

PROPERTY

Shaun Bonett tells retailers: Transform or perish



Precision Group chief Shaun Bonett. Picture: John Feder

The Australian | 12:00AM April 12, 2018



ELIZABETH REDMAN
Property Reporter | Melbourne | @elizabethredman

The Australian retail sector is feeling the pain of tech-savvy global competitors that have set up in the local market and needs to transform or risk being left behind, rich-lister Shaun Bonett says.

The chief executive and founder of Precision Group also warned against remixing shopping centres for the sake of it, as landlords stare down competition from Amazon's local play and other online outlets.

The comments come as the landlord announces a three-year contract with data analytics and marketing services group Skyfii, across five of the group's shopping centres, in the hopes of helping retailers to target more relevant advertising to customers.

As debates continue about social media companies' treatment of user data, Mr Bonett emphasised Skyfii was not a social platform and kept its customers anonymous.

He said the platform helped retailers send promotions that were appropriate and interesting to different customers from different demographics, rather than using a broad approach.

"It's the only way to compete in a business environment where your competitors are able to move significantly faster than you and get to the customers in a much more efficient way," Mr Bonett told *The Australian*. "The likes of Amazon have had so much success not necessarily because their products are better but because they have had tools which have enabled them to put their offerings before the customers in a quicker, more efficient manner."

He said the retail sector was feeling the effects of the technology revolution, but the answer was not remixing centres "just for the sake of it".

"Like any other sector, unless businesses rapidly embrace it and transform their business they will be left behind," Mr Bonett said.

"The opportunity for business to embrace these (technology) tools is actually for themselves to become more productive and create greater revenues which in turn will lead to greater profit for themselves, but that will come with some short-term pain of having to upgrade the logistics.

"(The retail sector) is feeling the pain of global entrants into the Australian market that have embraced these new technology tools ... there's a catch-up to do."