London, 22nd June 2021

Mobile self-scanning enters the mainstream and checkout-free technology takes off

32,000 stores across the world allow customers to scan items as they shop, while dozens of retailers are testing checkout-free technologies

Hundreds of retailers are offering mobile self-scanning

Customers can use mobile self-scanning at 32,000 stores across the world, according to *Mobile Self-Scanning and Checkout-Free 2021*, a brand-new study by strategic research and consulting firm RBR. Hundreds of retailers globally offer the technology, which allows customers to pick up a handheld device provided by the retailer or use their own smartphones to scan items as they shop.

Mobile self-scanning solutions are well-established in Europe, particularly in the UK, France and the Netherlands, although major retailers in other regions are increasingly offering the service.

Number of stores offering mobile self-scanning, end-2020
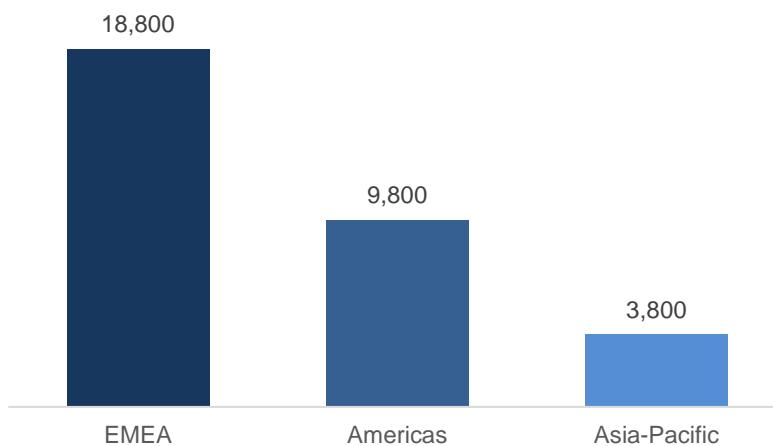
Source: Mobile Self-Scanning and Checkout-Free 2021 (RBR)

Retailers pilot checkout-free technologies to deliver 'grab and go' experience

In addition to mobile self-scanning, many retailers are partnering with a range of checkout-free technology vendors, installing cameras and sensors around the store to record items selected by customers. Although Amazon is the most prominent proponent of this type of store and continues to roll out its 'Go' convenience and 'Fresh' grocery formats in the USA and the latter only in the UK, similar concepts are popping up in countries as diverse as Poland and Singapore.

Smartphone applications allow retailers to roll out self-scanning quickly

Mobile self-scanning using retailer-provided devices is mainly present in Europe, with major grocery firms including Ahold Delhaize, Carrefour and Tesco continuing to roll it out to new stores. However, the study shows the adoption of self-scanning applications for consumers to download onto their phones is increasing rapidly around the world, encouraged by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This service is now available at more than 80% of outlets with mobile self-scanning, with retailers able to roll it out quickly across their store networks. The world's largest retailer, Walmart, initially trialled 'scan and go' back in 2013, but it has since been relaunched more widely and by 2020 was offered at all US stores.

Scope for growth in emerging markets and different retail sectors

Although mobile self-scanning is less prevalent in emerging markets in Latin America and Asia, where there are lower labour costs and concerns around shrinkage, the research found the technology is being piloted at retailers in a wide range of countries, including Brazil, India and Taiwan.

Furthermore, mobile self-scanning solutions are increasingly available in other areas of retail in addition to big box grocery. Convenience chains, DIY firms, fashion retailers and even toy stores are trialling the technology.

Alan Burt, who led RBR's *Mobile Self-Scanning and Checkout-Free 2021* research, commented: "*As retailers seek to widen self-service shopping options in a highly competitive landscape, both mobile self-scanning and checkout-free technologies are set to become more common, reducing friction and enabling a more convenient shopping experience to consumers*".

Notes to editors

These figures and insights are based on RBR's study, *Mobile Self-Scanning and Checkout-Free 2021.* For more information about this report or to discuss the findings in more detail please email Alan Burt (alan.burt@rbrlondon.com) or call +44 20 8831 7322.

RBR is a strategic research and consulting firm with three decades of experience in banking and retail automation, cards and payments. It assists its clients by providing independent advice and intelligence through published reports, consulting, newsletters and events.

The information and data within this press release are the copyright of RBR, and may only be quoted with appropriate attribution to RBR. The information is provided free of charge and may not be resold.