Google Cloud and Deloitte Boost Grocery Associate Productivity and Improve the Customer Experience

Kroger uses cutting-edge AI and data analytics to optimize daily work planning and enhance stores for customers

NEW YORK and SUNNYVALE, Calif., Jan. 20, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- Google Cloud and Deloitte* today announced a strategic collaboration with Kroger to help the grocery chain use cloud technologies to increase associate productivity across its nearly 2,800 stores nationwide. Kroger recently deployed a variety of Google Cloud data analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), and machine learning (ML) tools under an application framework co-developed by Deloitte and Kroger. The new tools are already empowering store leaders and associates to make real-time operational decisions to deliver a better shopping experience for the nearly 11 million customers Kroger serves every day.

"Technology and digital tools are fundamental elements of how Kroger continues to improve the associate experience, which in turn, enhances the in-store experience for our customers. Innovation is a critical component, and execution is even more important," said Jim Clendenen, vice president, Enterprise Retail Systems, Kroger. "Google Cloud and Deloitte brought us a technology architecture and application framework that we could implement in record time. We're already seeing results across our stores, with associate tasks being optimized and overall productivity increasing."

Kroger worked with Google Cloud and Deloitte to create two, purpose-built applications to enhance associate productivity. The first is a new task management application that provides Kroger's night crew managers with greater visibility into the volume and type of merchandise arriving on a given day, store staffing information, and stocking needs. The system then prioritizes team activities in just a few clicks on an Android device, with associates quickly informed of inventory or delivery changes in real-time.

The second is Kroger's new store management application, which empowers store leaders to be less dependent on paper tools. The app provides a standardized audit checklist for store managers and department leaders, helping ensure a high-quality shopping experience for customers. It also offers a customizable walk path that guides store audits, while giving team members flexibility in how store conditions are regularly evaluated. Both the store management and task management applications are now automatically generating tasks and prioritizing impactful work for Kroger associates nationally.

Underpinning Kroger's new applications are several Google Cloud technologies that were used by Deloitte to build a modern, event-driven architecture for the retailer, including:

- **Artificial intelligence and machine learning:** Google Cloud's AI and machine learning dynamically optimizes Kroger associate task lists based on inbound signals such as goods delivery data and staff availability.
- **Spanner:** With Google Cloud Spanner's fully-managed relational database, Kroger has been able to build a true event-driven ledger, which enables the company to capture unique events—at different times throughout the day and from different stores—to make better-informed decisions about how to direct associates to be more productive.
- **Dataflow:** Kroger is using Google Cloud's Dataflow, a serverless, fast and cost-effective data-processing service for capturing and analyzing data from different sources, like labor rates, transportation logistics, sales forecasting, and out of stock information.

"Retail is in the details. One of the most important ones many retailers struggle with is how to maximize the time and talents of their associates when every store and every day is different," said Jose Luis-Gomes, managing director, Retail and Consumer, Google Cloud. "Kroger doesn't just have the latest and greatest technologies — the grocer is literally putting them into the hands of their associates so their time can be used on what matters most for Kroger's customers."

"Today, retailers are prioritizing and investing in technology as a strategic differentiator, and customers are making share-of-wallet choices based on those investments," said Jon Yoo, principal, Deloitte Consulting LLP. "With Kroger, Deloitte and Google Cloud used that investment to build a platform that considers the unique balance of people, processes, and technologies required to power revolutionary customer and associate experiences."

About Google Cloud
Google Cloud accelerates every organization's ability to digitally transform its business. We deliver enterprise-grade solutions that leverage Google's cutting-edge technology – all on the cleanest cloud in the industry. Customers in more than 200 countries and territories turn to Google Cloud as their trusted partner to enable growth and solve their most critical business problems.

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