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Self-checkout



What's wrong with self-checkout lanes? Remember the compelling sales pitch made to retailers? Customers could scan their own purchases using their credit card, bag them and leave the store. Storeowners embraced the concept since these machines, while they may be expensive, could reduce expenses.



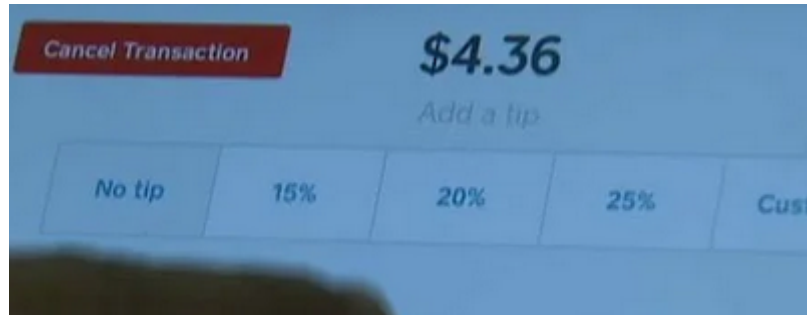
It was believed that long checkout lines would all but vanish once these machines were installed. Have checkout lanes disappeared? If you've recently been to a grocery store with finicky kiosks, it's likely from experience that this is not the case. Don't you still have to wait in line to use the kiosks? As the line slowly moves and you eventually reach a kiosk, is it easy to use? Or is it problematic? Have you ever been startled by the sounds that some of these machines make for failing to place the container in the proper position?



Some people might find it a bit irritating that they have to do the job of the cashier. Other people could have trouble locating an employee responsible for resolving a kiosk problem whenever something goes wrong with the Kiosk.

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Some retailers eager to reduce expenses were initially receptive to the idea; even though a set of kiosks can cost \$125,000.00. While it was expensive, kiosks would save money in time. It seemed less expensive than employees. Even skeptical retailers were convinced the prohibitive price would eventually translate into a small expense with less employees; who require sick days, receive benefits, request raises and even require workforce accommodations. The belief was that kiosks would save the retailers money with a smaller staff. Their savings over time would cover the cost of these kiosks and turn a profit.



What was overlooked? Is it a coincidence that shoplifting is skyrocketing with less cashiers? While Kiosks are less expensive than hiring people and can save some money, what's the point of purchasing them when projected savings are lost in shoplifting? The presence of alert staff members cautiously monitoring the checkout area is likely to discourage shoplifting that cuts deeply into coveted profit margins the organizations expected. As a result, stores have resorted to hiring more people to manage shoplifting issues. But weren't these Kiosks supposed to save money by reducing staff expenses? With the unexpected rise in shoplifting, it leads cost conscious store owners to consider that they may be spending more and saving less with these Kiosks.

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Perhaps people are the key ingredient. Is it possible that kiosk technology with a skeleton crew isn't capable of achieving a smooth and profitable operation? Consider that even Amazon's experimental '[no check out at all](#)' convenience stores aren't as popular as they had hoped. Maybe a compassionate, responsive staff of employees makes a noticeable difference!



It has been reported that some retailers are reconsidering the effectiveness of these devices as more customers are voicing their concerns and complaining about technical problems that are associated with these self-checkout kiosks.



Perhaps all of the above is part of the growing pains associated with adapting to new ways of processing transactions. Maybe the shoplifting issue with Kiosks is a temporary set back. Perhaps patience is required during the learning curve. One day, we may be able to look back and laugh about the early days; when working with Kiosks presented challenges. In the interim, it's important to have a sense of humor during our best attempts to anticipate unpredictable consumer behavior. On the subject of humor, watch a few videos about Kiosks, which might be informative for viewers, [even humorous](#).

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