AiFi

Capitalizing on Convenience:

A Quick-Step Guide to Launching a Successful Autonomous C-Store with AiFi
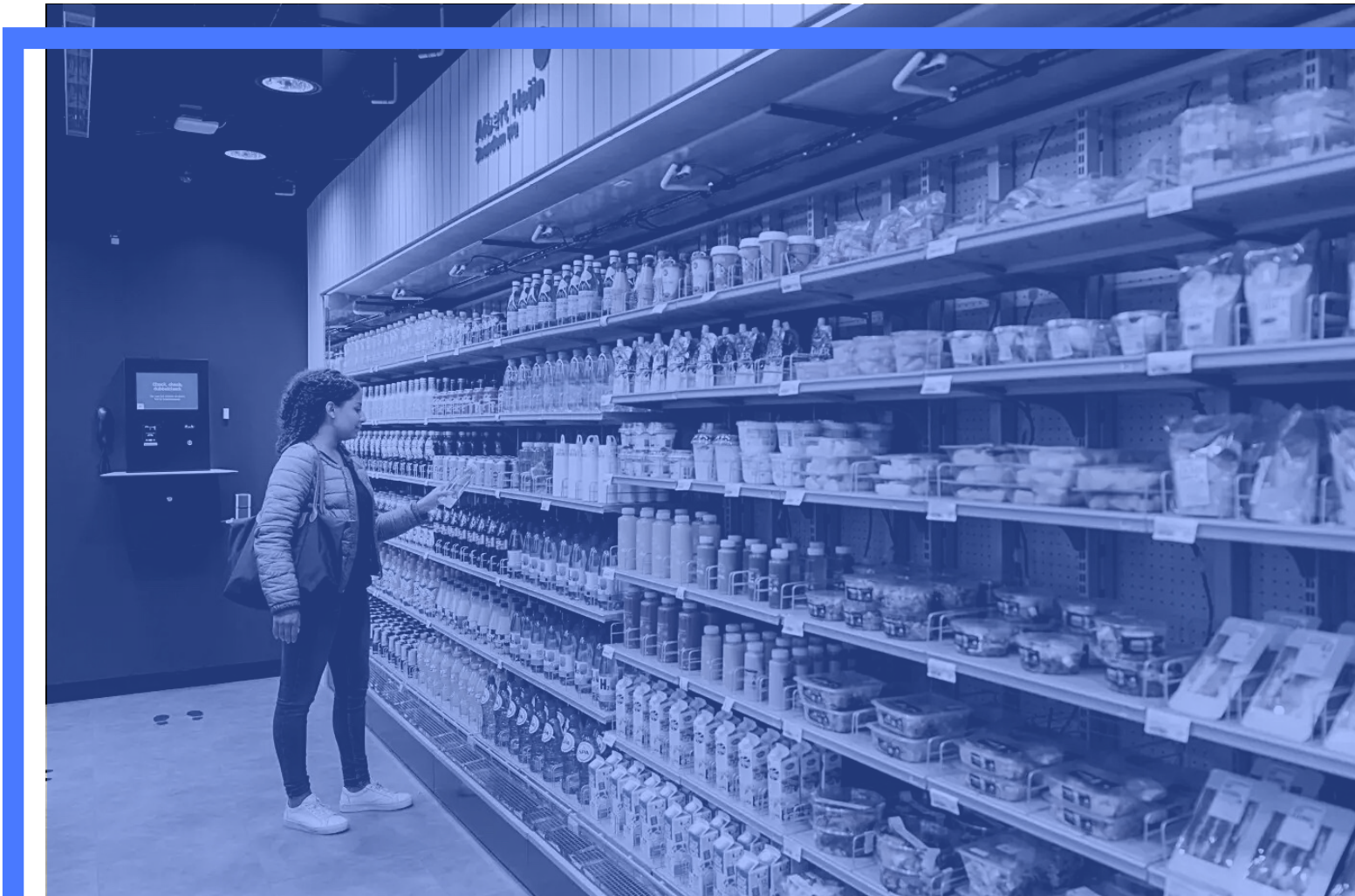
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Introduction

Autonomous stores offer a seamless and convenient shopping experience for consumers, enabling them to walk in, get the items they want, and walk out without having to wait in line, stop to scan, or pay. Today, these automated and easy retail experiences can be found in many settings, from grocery and convenience stores to airports and stadiums.

Convenience stores (c-stores), in particular, benefit greatly from implementing autonomous shopping solutions:
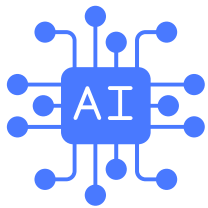
AI solutions enable **automated inventory management,** streamlined planograms, and fast transaction processing.
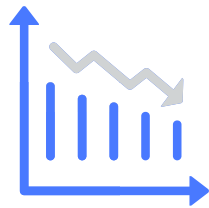
Retailers reduce the need for excess staff, eliminating high labor costs and **optimizing staffing resources.**

Autonomous stores **have the potential to nearly double profit margins** compared to traditional retail stores.
Source: Retail Technology Innovation Hub

Customers enjoy a **hassle-free, convenient, and cashier-less** shopping experience that is available 24/7.

But how can c-store owners transform their current store into an autonomous store?

Or, how can retailers build a brand new autonomous c-store?

The introduction and evolution of computer vision technology has made it simple for businesses to add a layer of sophisticated retail technology over their existing stores or launch entirely new stores with minimal business disruption.

In this quick-step guide, we'll explore how to capitalize on AiFi's autonomous technology, including computer vision, to launch a successful autonomous c-store.

3 **Reasons Modern C-Store Businesses Should Embrace Autonomous Retail**

1 **For today's customers, convenience is key to a worthwhile shopping experience.**

The modern retail customer has virtually unlimited shopping options. They can choose from a wide variety of brick-and-mortar stores, e-commerce sites, and even social media platforms. Convenience—whether it be the ease of shopping, little to no wait times, or quick access to necessary items—is often a major factor in helping customers decide between these options.

63%
of shoppers think convenience is essential

66%
say they will spend more if it means their purchase will be more convenient

Source: Analytics Steps

2 **Widespread labor shortages and rising costs are limiting c-store businesses' ability to expand.**

Today, c-store owners must find new and more efficient ways to meet business goals and needs with a smaller workforce—*without overworking them.* Apart from creating operational challenges, labor shortages can also significantly limit a business's ability to expand to serve new geographies, try new operational models, or even run seasonal promotions that require additional manpower.
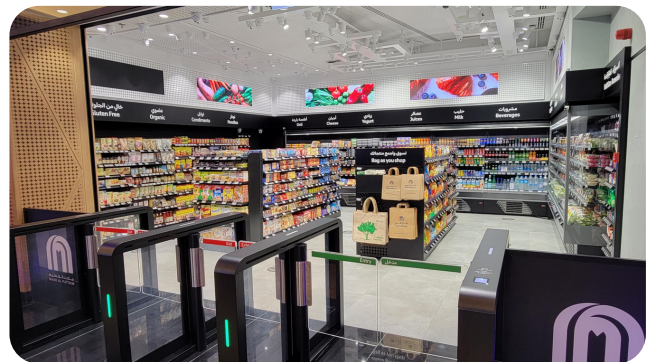
3 **New retail models can unlock greater levels of operational efficiency.**

Many businesses attempt to overcome operational challenges by trying to hire more workers or by specializing their inventory to serve a more niche market.

However, these methods of achieving greater efficiency are often limited. Autonomous retail enables c-store owners to achieve business goals efficiently by automating resource-intensive tasks and optimizing operational processes like inventory and planogram management, even with limited resources.

4 Ways Retailers Can Easily Launch an Autonomous Store with AiFi
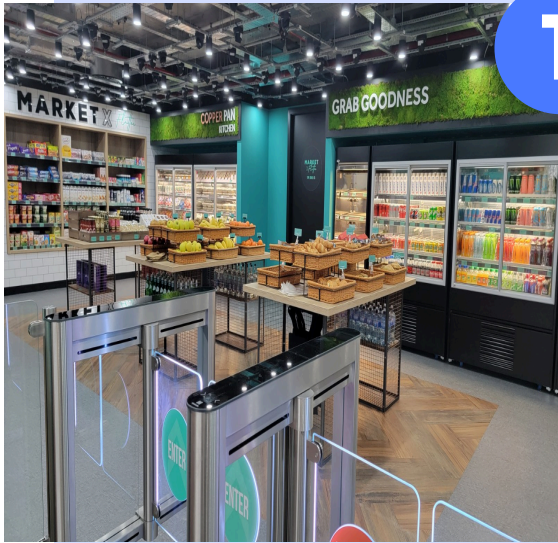
1 Camera-only AI solutions with no weighted shelves mean minimal hardware and low connectivity requirements.

C-store leaders can be hesitant to introduce autonomous retail to their existing stores or open a new store because of the perceived high costs and immense technological requirements. However, these challenges can be easily overcome with AiFi's camera-only solution. With an array of cameras and advanced AI algorithms, retailers can easily add a layer of intelligence to their existing stores without large hardware investments.

The AiFi Refresh and AiFi Build solutions allow businesses to set up an autonomous store with no disruption to store operations while **reducing costs by as much as 60%.**

2 AiFi's AI-powered technology eliminates the need for lengthy integrations.

Retailers are always under pressure to deliver a consistent experience across online and offline retail channels. To deliver this, retailers have to build complex inventory management systems and integrate critical payment systems into existing technology stacks. This can make it difficult for businesses to trust external vendors or introduce new retail formats that differ from existing stores.

AiFi makes it easy for c-store owners to **modernize key systems without disrupting or overhauling existing operations.**

## 3 The AiFi To-Go solution significantly reduces deployment time.

The journey to autonomous retail can be an exciting and profitable one for many businesses. Retailers sometimes wish to deploy these stores in high-traffic areas or to try this format for a limited time or for multi-location events.

AiFi To-Go allows c-store businesses to **deploy autonomous stores in any commercial space while still being portable.** This enables customers to interact with the business in unique locations and settings, such as at outdoor festivals and sporting events.

4 Specialized operational tools make it easy to manage constantly changing inventory levels and store layouts.
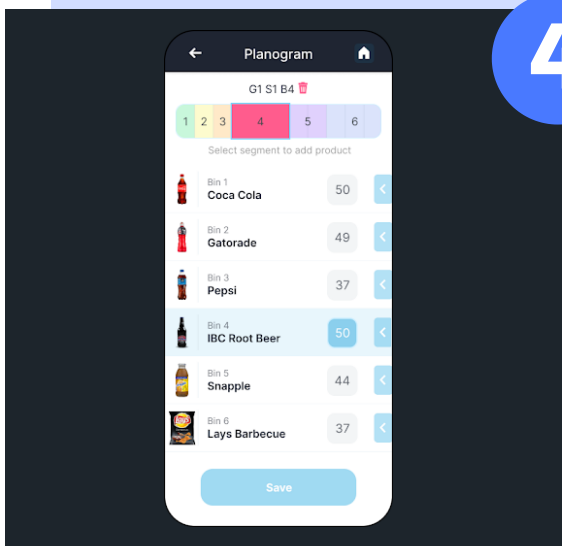
Even with highly optimized operational processes, inventories change and staff members must consistently and accurately plan, update, and follow their planograms. Operational tools built specifically for a c-store's unique business layout and inventory management needs can make it **easy for businesses to keep abreast of changing SKUs and inventory levels.**

AiFi's Operations App ensures that a store is always ready for customers by alerting staff members when products are misplaced or when inventory changes require them to manage and update their planograms.

Which AiFi Layout Suits Your C-Store's (& Your Customers') Needs Best?

AiFi Refresh
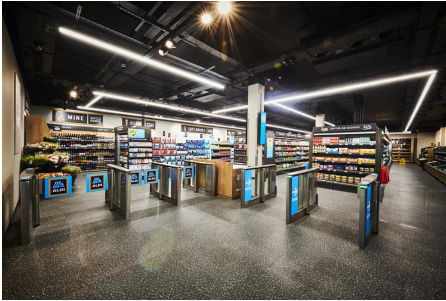
AiFi Refresh enables retailers to affordably and quickly automate their existing stores without the need to install new shelving or disrupt the customer experience.

AiFi Build

AiFi Build is a custom solution for businesses with the goal of efficiently scaling their retail footprint and deploying new stores of any size while offering a fully branded experience.

AiFi To-Go

AiFi To-Go is a fixed modular design solution that allows retailers to operate stores with no staff and increase their footprint in new, previously untapped locations and reach a larger customer base.

The Autonomous C-Store 5-Step Deployment Process

1. Plan
Meet with our team and design a plan tailored to your goals.

3. Configure
Connect software and test integrations to your other store systems.

5. Train
Train team members on new capabilities and go live.

2. Install
Install cameras and hardware either with AiFi's implementation team or with external partners.

4. Testing
AiFi conducts thorough testing to ensure 99% accuracy.

Final Thoughts

Autonomous stores are already becoming an integral part of the retail ecosystem. C-stores that adopt autonomous technology can easily deliver **greater convenience** to their customers while **improving operational efficiency** and **labor optimization.** In an increasingly competitive business environment, these advantages could be the difference between having a successful retail business and being pushed out by the competition.

Learn how AiFi's autonomous retail offerings can help you launch your own store with minimal fuss. Request a demo today to get started.

About AiFi

AiFi, a globally leading AI provider, empowers retailers worldwide to scale autonomous shopping solutions with 100% computer vision. Powered by the most cost-effective and flexible method of deploying cashier-less technology solutions, AiFi's camera-only platform enables businesses to provide a frictionless checkout experience to their customers. AiFi's technology works through cameras and computer vision to allow quick and efficient shopping for various store formats across multiple global retail segments.

AiFi's solutions adapt to numerous verticals, including convenience stores, sports and entertainment venues, universities, workplaces, and travel retail. AiFi customers include: LA Clippers, Golden State Warriors, NASCAR, Florida Panthers, Aldi, Carrefour, Compass Group, Zabka, and many more. AiFi now has the highest number of store deployments globally, with over 100 active stores. The company has raised a total of $80 million from investors, including Qualcomm Ventures, Verizon, HP, Mithril, Duke Angel Network, Cervin Ventures, TransLink Capital, and Plum Alley.

To learn more about AiFi, please visit aifi.com.