

# PROTECTING PEOPLE, PROFITS AND BRANDS

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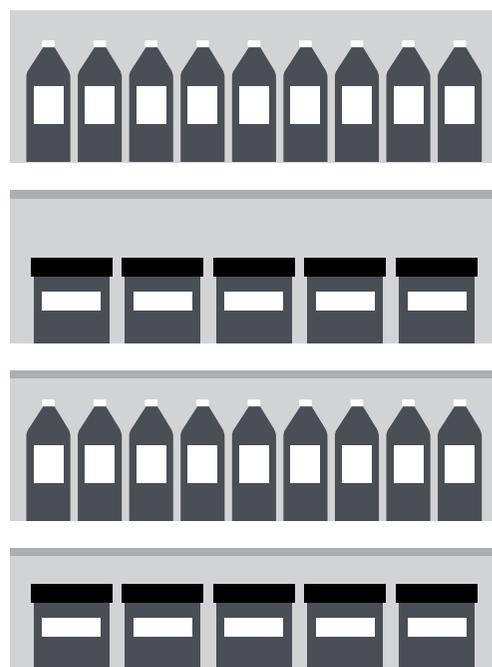
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# INTRODUCTION

A business, no matter what kind, is only successful if each employee is working at their best, their safest and their most productive. Grocery retail is no exception. Each touchpoint in a grocery store can either be an enjoyable work and shopping experience, or it can be a zone of potential hazards.

That's why it should be the foundational strategy of any grocery retailer to prioritize protecting its people, its profits and its brand from a range of evolving challenges.



# WHAT DOES PROTECTION LOOK LIKE?

Time is relative, as the COVID-19 pandemic has proven. At one moment everything is humming along as usual and then suddenly something will happen that can throw your entire business off course. Grocery retailers have proven to be an essential business<sup>1</sup> during the COVID-19 outbreak, but what does that mean for your frontline workers? Every day they put themselves at potential risk because they know what they are doing is important. But the inherent risk in their work can also induce anxiety, fear, frustration, stress and rushing to get the job done so they can go home.

This is a recipe for a potential increase in accidents, injuries and loss.

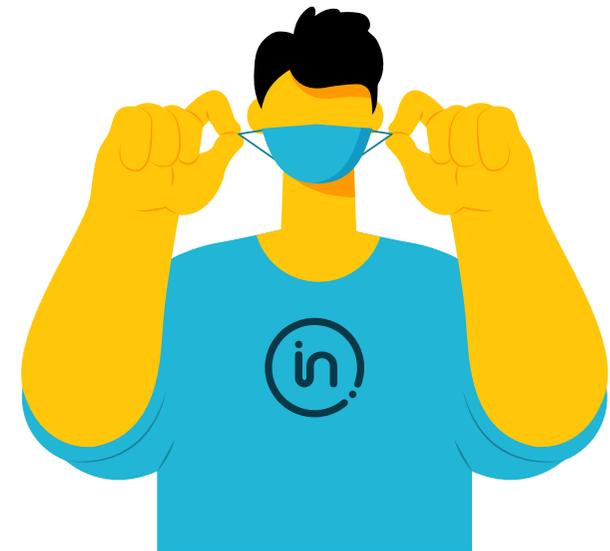
You might be thinking that now is not the time to worry about this while the pandemic continues, but actually it's more important than ever to prioritize your safety and loss prevention communications.

**So, let's list what might be the challenges your frontline workers are facing each and every day:**

- ▶ Stress of day-to-day tasks
- ▶ Helping stressed or fearful customers
- ▶ Remembering safety protocols
- ▶ Remembering loss prevention protocols
- ▶ Dealing with an increase in crime
- ▶ Fearing for their own safety
- ▶ Moral injury<sup>2</sup>

With 54% of Americans now choosing to cook from home<sup>3</sup> grocery retailers are busier than ever. And your employees have a lot on their mind.<sup>4</sup>

**Now let's help them.**





## CREATE CHAMPIONS

There is nothing more frustrating than trying to do a job well, but you are not supported with the right tools and information to be set up for success. That's where you come in. You can create safety and loss prevention champions in your grocery retail environment by simply providing them the right tools and information.

It sounds simple, and that's because it is when you partner with a communications agency with over 20 years of experience working with grocery retailers like you. The easiest part of this strategy is to be there for them. However, providing the right tools and knowledge, and understanding the timing in delivering these messages, is the trickier part. It's not as simple as a poster on a bulletin board and it certainly won't be just one email every month or so. Empowering your staff involves developing a highly engaging, and dynamic series of communications and tools with a very specific cadence.

Any successful safety program needs buy-in from the leaders. You are sending a very valuable message when you invest in your employee's well-being. You are letting them know you are prioritizing their safety, and that you support them to become their own champions of safety by giving them the tools and confidence to succeed.

# WHAT MOTIVATES SAFE CHOICES?

Humans are problematic. They forget things quickly or there is simply too much going on to make the right decision at a critical time. In fact, a new body of research is revealing that emotions play a key role in how humans interact with their surroundings, with machinery, and with daily tasks.<sup>5</sup> The role of feelings as a motivator for safety is incredibly important in understanding why, after training and reviewing safety and loss prevention protocols, accidents are still on the rise and shrink continues to increase.

Oddly enough, studies also show that the repetitive actions of certain jobs essentially encourage employees to let their guard down. They've done it over and over and therefore don't think about the inherent risk in the role. And that is where you also see accidents spike.

**“To effectively influence behaviors you must employ images, emotions, personal stories and experiential techniques that connect with your workforce and move them.”<sup>6</sup>**

The common theme is that humans are influenced by powerful motivators and positive reinforcement. “To effectively influence behaviors you must employ images, emotions, personal stories and experiential techniques that connect with your workforce and move them.”<sup>6</sup>

Just look at the success of the aviation industry. Crashes due to pilot error remained at 65% for over 50 years. Whatever training modules or styles applied; nothing was budging the dial on how they handled issues. That is, until they incorporated flight simulators for training. Now, crashes due to pilot error have declined 54%. That is a significant change in a relatively short time. What is it about providing an experience to the pilots that worked?



# WHAT CHANGES BEHAVIOR?

The aviation industry found its success, and thankfully eased travelers' minds, by using the latest research and tools to tap into an important part of awareness training. By immersing the pilots in a very visceral experience, they are now locked in personally. Not only that, the experience will influence future decisions they make because of the immersive experience.

How does this apply to grocery retail? That's where creativity plays an integral role. What are your stories, what are your experiences? What is going to affect real change in your employee's behavior? Why is it important that they respect the deli slicer? What is it about slips trips and falls that makes them one of the most preventable hazards but also one of the most common? It is by understanding the human mind and how it is motivated that leads to changing behavior.

Ignoring a spill in an aisle may seem harmless, but showcasing the dire outcomes of doing that, of connecting consequence to their actions, can truly transform a workplace. They may work with the deli slicer eight hours a day but and never experience an injury, but it just takes one time. And that one time could mean a completely new lifestyle due to a devastating injury.





## WHO HAS THE TIME?

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We've talked about immersive, engaging, experimental communications which means you must be thinking two things; who has the time to create these things and who has the time to take staff off the floor to take part in this stuff?

Time is valuable. Taking employees off the floor can cost you in many ways. The goal of any safety and loss prevention program is to have an impact in a way that doesn't encourage more time off the floor. In fact, it reduces it.

By using powerful, engaging micro modules hyper-focused on your challenges, employees will retain the information longer, in less training time. Not only that, passive awareness like posters, digital signage and more can help connect and keep that message top-of-mind.

Then there is the tech. By incorporating virtual reality or augmented reality in your program, you are not only inviting the latest in adult learning techniques into your business, you are also providing experiences and not just lessons.

To do any of this successfully, you need to work with an agency that has a proven track record of working with grocery retailers like yourselves and has made a real impact. A poster can be an experience when you add AR to it. A module can be moving when you tell their story, their outcomes and share real-world consequences. A workplace can be safer when you empower your leaders to become safety and loss prevention champions.

# PROTECT YOUR PEOPLE, YOUR PROFITS AND YOUR BRAND

The grocery retail industry is on the cusp of change and things are happening quickly but one thing that will never change is the importance of effective safety and loss prevention communications. An investment in their safety is an investment in your brand with an ROI that goes beyond the dollar.

**Contact Catalyst today**

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## Endnotes

- 1 [tvnews.ca/health/coronavirus/grocery-store-workers-on-front-line-of-covid-19-pandemic-1.4870500?cache=sazhusyrecmk%3FautoPlay%3Dtrue%3FclipId%3D89950%3Fot%3DAjaxLayout%3Fot%3DAjaxLayout%3FautoPlay%3Dtrue](https://tvnews.ca/health/coronavirus/grocery-store-workers-on-front-line-of-covid-19-pandemic-1.4870500?cache=sazhusyrecmk%3FautoPlay%3Dtrue%3FclipId%3D89950%3Fot%3DAjaxLayout%3Fot%3DAjaxLayout%3FautoPlay%3Dtrue)
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