going if over half of the test participants redirect their walk to redeem an offer within fifteen minutes. Stop or rethink if participants report finding the notifications intrusive or simply ignore them in favor of their original route.

Next step: A local app developer should approach three independent coffee shops in Westbourne within the next 90 days to set up a simple weekend SMS promo trial.