Title:
Retail Store U-Scan Machines: Self-Serve or Voluntary Part Time Job?

Word Count:
708

Summary:
Do many of us realize that we are working an unpaid part time job for the
grocery stores and some home appliance stores? We are ringing up our own goods,
are not getting any price discount for doing so and are saving these retailers
money.

Each self-serve lane contains two to three self-serve scanners. Retailers have
an average of two to four self-serve lanes. Retailers are saving each store an
average of four to eight cashiers' salaries per store. One attendant is assigned
to these self-service machines. Hypothetically, if stores are paying full time
cashiers $7 per hour, they are now saving $14,000 annually in wage expenses for
each cashier that they do not have to hire. Multiplied by four to eight
cashiers, each store saves $56,000 to $112,000 per year on wage expenses. This
simple calculation does not even count other benefits that companies pay to
their cashiers, such as healthcare, vacation pay, sick pay, 401(k), pension
benefits and tuition assistance.

Keywords:
Business, Customer Service, Convenience,Pennywise, Pound foolish,Financial

Article Body:
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their cashiers, such as healthcare, vacation pay, sick pay, 401(k), pension

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Are these savings passed on to the consumer? Nope!

Why should we work an unpaid part time job for the grocery industry?

1. Self-serve scanning machines are not always user-friendly

When grocery bags get filled up and you have nowhere else to put your groceries, the machine will say something like "Please place your item back in bag" and not even let you know what the problem is. The machine treats you like you're an imbecile. The machine is wasting your time while an attendant has to correct the problem.

2. Self-serve scanning machines do not always scan every bar code.

Some of the machines do not scan deposit bottle return slips, which requires an attendant to manually scan the deposit slips. If there is other merchandise that the machine will not scan, an attendant also has to manually override the system, which is consuming more time for the customer.

3. Self-serve scanners cannot correct price variations.

If an item should scan at a certain price, but the store's system scans the item at a different price, an attendant has to manually override the scanner to give the consumer the correct price.

4. Risks of alienating senior citizens

If self-scanners are challenging for younger people, imagine how intimidating the machines must be for seniors. Sometimes, perception and not reality can dictate a retailer's success. If seniors perceive that cashier-scanning is going to be phased out by self-scanning, seniors may take their business where the human touch is still being utilized.

5. Gas stations offer a price break for self-serve

Although full-serve gas stations are becoming more rare, those stations that still offer full-service and self-service combinations offer price breaks to those customers who pump their own gasoline. If gas stations can offer a price break to customers who pump their own gasoline, why can't grocery stores offer a price break to customers who ring up their own goods?

6. Impersonal aspect could dissuade customers

Many customers go to the same store, restaurant or tavern because people who work at the establishment remember them. Remember "Norm" from Cheers? They want to go "where everybody knows their name…" A U-Scan Machine is not going to know you from Adam.

7. Self-scanning is currently not set up to handle large amounts of goods.

Currently, U-Scan machines are set up to handle about fifteen items or less, which is fine with the light shopper. What happens with customers who are purchasing over fifteen items? Are the larger-quantity purchasers being rewarded by not having to scan their own goods? Why do shoppers with fifteen items or less have the opportunity to do voluntary part time work for retailers? Is it a case of if customers purchase enough groceries, they don't have to work for the store today?

Should this concept be called self-scan or self-scam? Fortunately, ringing up one's own goods is still optional. Yes, it is still optional to do part time unpaid work for a retailer in which you are patronizing. Customers are doing the retailers a favor by purchasing goods at their stores. Is this how the customers are being rewarded? What will be next? Will customers go into a restaurant, order their food, be expected to prepare the food and pay the same price as if someone else had prepared the meal?