

FMAGAZINE

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The Rise of Self-Service

What was once on a steady course has now broken into a run. What's behind the rise of self-service technology?



plus

2022 Customer
Experience
Predictions



5 Types of
Self-Service
Kiosks



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A global leader and innovator in capacitive touch systems and touch technologies, learn more about this issue's Featured Partner MicroTouch.

Frank Mayer and Associates, Inc. is a leader in the development of in-store merchandising displays, interactive kiosks, and store fixtures for brands and retailers nationwide. The company helps retailers and brands utilize the latest display solutions and technologies to create engaging customer experiences.

Visit www.frankmayer.com for more information.



Customer Experience Predictions for 2022

by: Katie Kochelek,
Marketing Specialist |
Frank Mayer and Associates, Inc.

Providing convenience has long been a catalyst behind innovation. As customers, we instinctually gravitate to frictionless experiences and reward the game changing companies and ideas that offer them. It's why today, we watch new movie releases on Netflix and pre-order our groceries on an app.

As the new year dawns, 2022 CX strategies across industries will continue to center on convenience and consumer satisfaction by nurturing omnichannel plans and implementing the latest technology. Read on to discover three customer experience predictions for the upcoming year.

THE HYBRID SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

The buzz term “omnichannel” is nothing new. However, a worldwide pandemic put added pressure on companies that hadn't already adopted a digital strategy to supplement their brick-and-mortar stores with ecommerce alternatives. It also drove shoppers to utilize websites, apps, and other methods like curbside pickup to get necessities.

Once physical stores began to reopen, though, they were met with a new consumer – one who came back with additional expectations for the same convenience and touch points they grew accustomed to during the global shutdown.

“When the shelter-in-place orders first took effect, delivery services like Instacart and Uber Eats boomed and programs like curbside pickup and BOPIS were essential,” says Cheryl Lesniak, Director of Marketing at Frank Mayer and Associates, Inc.

“And while people were eager to get back into stores once restrictions eased, they also have a newfound comfort level using these services,”

Lesniak continues. “In short, now they can toggle between shopping methods depending on what's convenient at the moment.”

What does this mean for 2022? Expect to see even more demand for this hybrid shopping experience.

This looks like customers who first check product inventory before venturing into a store because of the supply chain shortages, and families in quarantine who depend on grocery delivery.

It also looks like diners ordering food through a mobile app to ensure it's ready upon arrival or shoppers taking advantage of curbside pickup if they're short on time.

As customer experience strategies evolve, omnichannel methods will continue prioritizing the consumer's demands for ease and accommodation. And, at this point, it's no longer a desire, but an expectation.

ADDRESSING LABOR SHORTAGES WITH TECHNOLOGY

It's clear we're starting 2022 with a labor shortage.

According to a recent [Washington Post article](#), “Job openings in industries such as

restaurants, hotels and retail are at or near record highs. And some sectors, particularly retail and health care, have barely been able to hire enough people to balance out the number of workers leaving their jobs.”

And while many reasons factor into the ‘why’ behind the shortage, businesses are setting their sights on how to address the customer service problems caused by it.

Enter technology – a cheap hourly employee that can cover all shifts and allow current workers to focus on higher level tasks.

“[Kiosks](#), smart lockers, robots – these solutions have been around for a while,” acknowledges Lesniak. “But prepare to see businesses embracing these technologies fully in the coming year, especially as they must find reliable ways to fill labor gaps.”

The pandemic was instrumental in advancing the adoption of self-service, so it’s no surprise customers are now more willing to utilize these programs moving forward.

“The self-service industry is expected to grow from \$28.01 billion in 2020 to \$68.01 billion by the end of 2026,” Morgan Petty, Executive Director of the [Interactive Customer Experience Association \(ICXA\)](#) says. “In 2022, the industry is expected to incorporate new AI technologies along with seamless and secure

identity-verification tech to improve user experiences. This comes as consumers are becoming more accustomed to self-service experiences at ATMs, kiosks, innovative vending machines and via their own personal devices.”

Concerning self-service addressing labor shortages, she adds, “After seeing minimal impact from employee recruitment strategies, consumer-facing brands are adopting self-service technologies and deploying self-service kiosks at a more rapid rate than ever before.”

This means customers will see industries like QSR, healthcare, government, transportation and many more incorporating technology as a solution to staffing woes.

Interest in [smart lockers](#), specifically in the QSR space, has picked up since the pandemic created a need for contactless solutions. But with a labor deficit, businesses are

recognizing many other advantages they can offer. In fact, Nation’s Restaurant News lists technology-enabled pickup solutions like food lockers as a [restaurant technology innovation expected for 2022](#).

Jerrett Nasca, Chief Revenue Officer at [GRUBBRR](#), a leading global commerce automation company that specializes in self-ordering technologies, agrees.

“Given the ongoing labor shortage, it is important that restaurants can still service consumer demand for quick, convenient ordering processes that fit busy lifestyles,” he states. “Food lockers provide an ideal way to

grab and go, offering a safe solution for crowded pickup lines and face-to-face ordering while maintaining ease of transaction.”

Whatever self-service strategy a business adopts for the future, it’s clear programs like these not only save dollars in labor but ensure customer service doesn’t take a backseat.

AUTONOMOUS CHECKOUT

We can’t discuss customer experience predictions for 2022 without mentioning one of the biggest disrupters in the recent past – autonomous checkout. Expect this to grow substantially over the next year as more businesses explore and implement the technology.

A step further than self-service, autonomous checkout is a completely hassle-less experience that first got national attention when Amazon Go launched their cashierless convenience stores

in 2018.

Since then, the company has expanded into the grocery market as recently as 2020, and more companies have emerged as frontrunners in this space, including ones that enable retailers to retrofit existing stores with the technology.

One such company is [Grabango](#), a leading provider of checkout-free technology for existing, large-scale store chains.

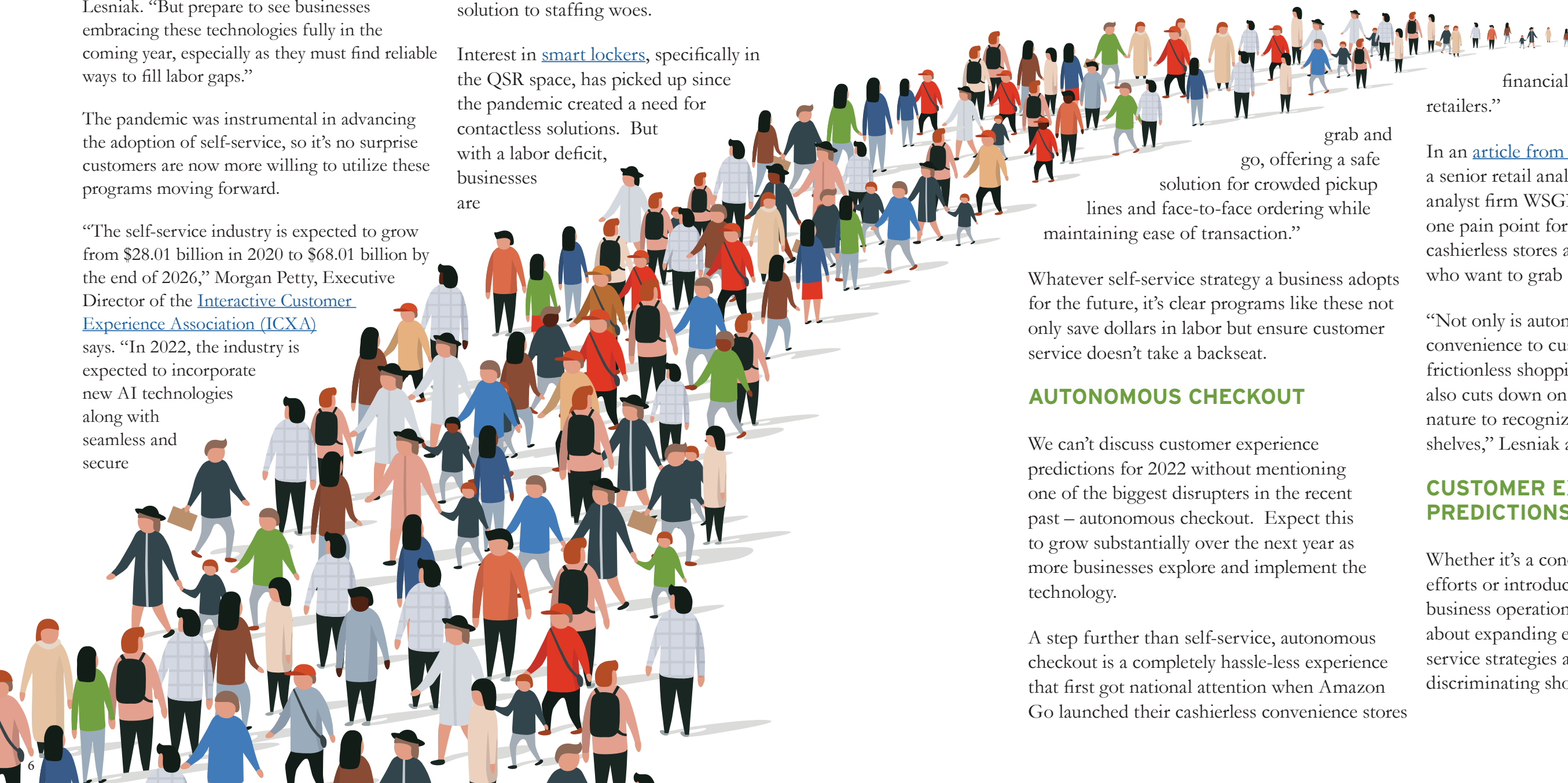
“With Amazon doubling down on brick-and-mortar retail operations, the race towards truly frictionless checkout is accelerating,” says Will Glaser, Co-Founder & CEO of Grabango. “In 2022, this race will reach full throttle as consumer awareness increases and the financial upsides become irresistible to retailers.”

In an [article from The Guardian](#), Laura Saunter, a senior retail analyst at the consumer trends analyst firm WSGN is quoted saying the number one pain point for people is queuing, making cashierless stores an attractive option for those who want to grab an item quickly and get out.

“Not only is autonomous checkout a huge convenience to customers who want a frictionless shopping trip, but this technology also cuts down on shrinkage because of its very nature to recognize items being selected from shelves,” Lesniak adds.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PREDICTIONS FOR 2022

Whether it’s a concentration on omnichannel efforts or introducing new technology to business operations, the year 2022 is all about expanding efforts to ensure customer service strategies are top-notch for the new discriminating shopper. «



5 Common Types of Self-Service Kiosks

by: Cheryl Lesniak, Director of Marketing | Frank Mayer and Associates

Chances are you've seen [self-service kiosks](#), whether ordering at a restaurant, finding your way around the airport, or checking out at the grocery store. [Self-service technology is everywhere](#). And while it was already gaining traction before 2020, the need for social distancing during the pandemic helped push self-service kiosks from convenient to essential.

With so many use cases varying from wayfinding to bill payment – and everything in-between – businesses will need to determine how best to utilize self-service kiosks to meet their unique needs.

So, with the many applications interactive kiosks can serve, how do you know what type of kiosk best fits your objectives? Below, discover the five most common self-service kiosk types and their benefits to multiple industries.

1

Self-Order Kiosks

Attached to a business's POS system, a self-order kiosk provides customers with the opportunity to explore purchase options at their own pace before putting through an order.

Even pre-pandemic, the use of self-order kiosks was on the rise, turning out profits up to 30 percent higher than traditional cashier transactions.

These types of kiosks are popular in the [QSR \(quick service restaurant\) industry](#), providing customer convenience, shortened wait times, and increased revenue at locations like restaurants, cafeterias, and stadiums.

Customizing orders is simple, leaving less room for error by cutting out a middleman. Customers are happy with the easy experience, and employees are free to attend to other customer-centered tasks.

But it's not just restaurants benefitting from self-order kiosks. In recent years, ordering kiosks have [gained popularity among the cannabis community](#), appearing more frequently at dispensary locations as an avenue for patrons to access digital menus and purchase product.



Self-order kiosks

2

Check-In Kiosks

[Check-in kiosks](#) can work across a broad range of markets, including medical, travel, hospitality, dining, and more.

This type of self-service kiosk makes check in and registration simple. Rather than waiting in a reception line at a healthcare clinic or hotel, patients and guests can simply check in at a kiosk.

There are numerous benefits to check-in kiosks.

First, kiosk types make social distancing easier, especially in a medical environment where reception staff is at risk to catch illnesses. Further, touchscreen kiosks are easily wiped down between uses to keep both employees and patients safe.

Additionally, check-in kiosks allow guests to skip lines, ensure personal information is correct, and even pay bills, while also filling labor gaps for businesses experiencing staff shortages.



Check-in kiosks

3

Ticketing Kiosks

Ticketing kiosks are used to purchase and dispense different types of tickets, cards, and receipts. They are often placed near entrances of locations that require paid admittance, cutting down on wait times, limiting face-to-face interactions, and allowing regular staff to attend to higher-level tasks.

These types of kiosks are ideal for movie theaters, theme parks, sporting and concert stadiums, museums, aquariums, zoos, historical landmarks, university campuses, ski resorts, parking structures, and transportation locations, like airports.

As ticketing kiosks continue to grow in popularity, businesses can utilize them to serve a variety of functions.

Some venues are currently expanding their use cases to include COVID-specific health questionnaires or provide access to reward programs.



Ticketing kiosks

4

Bill Payment Kiosks

Not everyone can easily visit a DMV during traditional operation hours, write a check to the power company, or pay a parking ticket online. Enter [bill payment kiosks](#) as a solution.

Often placed at convenient locations like grocery stores, parking garages, courthouses, hospitals, or university campuses, these kiosks offer an efficient option for everyone to pay bills, renew registrations, or take care of fines.

“Bill payment kiosks offer customers the convenience of meeting them where they are,” says Katie Kochelek, Marketing Specialist at Frank Mayer. “Offering these types of self-service kiosks at handy places affords access to everyone.”



Bill payment kiosks



Wayfinding kiosks

5

Wayfinding Kiosks

Ideal for malls, airports, universities, medical centers, stadiums, and more, wayfinding kiosks are a simple solution to guide guests and customers at unfamiliar places.

Replace bulletin boards and static maps with interactive kiosks that offer digital maps to lost visitors. Not only can these types of kiosks provide maps, business descriptions, and operation hours, but they're also easily updated with the most current information for guests.

FEATURED DISPLAY



Calacatta Collection Display

Wilsonart's Calacatta Collection includes a high-end assortment of quartz designs inspired by the look of Calacatta marble. The company sought to show samples of the selection to customers at their company-owned metro locations and independent design centers.

[Read more about the displays we've done for Wilsonart.](#)



What is the right type of self-service kiosk for you?

Choosing the right kiosk can seem like a daunting task, but the best place to start is examining your customer's journey and how self-service technology can improve the experience. Once you've determined this, narrowing down the right kiosk application becomes easier.

We've designed kiosks for many use cases. If you're still not sure what style of kiosk is right for you, [reach out](#) to one of our kiosk experts who can guide you in the process. «

The Rise of Self-Service

by: Cheryl Lesniak, Director of Marketing | Frank Mayer and Associates

Within the last few years, the buying experience has undergone a season of change. As consumer needs have evolved, the ways in which businesses respond to those needs have had to evolve as well.

With the return of shopping at brick-and-mortar locations, customers' new normal has pushed businesses to speed up their transitions into the omnichannel market to better bridge the gap between online and in-store experiences.

Self-service has made its way into the spotlight, and it's not going anywhere. But what can be attributed to the rise of self-service recently? Below, we detail reasons behind what prompted it and why the technology is here to stay.

THE PANDEMIC

Self-service advancements that had been on a slow and steady upwards trajectory before the pandemic were suddenly and unceremoniously rolled out, as businesses were forced to quickly adapt to survive during the crisis.

As the virus spread, customers were reluctant to visit stores and engage in close contact with others. Self-sufficiency became a way of life, with consumers and patrons familiarizing themselves with programs like BOPIS as well as self-service automation like self-checkout, ordering kiosks, smart lockers, and more.

Now, as the pandemic is nearing the endemic stage, and people are back to brick-and-mortar

stores, the reliance on contactless shopping has morphed into the new normal. Our society has emerged with a larger group of shoppers already educated on how to use the technology, and many have found it too convenient to revert to old habits.

COVID-19 has forever changed how we buy groceries, research products, and conduct business. Even as life starts to transition back into familiar territory, many changes that were made during the pandemic can be credited to where self-service is today.

LABOR SHORTAGES

The pandemic not only shifted the customer mindset, but it also prompted the rise of self-service for businesses.

As companies began to reopen, they were met with a new crisis: lack of manpower. The pandemic had led [47 million workers](#) to leave their positions. And for various reasons, they have been hesitant to return.

This [labor shortage](#) not only creates a gap for business owners, but it also generates additional issues – like maintaining a positive customer experience. Fewer employees means less workers to provide customer service, man checkouts and more.

Enter automation. With more customers taking ordering and checkout in their own hands, less employees are needed for customer-

facing jobs. One employee can oversee multiple self-checkouts or run a register while keeping everything running at a smooth pace. Remaining workers are then free to focus on other important tasks.

But it's not just companies, or even the workers, who are benefitting from self-service technology during the labor shortage. The increased use of automation is able to more easily fill in the gaps that might otherwise have appeared within the customer experience.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Customers have grown used to almost everything they need being at their fingertips. That means speed and efficiency are now viewed as non-negotiable expectations.

Today's [self-service](#) meets consumer needs for instant gratification. And self-checkouts mean that customers can be walking out of store with their items as quickly as they can scan and pay.

An added benefit to the rise of self-service is the correlated increase in order size. Not only do software features like upselling and cross-selling influence ticket amount, but the privacy of ordering from a kiosk also gives customers a safe space to order without fear of judgement from staff. This often equates to sizing up on meals or ordering extra sides, benefitting businesses.

We live in a world where people will continue to expect immediate satisfaction. As companies set their objectives to meet this need, we'll see self-service kiosks and similar automation play an even bigger role in the future.

THE CONTINUED RISE

Looking to the future, technology will continue to develop, advancing the abilities of self-service further.

“Every generation of kiosk will improve on the last, and technology itself will provide this layer across all aspects of business and personal processes, filling in the gaps of inefficiencies and inconveniences everywhere,” says Frank Mayer Account Executive, Edward Roberto.

No longer a foreign concept to the average person, the use of self-service kiosks will become much more standard, as well. With the ongoing worker shortage, companies are going to be more apt to roll out self-service options for patrons.

Roberto adds, “Ultimately self-service solutions will become so much the norm that the moniker ‘self-service’ itself and all the debate on its cost, benefits and intangibles will disappear.”

With the many surprises of the last few years, the best we can do is predict. Even so, the future for self-service kiosks is bright.

CONCLUSION

Just because customers are returning to stores does not mean they want to return to the old way of shopping.

Labor shortages have thrown businesses a curveball, while customer standards have remained [higher than ever](#). The pandemic has forever altered consumer expectations as well as companies' means of achieving them. Widespread self-service may just be the answer. «

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



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