

We look at Walmart's plans to add more technology to its stores and its efforts to build a dedicated ecosystem.

# How Walmart's adding to its in-store technology ecosystem



### 300 Auto-S shelf scanners

The retailer has also been using robotic scanners in-store to monitor product availability and planogram compliance. These scanners help identify where stock levels are low, prices are incorrect, or labels are missing. In addition, the scanners provide a real-time view of inventory in the store. The information is used to direct associates to the areas of the store that need the most attention. Using machine learning capabilities, the scanner can scan dozens of aisles in under an hour. This information is integrated into a workforce app which provides associates with detailed information on the tasks to be completed. The retailer plans to add a further 300 scanners to its stores.



### 1 200 FAST Unloaders

Linked to this, Walmart has been testing a new system in backrooms, the FAST Unloader. This automatically scans and sorts items which are delivered to stores based on priority and department, allowing associates to spend less time unloading trucks in the backroom and more time on the sales floor. When combined with data from the shelf scanner, the retailer can move relevant inventory from the back room to the sales floor more quickly; out-of-stocks are sorted by the machine for prioritisation. Trucks are unloaded in two hours or less, using four people, compared to requiring eight people previously. Walmart plans on rolling-out the FAST Unloader to 1 200 additional stores.



### 1 500 Auto-C autonomous floor cleaners

The retailer has also introduced autonomous floor cleaners. Each cleaner is programmed to travel across the store, polishing the floor. This helps to maintain a cleaner experience for its customers while also freeing up its associates. A further 1 500 floor cleaners will be deployed across its network adding to around 400 units which are currently operational.

**900 new Pickup Towers**  
Walmart has been one of the leaders in the US retail sector in terms of deploying new technologies in-store to either improve the shopping experience or to simplify ways of working. Many of its customer-facing technologies have been focused on its ecommerce operations, with the goal of making the store pickup process as fast and convenient as possible. Pickup Towers have been a central element, enabling customers to retrieve their orders within seconds of entering a store. With over 700 currently in place, the retailer plans to add a further 900 to the network.

