

SHOPPING WITH STEVE

Walmart Supercenter in Rogers, Arkansas



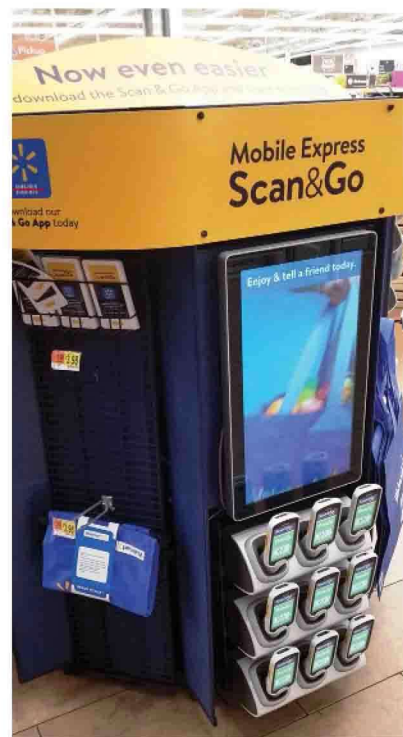
Steve Frenda, managing director – community development for the Path to Purchase Institute, has been a passionate retail watcher for more than four decades. Having worked as a retailer, for a brand manufacturer and in the infotech world, he is an authority on the entire path to purchase and its changing face. Contact Steve at sfrenda@p2pi.org.



FREND: While my photo doesn't show it, there was noticeable energy around the "Pickup" area. A steady stream of cars was arriving for the pickup team to facilitate "collect" of online orders. While the notion of giving customers the gift of time had occurred to me, seeing it come to life was exciting. With this service, there is no anxiety about when the delivery will arrive, and you save delivery charges as well.



FREND: At the Scan & Go kiosk, shoppers were encouraged to pick up a scanner and scan items while they shopped. There was interest and activity there as well, but it seemed shoppers are still quite willing to use self-checkout. I know how impressed I am with Walmart Pay, where you scan the symbol and the transaction finalizes in less than 10 seconds.



FREND: At the Freeosk sample-dispensing kiosk in the store, you select from a range of breakfast bars, in this case, and, voila, the sample appeared.



FREND: In the store, there was an impressive "Pickup" tower. Not sure of the logistics, but a gentleman walked up to the tower and entered his code, and within 90 seconds a box magically descended into his hands. As he turned, I questioned him about the nature of the order since he also had a half-filled shopping cart. He proclaimed that it was cosmetics and HBC items that she had ordered for in-store pickup. He noted he was incapable of shopping for them.



FREND: The electronics department was very impressive. From smart home displays to smartphones and gaming devices, the presentation puts you in the mood to buy.

Steve Says:

As we go forward with growing e-commerce, obviously Walmart and others will need to solve for issues such as unavailable items and substitution protocol. Also, concerns about ordering fresh meat and produce will need to be ironed out. ... But the future is bright.