



For Immediate Release

Grab a Cart. Americans overwhelmingly prefer grocery stores to buying food online, survey says

New Vixxo survey reveals why grocery retailers must deliver an exceptional in-store experience to maintain consumer loyalty and a competitive advantage

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz., Nov. 14, 2018 - Despite an abundance of new options for buying groceries online, American consumers still overwhelmingly prefer to do their shopping in stores, according to a new survey sponsored by facilities management and industry leader Vixxo. The research also found that providing an exceptional in-store experience and high food quality are key drivers for keeping supermarket customers happy and loyal.

The company surveyed more than 1,260 U.S. consumers to assess attitudes and buying preferences in a time of growing online alternatives for purchasing food products. It found that 87 percent of consumers prefer to shop in person. This preference also spanned different age groups, with nearly all Baby Boomers (96 percent) and a vast majority of millennials (81 percent) reporting that they prefer the in-store experience to online.



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The key driver was selection: most Americans (84 percent) like the advantages of being able to inspect and pick out their own products. Others (60 percent) said they simply favor the atmosphere and experience of shopping in brick-and-mortar stores. For example,

more than one-third (34 percent) of respondents said they notice things like the lighting, temperature and other factors that set the ambience when they first enter a supermarket.

“A key takeaway for grocery retailers is that effective facilities management impacts the customer experience. A well maintained store can keep them coming back for more,” said Warren Weller, Vixxo’s Chief Client Officer. “In other words, assets matter. Maintaining and optimizing assets like food production equipment, lighting, digital signage and refrigeration is essential to delivering an exceptional customer experience.”

Quality Counts

Because the ability to personally select food is the key driver of the in-store advantage, then the food quality better be good, the survey also revealed. Food quality emerged as the most important factor when selecting an item at the grocery store, according to 45 percent of shoppers.

Freshness of the ingredients is also critical to the buying decision, with 43 percent of shoppers demanding that their prepared foods be freshly made. For instance, approximately one-quarter of respondents buy prepared food from their grocery stores, including pizza (31 percent), pasta salad (29 percent), rotisserie chicken (28 percent), sandwiches (24 percent), and sushi (15 percent). All these preferences underscore the importance of having well-maintained food preparation, cold storage and food warming equipment.

While consumers may have their favorite stores, few are exclusively loyal, the survey found. Only 14 percent said that they shopped at one store. Nearly half (45 percent) said they shopped at three or more stores in an average month. This “infidelity” pattern of shoppers underscores the importance of delivering a superior in-store experience to attract and retain more customers in a highly competitive market.

When asked why they choose one store over another, consistency of product quality was the top attraction (29 percent), followed by variety of options (25 percent) and store location (25 percent). The social aspect of shopping factors heavily in the shopping choice for some. Millennials, for example, are three times more likely than other age groups to say that they enjoy the social interactions they experience in grocery stores, pointing

again to the importance of maintaining top-notch facilities.

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About Vixxo

Vixxo is a leading technology-enabled facility management company for many Fortune 1500 clients in the restaurant, retail, convenience, and supermarket industries. Their solutions are designed to optimize clients' multisite portfolios by improving service delivery, reducing costs and providing strategic insights – all aimed at lowering total cost of ownership. Based in Scottsdale, Arizona, Vixxo maintains a national network of 150,000 service provider technicians and services over 65,000+ client locations.

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