

Petrol PLAZA

The Netherlands: Albert Heijn pilots its 'NanoStore' at Schiphol Airport

Albert Heijn first unveiled the fully digital store in September at its headquarters in Zaandam in the Netherlands, where it was open only to employees.



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Ahold Delhaize's Albert Heijn grocery chain is piloting its 150-square-foot "NanoStore" at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport, the fourth busiest international airport in the world, according to a press release. The portable store, engineered by technology company AiFi, will be open until January.

With the move to the new location, the company expects to pilot the technology with consumers in a highly trafficked area.

The new location should stress-test the NanoStore's technology and provide valuable data that can further inform the project, according to Grocery Dive.

AiFi CEO Steve Gu noted in a statement the high volume of busy travelers going through Amsterdam who are conscious of time and often need food and drink. "This speaks to the original design thinking

behind NanoStore: to make a plug-and-play modular store so it can be easily placed and moved where people need it the most," said Gu.

Shoppers have to use a debit card to enter the store. Once inside, they can shop for products and just walk out verifying their purchases against the receipt. No cash is accepted. Ahold Delhaize offers a "tap to go" shelf solution at its Albert Heijn To Go convenience stores, allowing customers to pay for products using a card or mobile app.

Ahold Delhaize has been focused on developing other checkout-free innovations in recent months, in addition to the NanoStore concept. The company also opened another small format store called Lunchbox at its Retail Business Services headquarters in Massachusetts, featuring a new "frictionless" technology.