



THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO IMPROVING SUPERMARKET OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY



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The economic environment has created a perfect storm for grocery retailers

As inflation rates hit new highs both in the US and globally, grocery stores have faced new challenges to their growth and sustainability. In this uncertain climate, grocery stores are hit particularly hard with a unique problem: inflation of both supply and demand. On the supply side, inflation causes rising costs for goods and services. This is especially true for the food industry, where raw materials, manufacturing, and transportation costs are all subject to inflationary pressures.

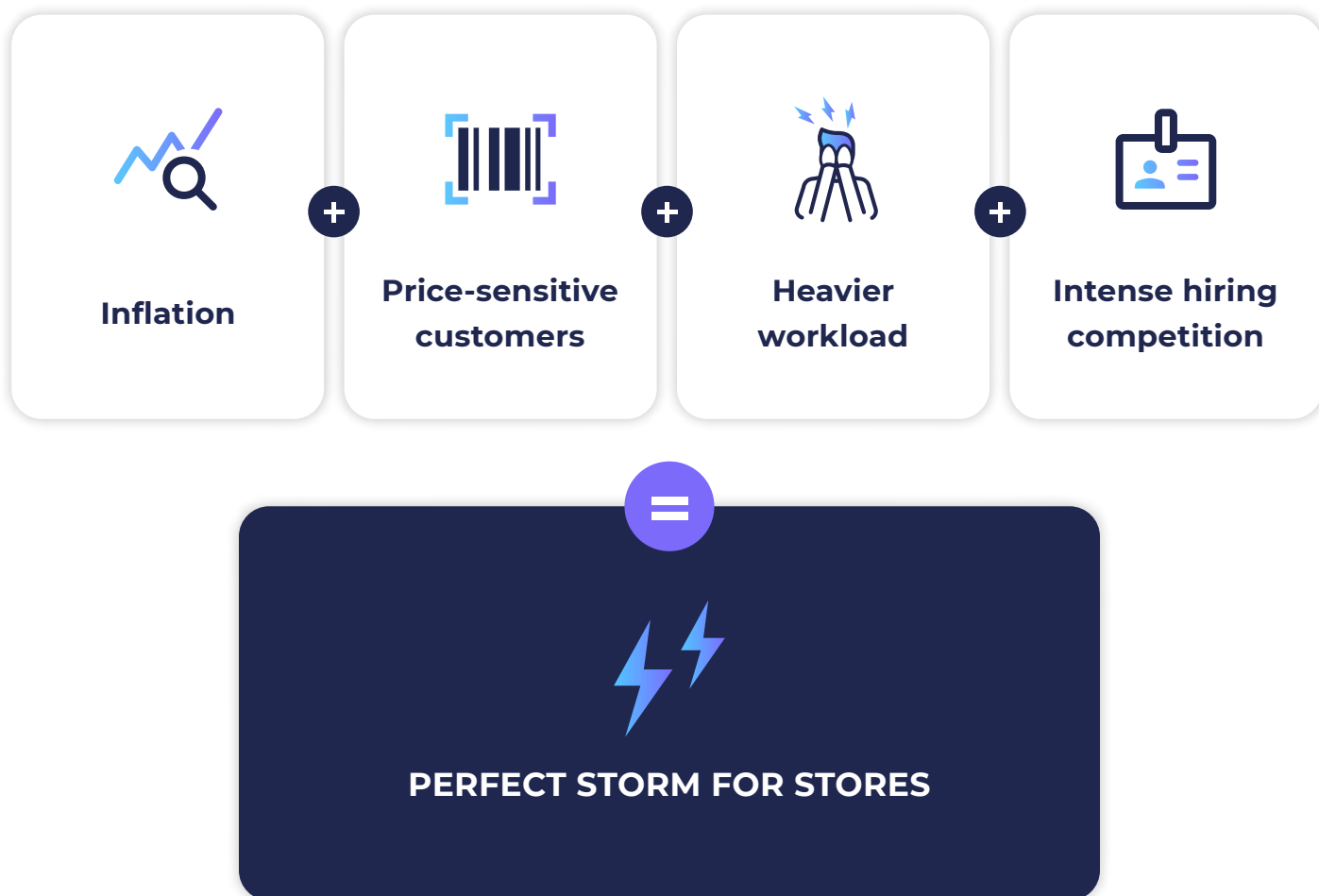
However, inflation doesn't stop there. The cost of maintaining stores also rises, including utilities and wages, as employees demand higher pay to offset the rising cost of living. Those who refuse to do so face crippling worker shortages.

While grocers can pass some of these costs onto consumers by raising their prices, doing so can be a tricky balance. Too large of an increase pushes price-sensitive customers to seek cheaper alternatives, such as discount stores or cheaper brands.

Meanwhile, on the demand side, consumers' purchasing power is significantly eroded by inflation. As expenses rise, disposable income shrinks, leading many consumers to tighten their belts. [High food prices](#), in particular, are forcing many consumers to rethink their favorite treats and any non-essential items—often high-margin products for grocery stores. For example, the cost of living crisis in the UK has caused [one in four](#) households to run out of money for essentials regularly. In the US, over [half of Millennials and Gen Xers](#) are concerned about their financial situation and cutting back on luxuries they once enjoyed.

Consumers' financial situations are hampering the ability to upsell and cross-sell, a critical part of any retailer's strategy. Additionally, consumers may start shopping at discount grocery stores or turn to bulk-buying to get more bang for their buck, which also negatively impact the traditional grocery stores' revenues.

The dual pressures of increasing costs and decreasing demand has created the “perfect storm” for grocery stores. In this challenging environment, it will be grocery stores that are most agile and adaptive—those able to control costs, innovate, and still deliver value to their customers—that will be best positioned to weather the storm.



How can retailers help stores overcome these challenges and ride out the uncertainty without sacrificing store performance? By relying on tech so each store can reboot with efficient, agile operations.

Efficient stores consistently maximize their performance and revenue with the minimal amount of resources possible. Agile stores are ready for change and react at light speed without any disruption.

Here are 5 ways grocery retailers use lessons learned over the last year to rethink operations, and by doing so, elevate the performance of every store.

1 Digitize store operations to gain instant visibility into store performance



LESSON LEARNED:

Without real-time visibility into store operations, customer experience, safety and organizational agility are in jeopardy.

A direct line of sight into store operations was hugely advantageous before the pandemic. It's now mandatory.

Grocery stores can't wait days, weeks and even months to find out whether or not store teams have implemented customer experience and safety instructions down to the letter. That's why unless it's in real-time, it's not real visibility. Visibility is a prerequisite for agility all grocers need in 2023, because you can't plan for the future without complete awareness of the present.



HOW TO FIX IT:

Digitize store operations to turn everything going on in-store into data you can track, measure and improve.

1

Digitize store tasks, processes and communications, so store data isn't lost in paper, emails, Excel spreadsheets or scattered across disparate applications.

2

Pull this digitized store data from stores in real-time, so teams can collect the information they need to support stores.

3

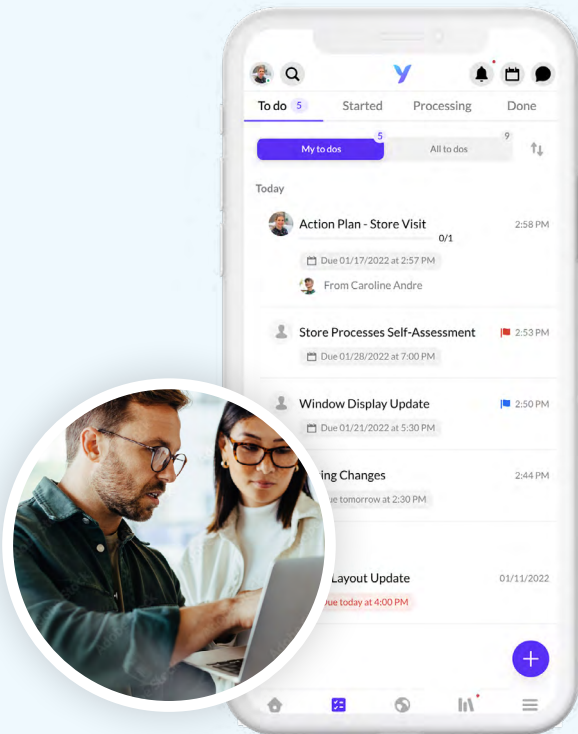
Automate the interpretation of this data for store, area and HQ teams with AI, so they can take data-driven decisions without needing to be data scientists. That way, they can react to changes in store performance and customer behaviour as they happen.



A REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE:

Lidl France is a discount retail chain with over 1,500 supermarkets in the country. Leaders needed to achieve visibility at the regional and national level for their supermarkets.

With the streamlined visibility that YOOBIC provides, leadership could conduct daily supermarket inspections and assign action plans to the team. The teams and leadership have instant access to photos and any comments. At headquarters, the teams there receive the visibility and insights they need to ensure stores are compliant with company guidelines at any time.



"Before YOOBIC, it was difficult for us to understand the situation of our supermarkets across the country. Now we are able to monitor compliance in real-time and understand our strengths and areas for improvement."

Thibaut Lièvre, Head of Sales Organisation at Lidl France

[Read Full Case Study](#)

2 Improve store communications to boost performance and employee experience



LESSON LEARNED:

When grocery store employees are disconnected from their organization and peers, stores can't perform their best and employees are unengaged.

This has left grocers completely unprepared for the pandemic and the rapidly changing guidelines that have accompanied it.

When store teams aren't in the loop with critical news and updates, they can't perform their best in the most unpredictable retail climate we've ever known. This disconnect also damages the retail employee experience, because store teams can't see how their work impacts the organization's progress and purpose.

74% of Gen Z employees value their job's purpose over its salary, so a disconnect from this purpose makes it harder to attract and retain top talent.



HOW TO FIX IT:

Use accessible, non-hierarchical and engaging store communications to connect workers to their organization and peers in other locations.



Use mobile devices to make internal communications available to every retail employee, whether they're on the shop floor or in the back office.



Encourage store and area teams to share their successes, challenges, feedback and questions to create a community between stores.



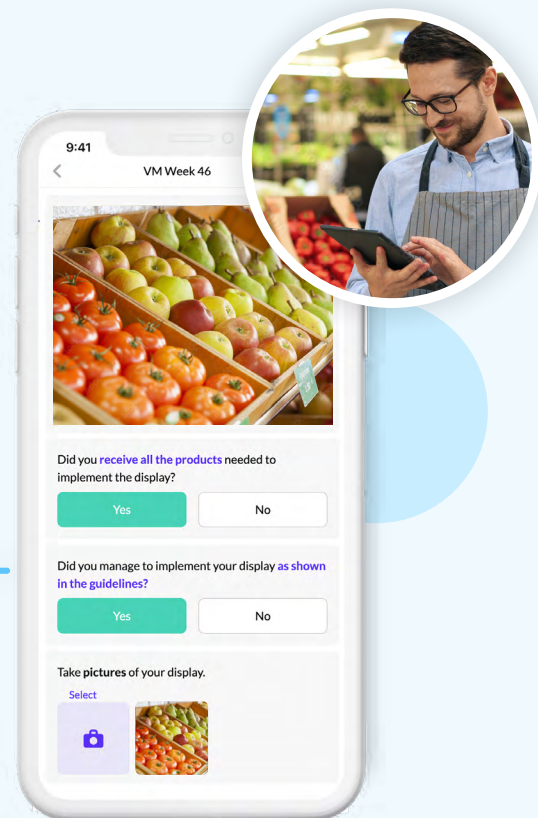
Use GIFs, emojis and a friendly tone to make internal comms fun to read, and use polls, comments and likes to make them interactive and measurable.



A REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE:

Leading German organic grocery retailer Alnatura centralized all store communications in a mobile app.

Instantly reaching 3700+ employees with important updates, and making sure they're read and actioned on, has helped Alnatura build a community, keep staff in the loop to improve compliance across the entire store network.



"We wanted to have a solution that was focused on stores, a lot of tools were more geared towards office workers, so they weren't as easy to send information to store employees. Whereas YOOBIC is mobile-first and designed specifically for store and field teams."

Rouven Zickwolf, Retail Coordinator at Alnatura

[Read Full Case Study](#)

3 Simplify repetitive store process to improve customer experience



LESSON LEARNED:

When store teams spend too much time on tasks, customer experience suffers.

Store teams spend too much time completing store processes in lieu of helping, advising and being available to customers.

This problem has grown exponentially worse over the last year because there are fewer employees with heavier workloads. That leaves store teams with next to no time to spend on customer experience when it matters most of all. When not managed efficiently, repetitive processes like opening checklists and daily store reports also make the retail employee experience more overwhelming and less fulfilling.



HOW TO FIX IT:

Digitize routine and repetitive processes to strike the perfect balance between fast, accurate completion and giving store associates more time to spend with customers.

- 1 Get rid of paper-based processes** and recuperate the time lost on the printing, filling out and filing away that goes along with it.
- 2 Merge tools like email, phone and intranet into one.** That way, retail employees have everything they need in one place without any juggling of multiple tools and lost productivity.
- 3 Digitize complex processes involving different people, departments and approvals.** Task handovers and waiting for approval is where bottlenecks happen and productivity is lost.

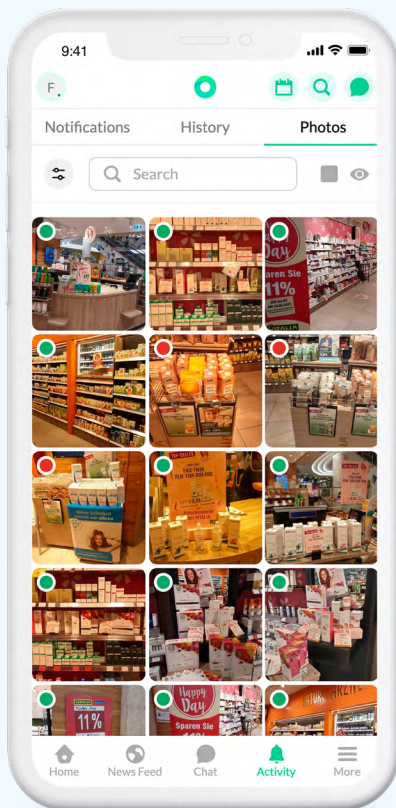
81% of workers want updated process to improve their efficiency so they're not overburdened.*



A REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE:

Leading German health and wellness retailer Vitalia digitized all store processes like weekly checklists, marketing and promotional campaigns and product recalls across **650 employees in 94 stores**.

This has freed up time for store colleagues, and increased completion of daily checks and compliance to 100%.



"We were able to massively increase both sales and monthly advertising campaigns. Weekly product hits and promotions are consistently completed. Completion of promotional campaigns in the branches has doubled. This wouldn't have been possible without YOOBIC."

Florian Lindner, Operations Manager at Vitalia

[Read Full Case Study](#)

4 Digitize regional team process to support stores remotely



LESSON LEARNED:

When regional teams rely on in-person visits to support stores, performance declines and costs increase.

Regional teams help each store perform its best through store visits, audits and coaching. Up until recently, these were usually done in-person.

Now, the problem is that there aren't just fewer store associates post-pandemic, but fewer regional and area teams as well. That means each area manager has more stores to support, heavier workloads and even less time to visit each store in person. If the default mode of supporting stores is in-person visits, regional teams simply won't be able to help stores perform their best.



HOW TO FIX IT:

Digitize regional team processes. That way, regional teams can do some of them remotely, which broadens coverage and improves support of stores.

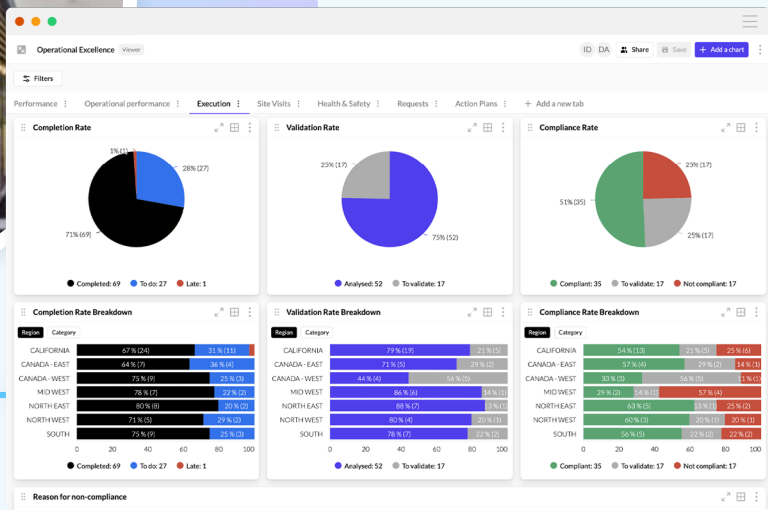
- 1 Open up remote communications between store and regional teams** with video calls, photos and live chats to give regional teams visibility into store performance.
- 2 Delegate simplified regional team processes to store teams** using digitized checklists, pictures and calls.
- 3 Supplement in-person store visits and audits with remote ones using steps 1 and 2.** Regional teams now have broader coverage of each store, fewer travel expenses, and can do more to support each store with less time and fewer resources.



A REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE:

Lidl France used remote store visits to broaden regional team coverage of stores across 1,500 stores.

Regional teams now have better visibility into store performance and ensure the correct deployment of projects and equipment to meet company standards.



"YOOBIC enables me to send the completed store visit report directly to the supermarket. This way, the supermarket manager can instantly see the photos, action plans, and comments I've made in the app."

Miki Otosaka, Area Sales Manager

[Read Full Case Study](#)

5 Upskill store teams in their flow of work to drive efficiency



LESSON LEARNED:

When retail employees aren't trained with the right training tools, they don't have the knowledge and skills to drive efficiency.

Employee knowledge drives productivity and efficiency. Retailers need those in-store conversions now more than ever.

But “traditional” training (in-person, take-home materials or conventional e-learning courses) doesn't keep up with grocery store employees needs because it's infrequent and not at their fingertips. In fact, 53% of employees don't receive regular training. What's more, most training tools have low adoption rates since they're inconvenient for busy store teams. The result is that training doesn't get completed and/or isn't retained afterwards.

And as foot traffic surges, so will retail's hiring needs and the competition for top talent. Employers without proper training programs won't be able to attract or retain the talent they need. Plus, an accelerated onboarding process will help get new employees up to speed quickly, allowing them to be more productive and helpful in their roles. This will help improve retention rates: research shows [69% of employees stay](#) when they have a superior onboarding experience.



**of employees don't
receive regular training.**



HOW TO FIX IT:

Tailor training to the grocery store employee flow of work to give store teams the knowledge they need and the employee experience they want.

1

Use mobile to make training available to every employee, wherever they are. The majority of retail employees — 74% — think mobile app-based training would be easier.

2

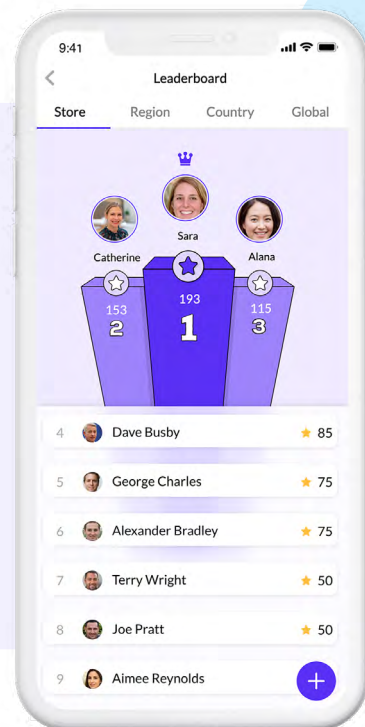
Make training content short and easily digestible, so it fits into a store associate's flow of work and gets new employees in their roles as quickly as possible. This means sessions are short enough to do between shifts, and it's easy to find information whenever the need arises.

3

Make training content fun, engaging, competitive and social, so everyone has a reason to come back for more. It's critical to match training to what younger employees are used to, and also to give older employees something refreshing to change things up.

74%

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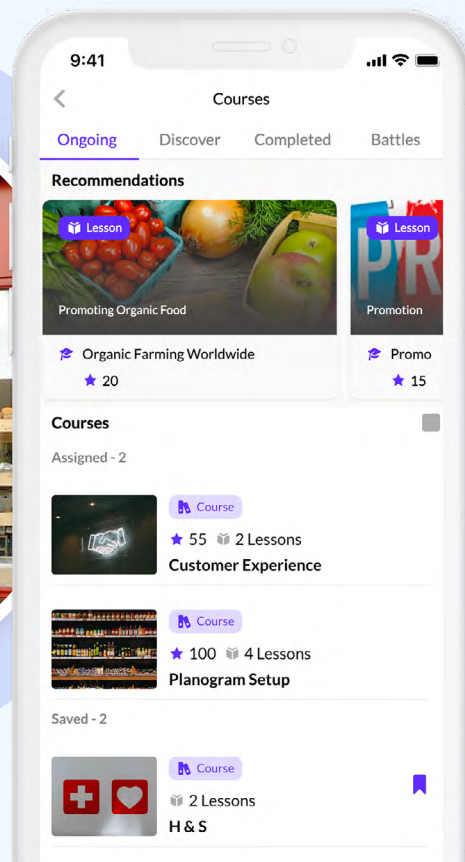




A REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE:

Organic grocery retailer Naturalia digitized their onboarding and training with YOOBIC to their across 250 stores.

Now that quick courses and quizzes on products, processes and the brand are available anywhere and anytime, they are more agile in managing the onboarding and training process of employees throughout their working life.



"The YOOBIC solution enables us to reach every member of our workforce. Onboarding and e-learning courses accessible on mobile phones have enabled us to be more agile in managing the onboarding and training of our employees throughout their working life."

Mélody Le Barbenchon, HR Director, Naturalia

Key takeaway:

Grocers should use tech to boost the performance of their store network and help stores adapt and thrive in the economic uncertainty by:

- 1 Gaining visibility into store operations as they happen to drive performance at scale
- 2 Connecting store teams to their peers and organization to improve employee engagement, motivation and performance
- 3 Streamlining store tasks to refocus store associates on customers to improve in-store experience
- 4 Supplementing in- person regional processes with remote ones to better support stores and reduce overheads
- 5 Training and upskilling store teams in their flow of work to improve team productivity

This isn't a sink or swim period for grocers. That's because merely staying afloat is no longer a viable alternative to going under.

By using tech to rethink operations, grocers can blow store performance out of the water while everyone else is treading water.

About YOOBIC

YOOBIC's frontline employee experience platform helps grocery retailers like Lidl, Carrefour, Redner's Market, Alnatura and Binny's gives business leaders and frontline teams the performance tools they need to communicate, learn, and work—all in one place.

With streamlined communications, mobile learning, and digitized task management, YOOBIC drives operational excellence while drastically improving the frontline employee working experience. 350+ companies around the world trust YOOBIC to improve operational consistency and agility, get real-time visibility into multi-location business execution, and improve customer experience.



Want to see it in action?

Get a Demo