grocery doppio
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State of the Industry:

How Digital is Reshaping the Grocery Workforce

About this report

Grocery Doppio surveyed grocery associates to understand their viewpoints in regards to how technology is changing the industry and their jobs.
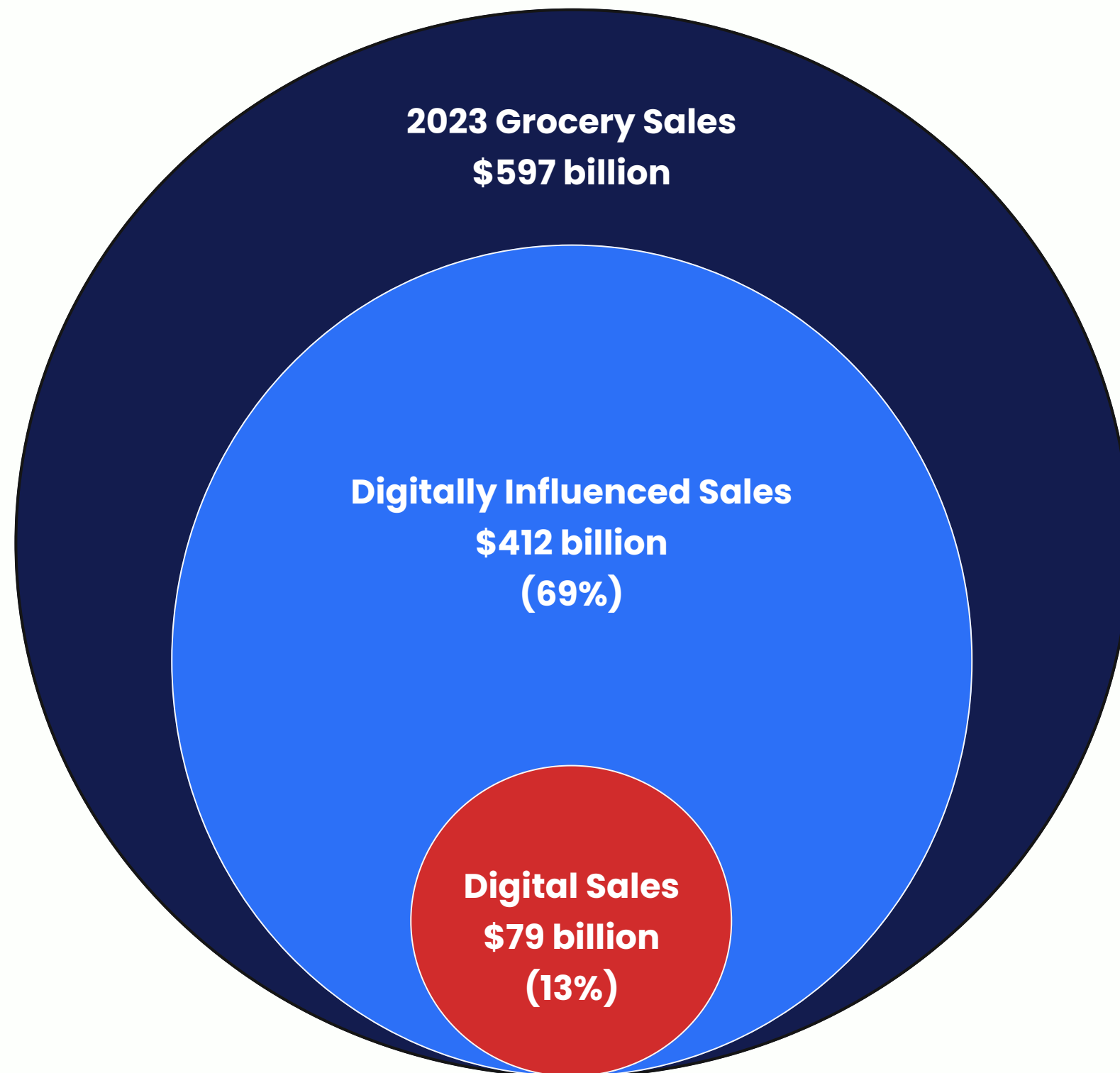
703

Total respondents

Grocer Size

47% National

44% Regional

09% Small

From January to August 2023, 69% of all grocery sales were digitally influenced.

2023 Grocery Sales
$597 billion

Digitally Influenced Sales
$412 billion
(69%)

Digital Sales
$79 billion
(13%)

Grocery shopping is firmly omnichannel.

Grocery shopping has undergone a remarkable transformation over the last 48 months. Digital sales have grown 3x, and there is a shift away from a singular focus on e-commerce.

The majority of grocery sales in 2023 were digitally influenced (discovery, inspiration, order, pick-up, wayfinding, coupons, etc.).
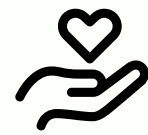
Shoppers want to navigate seamlessly between online and in-store environments, and grocers must meet their diverse needs and preferences at every step of the journey.

The store's digital experience is critical to maintaining shopper loyalty.

77%

of shoppers said that a poor online or pickup experience has a very high or high impact on their loyalty.

83%

of associates said that a poor store pickup experience has a very high or high impact on shopper loyalty.

13%

of shoppers used their mobile in the store to assist their shopping journey.

1 in 4

shoppers plan to use their mobile phone in the store to assist their purchase in the future.

Associates recognize that digital execution matters.

The store's digital experience is vital for shopper loyalty. Consumers demand seamless online services and efficient pickups. Any setback can push them towards competitors.

While both shoppers and associates believe a poor pickup experience erodes loyalty, associates weigh it higher than shoppers.

Being on the front lines of customer service, associates have a unique perspective on the implications of a poor pickup experience. They witness firsthand customers' frustrations and complaints, and they often bear the brunt of dissatisfaction. From their vantage point, a poor pickup experience can lead to negative feedback, potential confrontations, and the loss of repeat business.

Grocers have to do more with less.

68%
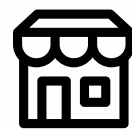of grocers still rate labor availability 'difficult' or 'very difficult'.

+7%
increase in volume of orders fulfilled by the store.

−3%
reduction in store productivity.

+16%
increase in peak volume of orders fulfilled by the store.

Grocers can't scale without technology.

Grocers face a complex scenario marked by labor challenges and rising demand. Staffing issues persist, yet the volume of orders, especially during peak times, continues to grow.

This juxtaposition strains overall store productivity. As they strive to meet these demands with limited resources, the importance of technology becomes evident. Implementing advanced technological solutions can streamline operations, optimize workflows, and enhance customer experiences.
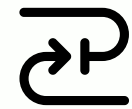
In this demanding environment, leveraging technology is not just beneficial but essential for grocers to boost efficiency and remain competitive.

Associates believe technology can help them do their job better, but they are saddled with unreliable tools.

87%
of associates said that new technologies can help them do their job better.
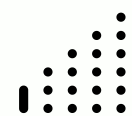
81%
of associates said they had a technology issue that affected their job this year.

69%
of associates believe their store is lagging behind the competition when it comes to adding technology.

63%
of associates said their in-store technologies don't always work.

Associates want robust technologies.

Associates recognize the transformative power of technology in enhancing the efficiency of their roles.

Reliable technology streamlines operations, reduces manual tasks, and allows associates to provide better customer service. When technology functions properly, it can enhance the shopping experience for customers, leading to increased satisfaction and loyalty.
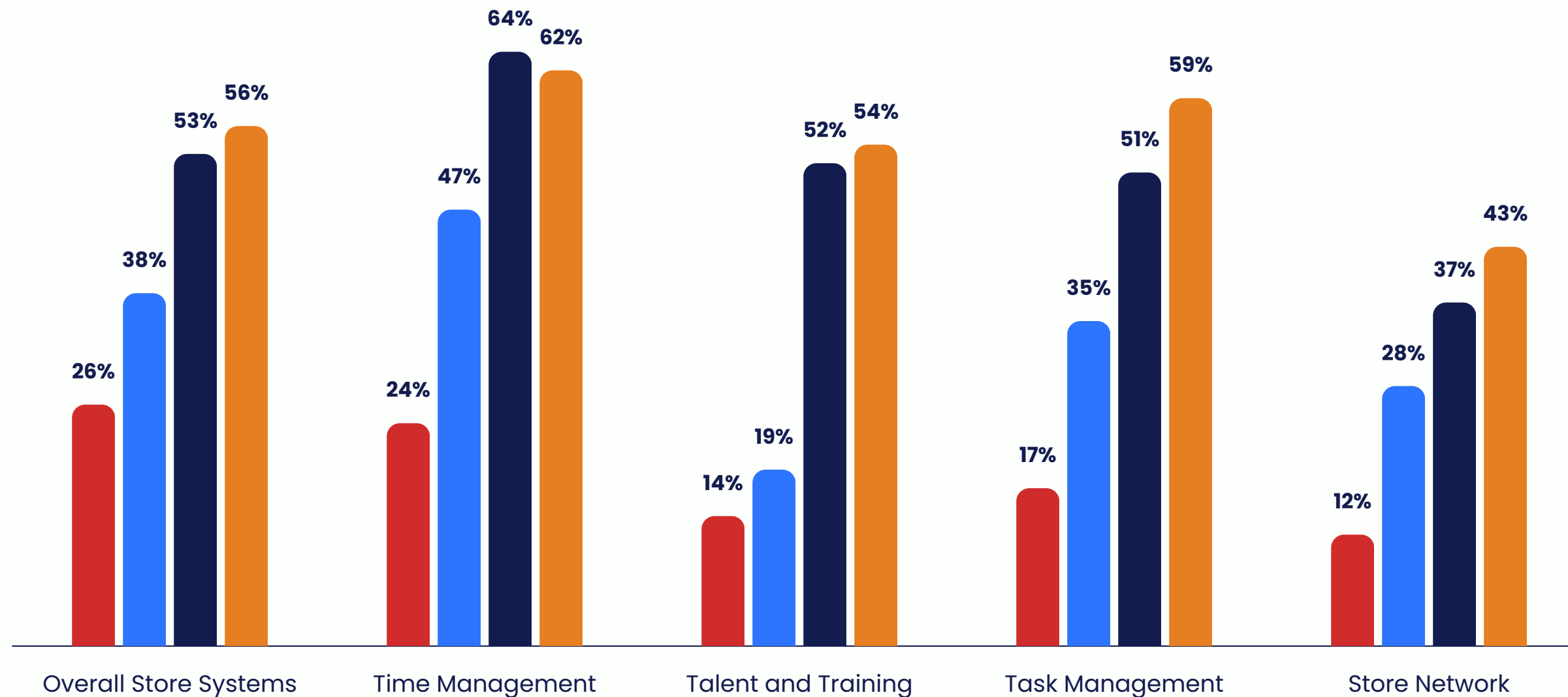
Conversely, malfunctioning technology can lead to delays, errors, and increased workloads, causing frustration for both associates and customers.

Furthermore, associates take pride in their roles, and having dependable tools empowers them to perform at their best and meet the store's objectives.

Younger associates rate their work software significantly lower than other demographics.

% of associates satisfied with technology

Legend: ● Gen Z ● Millennial ● Gen X ● Boomers

Overall Store Systems: Gen Z 26%, Millennial 38%, Gen X 53%, Boomers 56%

Time Management: Gen Z 24%, Millennial 47%, Gen X 64%, Boomers 62%

Talent and Training: Gen Z 14%, Millennial 19%, Gen X 52%, Boomers 54%

Task Management: Gen Z 17%, Millennial 35%, Gen X 51%, Boomers 59%

Store Network: Gen Z 12%, Millennial 28%, Gen X 37%, Boomers 43%

For Gen Z, the bar for good technology is high.

Younger associates, especially those from Gen Z, are generally more critical of their work software than older demographics.

This trend is evident across various categories, from overall store systems to task management. One possible reason for this disparity is that younger generations, being more tech-savvy and accustomed to advanced digital interfaces in their daily lives, have higher expectations and standards for workplace technology.

In contrast, older associates might be more forgiving or satisfied with the existing systems, having seen the evolution of such tools over the years.

Associates believe that poor technology is a function of not fully understanding store complexity and operational nuances.

Top 4 Reasons for Poor Technology	%
Limited 'real world' testing	73%
Poor store connectivity and legacy infrastructure	71%
Lack of field inputs during development	59%
Inadequate training	59%

Technology selection and deployment need to be more collaborative.

Associates contend that in-store technology often falls short of addressing the nuanced challenges of retail operations.

They feel that there is a disconnect between the available tech solutions and the practical needs of the store, which is due to a lack of hands-on testing and limited input from frontline workers during the selection and implementation of tools.

Additionally, the effectiveness of these tools is hindered by insufficient training, outdated store infrastructure, and poor connectivity.

Associates recognize that robotics and AI will have a significant impact on their job.

$13.8 billion

opportunity to leverage AI to improve store operations.

87%

of associates are worried that AI and Robotics will lead to a reduction in workforce.

25 -40

minutes of time saved per associate per 4 hour shift due to new technologies like AI and Robotics.

Tech optimism meets job concerns: The retail paradox.

Associates understand the profound influence of robotics and AI on their daily tasks.

They see the immense potential in leveraging these technologies to optimize store operations. Such advancements promise to enhance efficiency, potentially saving associates considerable time during their shifts.

However, alongside this optimism, there's a prevailing concern. The looming shadow of job displacement due to technological advancements creates a mix of hope and apprehension.

Their sentiments highlight the delicate balance between embracing innovation and preserving the human touch in the retail sector.

Grocers must invest in bridging the growing technology expectation gap, especially due to changing demographics.

Omnichannel is transforming grocery stores.

Stores are undergoing a transformation to meet modern consumer expectations for a seamless omnichannel shopping experience.

69%

of all grocery sales are digitally influenced.

Associates don't have the tools to execute effectively.

Current in-store technology often falls short, leaving associates grappling with tools that don't align with the complexities of their roles.

81%

of associates said they had a technology issue that affected their job this year.

There is a growing generational tech gap.

Younger associates, especially those from Gen Z, express greater dissatisfaction with existing store tech, highlighting a need for more intuitive and advanced solutions.

74%

of Gen Z associates are dissatisfied with their in-store technologies.

There is cautious optimism about new technologies.

AI and robotics in retail spark a blend of optimism and concern. While associates see the promise of enhanced efficiency, there's also apprehension about job security and the potential loss of the human touch.

$13.8 billion

opportunity to leverage AI to improve store operations.

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ABOUT GROCERY DOPPIO
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Grocers have experienced a generational shift in eCommerce adoption within a condensed period of time, giving rise to both - new growth opportunities and unfamiliar threats.

Grocery Doppio is an independent source of insights and inspiration designed to help grocers jumpstart, accelerate, and sustain growth in this dynamic new environment.

www.grocerydoppio.com

ABOUT WYNSHOP
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Wynshop is an ambitious team of digital innovators helping grocers and other local store-based retailers grow wildly successful online businesses. Wynshop's easy-to-use digital commerce platform enables efficient in-house picking, reduces fulfillment costs, and gives retailers control over every facet of the digital shopping experience.

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