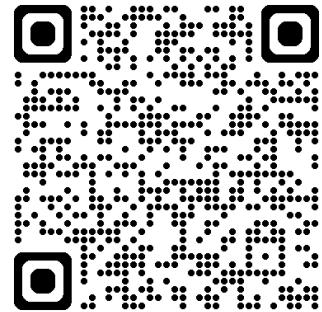


Goodbye cashiers: Popular chain opens unmanned store



<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/videos/20250829061856964/>

Automation in stores has been gradually increasing across Japan in recent years. Many cashierless shops use self-checkout systems, but a new outlet that opened in July takes the trend a step further. It doesn't even have a register. We went to find out how it works.

A smart store opened early July at Osaka Electrocommunication University in Neyagawa, western Japan.

This shop has no staff in sight. Just by walking out with the items, you can complete your purchase.

To use the store, customers simply register their membership and payment information online.

By scanning this QR code, you can enter the store.

Inside this compact 15 square meter store, about 450 items are neatly arranged. It stocks stationery, snacks, bento meals, and even false eyelashes, products popular among young people. So how does shopping work without a register?

A weight detecting sensor is in the shelf. And if you look up, can you see them? Cameras.

Eleven AI powered cameras are installed on the ceiling. With sensors, the system can detect which items are picked up and how many. It can automatically track purchases.

As you walk out through the gate, your payment is completed.

The transaction and a breakdown of the items purchased can be confirmed on a cell phone display.

This is my first time using a fully unmanned store. It's a really new experience. It even sells false eyelashes.

I bought a riceball and a bottle of water. The cafeteria gets super crowded during lunch, so it's great not to have to wait in line. It's super convenient.

The store is operated by the same company that runs Don Quijote, a discount chain popular with young people and tourists. By going cashierless, the company aims to cut staffing needs by 85%. It hopes this can be a solution to Japan's growing labor shortage.

Our target customers here are digital natives, so they can easily use the store. We will assess if the model makes economic sense before expanding further.

The company is planning to open a second automated store as early as November. As Japan grapples with a shrinking and aging workforce, could this be a game changer? Retailers across the country are watching closely.

Source: (NHK World News)

Now discuss the questions with a partner.

1. Do you prefer self-checkout or cashiers? Why?
2. Can you think of any other good locations for Don Quijote's cashierless shops?
3. What problems could happen in a cashierless store?
4. What kind of items would you want to buy in a cashierless store?
5. What other companies do you think could use cashierless stores?