Automated retail trends 2021

Lucerne, 14th of January I How is the world of automated retail changing? Where are the trends headed in the new year? What IoT solutions are going to shape the purchasing experience? After the complete standstill we have faced this year as a result of the ongoing pandemic it's time for the automated retail market to look into the future. The Swiss startup Invenda Group specializes in automated retail solutions and is offering up some market trends for 2021.

CFO Grégoire Bonnet, COO Ursina Beerli and Invenda CEO Jon Brezinski (left to right)

Trend 1: Changing purchasing behaviors require novel solutions
In train stations and airports across the world things have not been quite the same since the pandemic started earlier this year: Crowds of commuters and travellers have significantly decreased and are only slowly recovering. This has caused some trouble with the planning of opening hours, resulting in frustrated customers standing in front of closed stores. In airports in cities such as Zurich, Paris, Frankfurt or London, the opening hours remain reduced, although the number of travellers is picking up again. In addition to this, the increasing adoption of working from home will have a lasting effect on our shopping behavior and the skyrocketing e-commerce figures are clearly demonstrating a shift towards individual shopping - whatever and whenever.

This is where automated retail comes into play: It allows around-the-clock shopping. The [Global Field Force Automation Market Analysis](#) conducted by Research and Markets states that the revenues in this market will grow almost ten-fold until 2030. New vending machine systems facilitate one of a kind shopping experiences, thanks to gamification, AI and seamless customer journeys.

Trend 2: Automated retail solutions for people with disabilities
People with disabilities continue to be discriminated against in their daily life. In Switzerland, there are a lot of efforts to bring about change - for instance with initiatives such as the [ETH Cybathlon](#). Automated retail technologies can help remove many of the barriers people with disabilities face and today there are already many existing solutions featuring voice control based on IoT technologies to facilitate 24/7 access to -shopping with vending machines to people with visual impairments. Invenda goes one step further - the intelligent vending machine adjusts to people in a wheelchair.

Trend 3: Nutrition information must be visible on a vending machine and other self-service machines
This October, Germany voted for the introduction of the so-called Nutri-Score system, which is meant to standardize the nutritional information shown on food products. The system has already been introduced in other countries within the EU and Switzerland is discussing deliberating this. For the automated retail space, this translates into potentially stricter guidelines and higher visibility of the list of nutrition facts. For non-digital vending machines, which still resemble a display case, this is virtually impossible. For digital vending machines with large touch screens however this is an easy fix - you can easily display product information and have customers engage with it.

Trend 4: The relentless ascendance of e-commerce - An opportunity for the retail industry
Corona, online stores and lightning speed delivery: E-commerce is booming and with it innovative systems for digital shopping experiences. Just a few years ago, it was unthinkable to order items via app and pick them up in the store or having it delivered to you by bike courier - today, this is a common procedure. The supposed losers, the brick-and-mortar stores, can also benefit from this development. With new automated retail solutions, they will be able to expand their cross-channel strategies in the future. What we know from digital

e-commerce marketing and its corresponding algorithms is also possible in stationary retail - artificial intelligence is the keyword here. However, cross-channel sales are also exciting for other business areas, for example for operators of charging stations, mountain railroads, fitness centers, and many more.

Trend 5: Higher volumes of data processed faster thanks to 5G rollout
The number of connected devices is growing rapidly and IoT solutions that make our everyday lives more efficient are on the rise. 5G will also have a major impact on the automated retail industry. Up to 100 times faster than 4G, the 5th generation of the mobile network will significantly reduce latency and thus drastically improve the connectivity of real-time applications and smart devices. Accordingly, 5G means better device communication for innovative automated retail technologies thanks to real-time data exchange, which facilitates even more seamless shopping experiences.
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