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a GLORY company



Grocery unpacked: Trends driving the next generation of retail

Seamless, flexible, always available

In the fast-paced world of retail, grocery is the ever-present, essential destination. Responsible for must-haves such as food, beverages, and fuel, grocery retailers are a staple for all consumers – no matter their demographic or location. These are businesses that need to be always available for trade.

In the U.S., the largest food and beverage market in the world, 85% of grocery sales still occur in brick-and-mortar stores, while the market size is predicted to reach $864 billion in 2025, growing at a CAGR of 4.06% to 2029. As footfall is increasing, so are customer expectations. Retailers must find ways to keep up with the growing demand.

In addition to this increasing pressure on their services, grocery retailers face several evolving challenges. Grocery industry employee turnover is at 69%, one of the highest rates of any U.S. industry, while a recent study by The Food Industry Association found 80% of grocery retailers say it's difficult to hire and retain people. Labor shortages are a key concern. If retailers want to keep customers satisfied, they must find new ways to hire and retain efficient staff who can handle a multitude of general to specific queries on the shop floor, while leaning further on technology to improve flow.



Equally, the introduction of additional import tariffs has created additional pricing instability and potential supply chain issues as U.S. grocery retailers brace for possible price rises in import-heavy categories such as seafood, alcohol and fresh produce. With the increasing adoption of electronic shelf labels, price changes can be dynamically altered during active hours, harnessing transactional and algorithmic data to fine-tune costings based on demand, a practice that is raising concern from consumer groups who say that customers are being squeezed to maximize profits.

With in-store shoplifting and theft also on the rise, resulting in a 93% increase in the average number of incidents per year in 2023 versus 2019 in the U.S., retailers also face the prospect of lost profits owing to criminality. This challenging environment inclusive of potentially illegal activity can have knock-on effects for grocery staff members tasked with stretching their attention between customer queries and monitoring self-checkout kiosks for suspicious behavior. In extreme cases, when these activities are flagged and addressed, they could equally lead to abusive, or even violent, behavior that staff are not prepared nor even expected to handle. According to a 2024 National Retail Federation survey, 91% of respondents stated that shoplifters are displaying more violence and aggression compared to 2019.

> ***Theft cost US retailers $112.1 billion in losses in 2022.***

Source: WTW

Faced with such a storm of possible issues that comprise both external challenges and internal problems, how can grocery retailers not only stay afloat but continue to delight their customers with seamless service and timely responses to their changing needs? The answer lies in a trusted partner who can help businesses implement innovative technology to remove or even prevent the obstacles ahead.

Flooid has decades of experience helping the world's largest grocery retailers maintain efficient operations at scale, driving innovation and enabling loyalty-building personalization. From electronic shelf labels and computer vision at self-checkout to hybrid operations, mobile self-scanning, smart carts, and cashier-less checkout, Flooid's unified, composable platform makes it simple to adopt, adapt, and deliver the cutting-edge solutions that fit your business.

Read on to find out exactly how technological innovations are making it easy to tackle grocery challenges and how Flooid can offer a tailored seamless solution that works for you and your customers.



Personal, smart, enhanced: Innovating customer journeys

With customers increasingly seeking out personalized, tailored grocery experiences and in-store services that prioritise speed, accuracy and convenience above all else, how can grocery retailers ensure that their offering always puts these needs first? And what are the new technological developments that can help them deliver?

Self-checkout transformations

Self-checkouts have become the norm for grocery retail, yet associates are increasingly tasked with monitoring their SCO allocations as well as attending to shop floor queries or deliveries, meaning their attention can be divided. This can lead to sources of potential frustration for customers who need assistance scanning, identifying items or approving age restricted products.

Both shoppers and store associates can be assisted by AI-powered computer vision, which speeds up purchase times thanks to its advanced recognition capabilities. Rather than having to spend time manually inputting the identity of certain items such as loose produce, computer vision cameras integrated into SCO kiosks can help identify products automatically, leaving customers to choose from a set of options with the highest probability of accuracy. Since customers are slower at scanning than cashiers, averaging 85 seconds per basket at best, this technology can ultimately help produce faster, smoother and in some cases, more accurate transaction flows.

When it is time to leave the store, AI-enabled receipt verification technology is being trialed in stores such as Sam's Club in the U.S., allowing customers to exit without needing to show proof of their purchases, streamlining the final leg of the in-store experience. This recognition software, coupled with computer vision technology, can allow customers to shop, scan, pay, and walk out of the store, while also enabling retailers to strengthen their loss prevention protocols by knowing all items have been paid and accounted for.



75.5% of self-checkout kiosks are installed in retail stores

96% of grocery stores offer self-checkout

Source: Capital One Shopping

Smooth in-store journeys

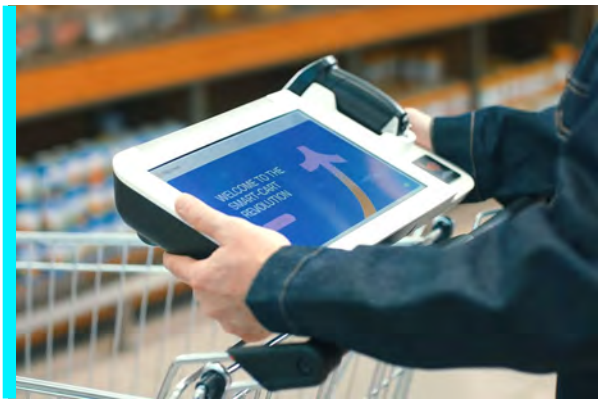
Finding yourself searching through the aisles for a specific item and asking store associates for help is a common and frustrating experience that retailers should aim to keep to a minimum. Instead, innovations like Cust2Mate's smart carts, which allow customers to:

- locate items via an on-cart screen featuring maps and navigation, and
- receive personalized shopping experiences that track their savings and spending as they move through the store,

can ensure customer journeys remain smooth and efficient. Amazon has recently implemented smart carts throughout its U.S. grocery stores to replace its contactless JustWalkOut technology, while Walmart and Kroger are also currently experimenting with the technology.

On the shelf level, electronic shelf labels are also becoming more widely adopted, with the global market predicted to grow at a CAGR of 15.8% from 2024 to 2030. These digital item displays can improve efficiency and reduce error for store associates, who no longer need to spend time manually updating paper tickets for price changes, while reducing waste, encouraging greater price accuracy and the possibility of dynamic pricing for items based on demand and availability.





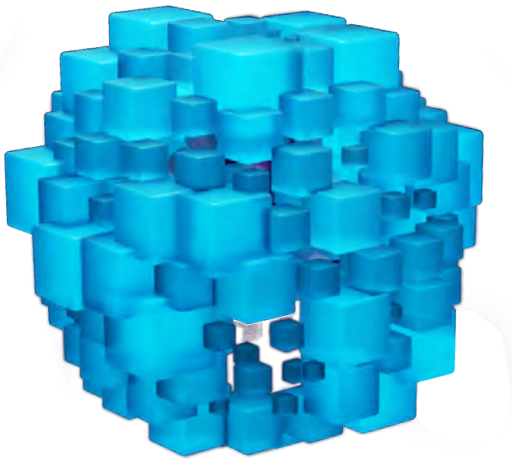
The smart cart market is projected to reach a value of $9.74bn by 2030

Source: Grocery Doppio



AI-assisted insights

Generative AI is fast becoming a core feature of technological developments and in the world of grocery, conversational AI assistants are empowering store associates to have useful information at their fingertips that can deliver specialized advice to customers. Walmart has been using the technology to enhance customer search, while its 'ask Sam' feature allows employees to use voice search to locate items, all working towards creating a seamless customer experience.



"The industry is experiencing a maturation phase, moving away from 'AI for AI's sake' and concentrating on larger-scale transformative technologies that impact the bottom line. Vital to this is separating the substance from the noise and only adopting technologies that will enhance operations in the long term."

Henry Ayres, Head of engineering practice at Daemon.

Source: The Grocer

Skilled, agile and safe: The changing role of the store associate

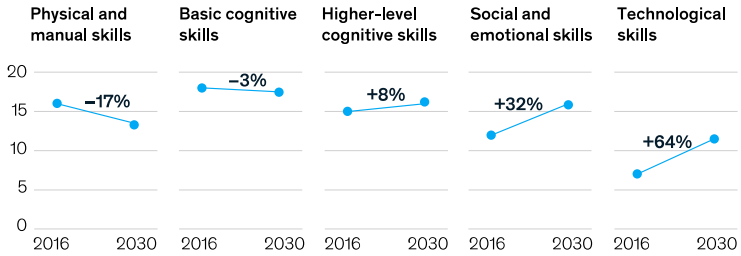
Grocery retailers are seeking solutions to alleviate the growing issue of staff shortages. As stores transform from simple repositories of items to unifying, interconnected spaces for information, discovery, and personal experiences, store associates are increasingly tasked with taking on multiple roles. These roles can range from guiding customers to monitoring SCO kiosks, managing inventory and providing knowledgeable answers to a range of queries.

One way that grocery retailers are engaging with this changing labor landscape is to invest in their people. Walmart has recently invested $4 billion in a reskilling program that requires new frontline hires to enrol in a certificate program building basic retail and emotional skills, better equipping associates with the know-how to deal with changing customer needs. Additionally, when it comes to staff safety, the National Retail Federation reports that 35% of U.S. retailers are currently researching investing in body cameras for employees, in order to deter potential criminal and violent activity, while the recently passed Retail Worker Safety Act mandates that in the state of New York retailers must adopt a retail violence prevention policy and equip staff with violence prevention training.

Technological innovations can equally make the multi-faceted tasks required of store associates easier and more efficient, leading to higher labor retainment rates. Interactive kiosks are being implemented to free up staff to attend to other duties rather than product sampling in grocery stores. Robotics have been deployed in SpartanNash stores across the Midwest to automatically stock shelves and monitor inventory, allowing employees to better focus on the technological and social skills that can ensure customer loyalty and satisfaction.

Social and technological skills are becoming more important in retail.

Retail hours worked by activity, US and Western Europe,[1] billions



	Physical and manual skills	Basic cognitive skills	Higher-level cognitive skills	Social and emotional skills	Technological skills
Sample skills	• General equipment operations	• Basic data input • Basic data processing	• Creativity	• Leadership • Empathy	• Programming
Sample retail activities	• Restock shelves • Scan items at checkout	• Take phone orders • Keep sales record	• Interpret performance dashboards • Create custom staff scheduling	• Serve customers • Coach personnel	• Consolidate customer info on a tablet • Complete e-learning trainings

[1] Western Europe includes Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.
Source: McKinsey Global Institute

McKinsey & Company

Source: McKinsey

The grocery store of the future is hybrid and always available

Grocers need to cope with explosive upticks in demand and deploy labor as well as new technology in the most efficient manner. They also need to stay flexible to serve the new types of customer journeys emerging all the time.

As customer desires shift, retailers must also bring together personalized experiences that track complex loyalty reward schemes alongside hybrid in-store journeys. These hybrid journeys might combine fulfilling a shopping list with stopping for food and drink, asking associates for assistance, or engaging with AI chatbots and SCO kiosks.

Throughout the next decade, grocery retailers can expect their stores to diversify to a greater extent, creating omniscient, interconnected spaces where customers can take advantage of shelf intelligence, smart carts and self-scan programs with real-time loyalty updates, automated checkouts and even robot and drone deliveries.

Retailers are resultingly faced with an overwhelming array of possibilities to engage with, leaving them potentially unsure of which path might be right for their business. This is where a trusted partner like Flooid steps in. Our decades of experience can help you navigate continued change, ensuring that your business keeps growing no matter what the future holds.

Flooid's unified, composable platform enables grocers to seamlessly integrate and manage the latest technology, from delivering a range of retail industry solutions with a single code base to offering convertibility, easily switching between POS and SCO as well as delivering queue-busting options. AI computer vision integrations and flexible connections to third-party loyalty, coupons, payments, and pricing systems, including electronic shelf labeling, equally enhance the customer experience. Flooid solutions also support U.S government supplemental programs such as SNAP and WIC, making the purchase convenient and affordable as well as intuitively easy to pay for all shoppers.

Flooid's Empower solution harnesses the power of real time scanning insights to provide an overview of transaction and any interventions requiring attention at in-store endpoints. Empower's assistant dashboard allows associates to immediately respond when a customer requires assistance, enables remote authorization of restricted sales, and delivers real-time transaction auditing. This means associates can remain agile, knowledgeable and available to help, ensuring shoppers have a positive and personalized experience. These advanced insights and in-store monitoring capabilities also ultimately help strengthen a retailer's loss prevention protocol, with new closed loop cash management systems and cash recyclers ensuring that back-office security is equally maintained.

In the U.S. and in many places around the globe, cash is still king, and retailers need smart ways to handle it without slowing down service. Flooid's parent company, Glory, delivers exactly that through cash payment automation and self-service solutions that streamline transactions, cut queues, and reduce the cost of cash operations. By automating cash handling, stores not only improve efficiency and security but also free associates to focus more on customers. With a variety of options for all sized baskets, Flooid and Glory offer solutions which further enhance satisfaction and keep lines moving, creating a faster, safer, and more enjoyable shopping experience from start to finish.

The future of grocery is arriving fast. With the help of Flooid, retailers can harness the exciting power of today's evolving digital technologies to prepare their businesses for whatever tomorrow might hold.

Connect with our team today to discover how Flooid's solutions can help your grocery business retain talent, minimize losses, and deliver agile, personalized service that builds loyalty.

About Flooid

Flooid, a GLORY company, is a market-leading unified commerce platform provider that enables retail and hospitality brands to sell to customers flexibly and consistently, wherever they are and however they choose to shop. Our scalable cloud-native composable solution and services portfolio includes assisted and self-service experiences, an open API services platform and operational business analytics as well as cloud, platform and endpoint managed services that enable retailers to select the right mix of overall services and technology partners to facilitate the selling journey that's right for every customer. One composable, unified commerce platform. Unlimited possibilities.

flooid.com

About Glory

As a global leader in cash technology solutions, Glory Global Solutions provides the financial, retail, QSR, cash centre and gaming industries with confidence that their cash is protected and always working to help build a stronger business. Our cash automation technologies and process engineering services help businesses in more than 100 countries optimise the handling, movement, and management of cash. While we span the globe, we personally engage with each customer to address their unique challenges and goals — enhancing staff efficiency, reducing operating costs and enabling a more rewarding customer experience. Employing over 11,000 professionals worldwide with dedicated R&D and manufacturing facilities across the world, GLORY Ltd. is built on a rich customer-focused, technology-driven heritage spanning almost a hundred years.

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