

App filters grocery shelves to fit shoppers' needs

Charisse Jones
USA TODAY

Call it grocery shopping 2.0. If you're lactose intolerant, counting calories or trying to fill your kitchen with gluten-free foods, you'll soon be able to use your smartphone to scan a grocery store shelf and pinpoint items that specifically meet your dietary needs.

Swiss technology company Scandit expects some U.S. grocery stores to roll out the new feature in the next six to nine months. Shoppers at those supermarkets will be able to narrow down what they're looking for in an app similar to how they filter products when buying and browsing online.

Retailers can decide what types of information they want to offer. When customers open the store app, they will see different categories – such as lactose or nut free – and can click on what they're interested in.

Then, when they aim their smartphones at a grocery case, icons will pop up on the device's screen, hovering over items that meet their dietary requirements.

"Standing in front of shelves filled



Scandit says its technology can quickly scan for items that meet shoppers' dietary requirements. GETTY IMAGES

with hundreds of items can be an intimidating experience," Scandit CEO Samuel Mueller said. "Instead of picking the best item, many shoppers just give up and pick the most familiar one. (Augmented reality) filtering enables shoppers to quickly see beyond the shelves and into the products themselves so they can find exactly what they want in the most efficient way."

The ability to search ingredients is the next leg in the race toward the store

of the future, at a time when the Mall of America has used a hologram as a virtual greeter and Home Depot customers can type an item into the store's app to get a map that leads them to what they're looking for.

Technology has played a particularly vital role in the grocery store space, tracking inventory and making life easier for shoppers who want to quickly fill their carts, then get on with their day.

"It's becoming tremendously important and will probably change, over the next decade, the entire grocery shopping experience," says Bill Bishop, the head of Brick Meets Click, a consulting and research firm focused on the evolution of food retailing.

Already, at several Schnucks grocery stores, a robot named Tally checks prices, scans shelves and alerts employees if an item needs to be restocked. And at Amazon Go stores, which have opened in Seattle, Chicago and San Francisco, customers can pay for milk, bread and other foods as they shop, cutting out the need to wait in a line or deal with a cashier.

Scandit's technology reflects another trend in which shoppers are demanding

as much information as possible about the products they're buying, from ingredients to how far the items travel to get to market.

In particular, "younger people ... (are) used to turning to their phones for these kinds of answers," Bishop says.

The scanning technology is "an example of improved transparency and more detailed communication of what a product really is all about ... You don't have to pick up every package and read the back of it and figure out what it means."

While Bishop envisions a landscape a decade from now in which many household staples are ordered online, and grocery stores are smaller and cashier free, others believe the push to the future will have as many fits as starts.

"No chain has so far made enormous advances by using technology. However, a lot of retailers are testing new things," Neil Saunders, managing director of retail consultancy GlobalData, says.

"Some of these advances are likely to come to nothing. They will be too expensive, provide too little return or will prove to be unpopular with shoppers."

Tariffs

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tariffs, though he is not bound by whatever Commerce recommended.

The result could be tariffs of up to 30 percent on imported vehicles and parts, excluding those from Canada, Mexico and South Korea, which have separate trade deals with the United States.

Other costs to automakers in the trade war include tariffs on steel and aluminum and Chinese imports, which are already in place. Ford said those tariffs cost it \$750 million last year.

'Threat to consumers'

"Broad Section 232 tariffs on autos and auto parts still present the biggest trade policy threat to consumers and the U.S. economy," National Auto Dealers Association President and CEO Peter Welch said. "NADA understands and appreciates the administration's attempts to level the trade playing field and eliminate unfair trade practices, but expansive Section 232 auto tariffs are the wrong tool for the job. They will lead to dramatic price increases, depressed vehicle sales and job losses."

NADA sponsored CAR's study, "U.S. Consumer & Economic Impacts of U.S. Automotive Trade Policies."

Every car, truck and SUV sold in the USA would be affected by the tariffs. Even vehicles assembled in the USA use many imported parts, and U.S.-made parts are exported to plants in Canada and Mexico.

"There is no 100 percent U.S.-made car," said CAR Vice President for Industry, Labor and Economics Kristin Dziczek. "The average U.S.-built vehicle has around 50 percent to 60 percent U.S. content," excluding labor.

The worst-case job losses predicted by CAR are 96 times the 3,800 jobs at four U.S. plants General Motors is expected to close.

The effect of widespread Article 232 tariffs on vehicles and parts would dwarf tariffs on imported aluminum

and steel, which raised vehicle prices and cut automakers' profits by billions of dollars in 2018.

The Commerce Department spent months on the report, which Trump requested to justify tariffs on imported vehicles and parts on national security grounds.

There was a brief flurry of concern when trucking companies canceled a significant number of orders for tractor-trailers, which are called Class 8 heavy-duty vehicles based on their towing capacity. That turned out to be a blip, not a trend, said Jim Mele, Wards Intelligence contributing editor for commercial vehicles. He expects steady sales of Class 8 and smaller medium-duty vehicles, such as UPS vans, boom trucks and construction vehicles, through 2019.

"The freight business is growing twice as fast as the GDP," said IHS Markit commercial vehicles director Andrej Divis. "That's very strong. The general view is 2019 will be up slightly from 2018."

Medium- and heavy-duty truck sales can indicate future economic strength. They've been increasing steadily since the end of the Great Recession, one of the longest economic expansions in U.S. history.

'A very strange market'

That's one of the reasons economists are nervous. The country is overdue for a cooldown, though not a major recession.

"This is a very strange market," said Charlie Chesbrough, chief economist for Cox Automotive. "The length of the recovery and recent interest rate increases suggest we should see a downturn, but borrowing and wages are not showing it." The rise in people falling behind on car loans appears to be another blip, he said.

"The president's policies add a level of uncertainty," Chesbrough said. "You can't plan because they're all over the map. New tariffs on vehicles, parts or materials would send shock waves through the economy."

Samsung

Continued from Page 1B

hood of the S10 and S10+, both of which are also said to be taking advantage of Qualcomm's new "ultrasonic" fingerprint sensor that puts the sensor inside the screen.

Both the S10 and S10+ are said to have three rear cameras, while the S10E will go with just two cameras on its back.

WinFuture reports that 6GB of RAM and 128GB of storage will be standard across the trio, with the S10+ possibly available in what will no doubt be a price variation with a whopping 12GB of RAM and 1TB of storage – for those who need such power.

One novel feature that may be coming to the line is the ability to charge other devices wirelessly using the Galaxy's own battery. Earlier this month WinFuture leaked what appears to be a promotional image from Samsung that shows a pair of the company's seemingly updated earbuds wirelessly charging off of a Galaxy S10.

5G variant with massive display

In addition to the three main S10 phones, Samsung is also prepping a 5G phone that would be compatible with the speedy new wireless networks that are just emerging. Such a model could appear this spring.

According to a report late last year from The Wall Street Journal, the 5G phone will have a massive 6.7-inch screen, six cameras (two on the front, four on the back).

AT&T and Verizon have announced they plan to have a Samsung 5G phone in the first half of 2019, with Sprint and T-Mobile saying that they, too, will carry a Samsung 5G phone this year. Beyond AT&T's limited 12-city launch late last year, however, no other carriers have turned on their respective mobile 5G networks as of now.

Last year Samsung's mobile chief DJ Koh told Korean journalists, as

spotted by ZDNet, that the S10 would not have 5G, with a separate model getting the technology first.

Other specs for the 5G phone, according to South Korea's ETNews, includes a massive 5,000 mAh battery, over 10GB of RAM and 1TB of storage.

ETNews reports that the 4G LTE S10 line will be available on March 8, while this 5G model will be available on March 29. We'll see.

Foldable phone makes its debut

Samsung is also expected to properly introduce a foldable phone, after publicly displaying an early version in November.

In its closed position, this flexible screen device has a roughly 4.6-inch display. Unfold the screen, and it grows into a tablet-sized 7.3 inches. Samsung is working with Google to optimize Android for the new foldable form factor, allowing the apps that you were using when the device is closed to be there when you open up the phone in tablet mode. Samsung also teased that you'll be able to have three apps displaying at once, allowing you to multitask as you would on a more traditional computer.

That said, plenty about this device still remains a mystery, most notably how much it will cost and whether it will have similar specs to the S10 line, including 5G.

Galaxy Watch and fitness tracker

Samsung is also rumored to be preparing a new Galaxy Watch.

According to SamMobile, a website that tracks Samsung, the new smartwatch may be called the Galaxy Watch Active and will feature a 1.1-inch AMOLED display. It will likely offer wireless charging, and as with Samsung's previous Gear Sport timepiece, be water-resistant down to a depth of about 50 meters, (roughly 164 feet).

Indian tech website 91mobiles, which previously leaked an image purporting to be the new watch, says it will also be capable of tracking sleep and making mobile payments.

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