

Shoprite launches digital business unit and checkout-free concept store

The Shoprite Group has officially launched its digital business unit, dubbed Shoprite^x, and is also trialling a cashless, checkout-free Checkers Rush concept store at the new unit's office in Cape Town.



Source: Supplied

Precision retailing

Incubated over the past year, the Shoprite^x unit is combining data science and technology to create more personalised shopping experiences for customers.

The launch is part of the group's strategy to grow its ecosystem of value for consumers and monetise new and diverse revenue streams. Shoprite^x has already delivered two innovations – the [fast-growing Xtra Savings](#) rewards programme, and Checkers' popular Sixty60 on-demand grocery delivery service.

“We are serious about being Africa's most customer-centric retailer, and the launch of Shoprite^x represents our investment in fit-for-the-future precision retail, which is increasingly digital and data-led,” says Pieter Engelbrecht, CEO of the Shoprite Group.

The Shoprite^x offices are located above the new [Checkers Hyper Brackenfell](#) flagship store, which is next to the group's home office.

The new division's 250-strong team includes data science, e-commerce and personalisation experts, who work with Shoprite's IT team to form a combined team of over 1,000 people working to create and implement new innovations.



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Checkers Rush

The new offices are also home to the latest retail innovation, Checkers Rush, an automated, cashless “no queues, no checkout, no waiting” concept store, where employees can grab products and walk out. Using advanced AI camera technology to identify the products being taken off the shelves, Checkers Rush bills users' bank cards upon exit.

This is one of numerous digital innovations under development, according to the group. “The next era of growth for us is about precision retailing. Shoprite^x will use our rich customer data to supercharge a ‘smarter Shoprite’ and ultimately fuse the best of digital with our operational strength across the continent,” Engelbrecht says.



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Culture of innovation

Neil Schreuder, chief of strategy and innovation, says that “Shoprite to the power of X represents the exponential growth opportunity when you combine the best of data, tech and talent with the scale of the Shoprite Group.”

Innovations such as Sixty60 and Xtra Savings have seen the team scoop up 17 innovation awards in the last year, and Schreuder says the group is “just getting started”.

“Through a culture of innovation and startup-like pace, our teams are making grocery shopping more personalised for customers while removing friction from the retail experience.”

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