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Kroger, Instacart come out with AI shopping tool, express delivery

Companies say deal will open up new opportunities for consumer brands to reach shoppers

Supermarket News
Staff

Nov 4, 2025

Kroger and Instacart announced that they are expanding their long-running partnership to strengthen the grocery chain's online shopping and delivery operations, while adding new AI-driven features designed to make digital grocery trips faster and more personalized.

Instacart will remain Kroger's primary fulfillment partner, handling delivery from roughly 2,700 stores across more than 20 banners through Kroger.com and the Kroger app. The companies say the expanded deal will also open up new opportunities for consumer brands to reach shoppers through retail media and in-app promotions.

One of the most visible additions for customers will be Cart Assistant, an AI shopping tool from Instacart that will appear in Kroger's iOS app. The feature uses conversational prompts to help users find recipes, build carts based on past purchases and plan meals more efficiently.

Yael Cosset, Kroger's executive vice president and chief digital officer, said the technology could reshape how customers approach grocery shopping and meal planning by offering suggestions tailored to their preferences.

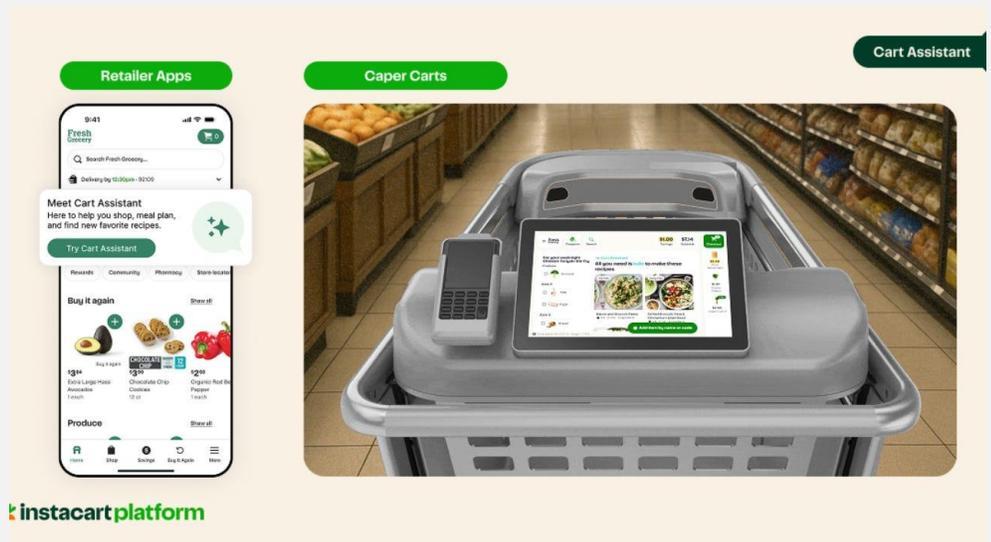
Instacart and Kroger also plan to widen access to Express Delivery, which promises delivery in as little as 30 minutes. The companies say the service has seen fast adoption among customers looking for last-minute meal solutions and quicker turnaround times.

According to Instacart CEO Chris Rogers, Kroger is among the delivery platform's most integrated retail partners. Rogers said the expanded collaboration will focus on improving order speed and reliability while continuing to develop new AI-powered shopping features.



Congrats to Jennifer Gosney!

She is the winner of the \$25 Kroger Gift Card for completing our feedback survey



Kroger debuts protein-focused private brand products

Simple Truth Protein builds on a growing food trend and marks the latest line extension under the popular store brand.

*Food Dive
Peyton Bigora*

Sep 23, 2025

Dive Brief:

- Kroger announced on Wednesday a protein-focused extension of its top-selling [private label line](#), Simple Truth.
- Simple Truth Protein includes over 80 high-protein meals and snacks and marks the grocer's largest product expansion to date, according to Ann Reed, group vice president of Kroger's Our Brands.
- Kroger continues to use its Simple Truth private brand to remain up to date with consumer trends and values

Dive Insight:

Protein-dense diets, recipes and food products have been a [growing trend in the food industry](#) for well over a year, appearing on social media and gaining more shelf space at grocery stores, including Kroger's.

The grocer's Simple Truth Protein products include frozen meals, beverages, chips and desserts that offer protein boosts. Products include French toast sticks, instant mushroom coffee and fudge brownie mix, according to the press release.

The company noted that the Simple Truth private label brand will continue to grow, but did not specify if this will include adding more protein-packed products.

In recent years, Kroger has leaned on this private label brand to show it is in touch with consumers' priorities. In 2021, the company announced it would sell [carbon-neutral, cage-free eggs under its Simple Truth line](#) as part of a partnership with Kipster Farms. Two years later, Kroger announced the [private brand added two upcycled-ingredient breads](#) to its product lineup in an effort to offer more sustainable items.

Kroger is also using its private label offerings to remain trendy with its shoppers. In April, the grocer [announced the addition of several items](#), including instant mushroom tea, restaurant-style Italian dressing and kettle-style tortilla chips in a Hatch chile flavor. At the time, Kroger said it was on track to launch over 900 new items this year.

Kroger's store brands accounted for over [\\$32 million in sales](#) last year, according to the grocer's annual report. In addition, Kroger's store brand sales are outperforming name brand sales, with Simple Truth and Private Selection, another private label line under Kroger's Our Brands umbrella, leading the charge, interim CEO Ron Sargent recently told investors.

Debut of Simple Truth Protein



A sample of offerings from the newly launched Our Brands line includes waffles, mac and cheese, peanut butter, soup, crackers, salmon burgers and pancake mix

Louisville Division Grand Opening



Kroger Store #365
Louisville, KY
Grand Opening 11/6



**Nashville Division
Grand Opening**



Kroger Store #580
Clarksville, TN
Grand Opening 11/5



Kroger Store #580
Clarksville, TN
Grand Opening 11/5



Kroger Store #580
Clarksville, TN
Grand Opening 11/5

Store and Leadership Updates

16 Columbus

Store 800 Mt. Gilead, OH
Re-Grand Opening 9/17

Store 851 Canal Winchester, OH
Re-Grand Opening 9/19

Store 510 Findlay, OH
Re-Grand Opening 9/25

Store 971 Columbus, OH
Re-Grand Opening 10/10

24 Louisville

Store 365 Louisville, KY
Grand Opening 11/6

Store 361 Lexington, KY
Re-Grand Opening 11/13

34 Houston

Store 336 Houston, TX
Re-Grand Opening 10/17

35 Dallas

Store 541 Fort Worth, TX
Re-Grand Opening 10/31

26 Nashville

Store 580 Clarksville, TN
Grand Opening 11/5

Store 502 Nashville, TN
Re-Grand Opening 11/12

620 King Soopers

Store 83 Denver, CO
Re-Grand Opening 9/17

Store 130 Colorado Springs, CO
Grand Opening 10/8

Store 16 Centennial, CO
Re-Grand Opening 10/29

Store 44 Loveland, CO
Re-Grand Opening 11/5

660 Frys

Store 667 Phoenix, AZ
Re-Grand Opening 10/10

Store 661 Phoenix, AZ
Grand Opening 10/31

Leadership Announcements

Aaron Stryk Promoted to Director of Operations for Texas Division

Aaron Stryk, currently district manager in the Texas Division, has been promoted to director of Operations for the division, effective Nov. 9. He will support Jesse Avelar and Rich Winters, vice presidents of Operations for the newly formed Texas Division, providing leadership across both Texas regions in all aspects of Retail Operations.

Aaron brings 34 years of experience in the food retail industry, including 27 years with the Kroger Family of Companies. His career spans a variety of leadership roles in stores, Human Resources, Merchandising and Operations. Aaron spent 15 years in Merchandising, holding key positions in Deli/Bakery, Marketing, and serving as Meat Merchandiser for the Southwest Division and Produce merchandiser for the Houston Division. For the past six years, Aaron has excelled as a district manager in the Houston Division, successfully leading two different districts.

He has contributed extensively to the company through multiple steering committees and has partnered with state programs and local universities to advance retail food product knowledge. Aaron is also deeply engaged in the community, having served on numerous boards and councils, including as president of the Houston Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Association.

Aaron holds a bachelor's degree in business management and marketing from University of Houston



Leadership Announcements

Chelsea Cubero Named Director, Associate Experience Business Partner for Retail

Chelsea Cubero, currently HR director for the Fred Meyer Division, has been named director, Associate Experience business partner for Retail, effective Nov. 9. In this role, she will report to Kevin Lindsey, vice president and Associate Experience business partner for Retail Divisions and Retail operations. Her successor will be named at a later date.

Chelsea joined the Kroger Family of Companies in 2001 as a courtesy clerk in the Ralphs Division. She went on to hold a variety of roles with increasing responsibility for the division including Front End manager, assistant store leader, store leader and Grocery coordinator. In 2016, she moved to the Fred Meyer Division as Grocery coordinator. In her time with Fred Meyer, she has served as district Merchandising manager and district coordinator for associate and customer experience, responsible for Front End operations and Human Resources. In 2020, she was named a district manager with the QFC Division before moving back to Fred Meyer as a district manager in 2021. She was promoted to her current role in 2023.

Chelsea holds a bachelor's degree in finance from California State University and a master's degree in food industry leadership from the University of Southern California.

Announcements



Chelsea joined the Kroger family in 2001 as a courtesy clerk in the Ralphs Division

Kroger Releases Its Annual Holiday Film

*MorningNewsBeat
Kevin Coupe*

Nov 12, 2025

Kroger is out with its annual holiday promotional film, which is entitled "Operation: Gingerbread" and connects to the company's longstanding support of the United Service Organizations (USO).

In its press release heralding the new film, Kroger says that it "is proud to be the largest cumulative donor to the USO in the organization's 84-year history, contributing more than \$44 million, including an additional \$1 million this year to advance its mission of strengthening the well-being of troops and their families. Since 2022, Kroger has also helped the USO host several mobile canteen events, offering service members a place to relax and reconnect, including the recent deployment of two mobile centers to support U.S. Navy personnel and civilians impacted by Hurricane Melissa."

"At Kroger, we believe the holidays are about moments that bring us closer together," Mary Ellen Adcock, Executive Vice President and Chief Merchant and Marketing Officer, said in a prepared statement. "This film is a tribute to the families who make every holiday and homecoming unforgettable and to the service members whose sacrifices inspire us all."

You can watch it [here](#).



The ad features kids, families as well as neighbors in its heartwarming message

**Columbus Division
Re-Grand Opening**



Columbus Store #971
Clintonville, OH
Re-Grand Opening 10/10



Columbus Store #971
Clintonville, OH
Re-Grand Opening 10/10



Columbus Store #971
Clintonville, OH
Re-Grand Opening 10/10

Kroger Unveils Most Comprehensive Digital App Refresh to Date

Company exec says the new experience is food-forward and customer-centric

*Progressive Grocer
Emily Crowe*

Nov 4, 2025

While [The Kroger Co.](#) first dipped its toe into digital transformation 15 years ago with the rollout of its original mobile app, the company has since made leaps and bounds in the digital space in an effort to evolve alongside its customers.

In what is perhaps its biggest tech-facing evolution to date, Kroger recently unveiled its refreshed digital app, which leans on personalization and simplicity to connect savings, pharmacy visits and online orders into an innovative platform.

According to Kroger Group VP, Digital Experience and E-Commerce Jody Kalmbach, the latest iteration of the app offers a customer-centric, food-forward experience for shoppers that was inspired by shoppers themselves.

“We spent a lot of time listening to customer feedback,” Kalmbach told Progressive Grocer. “Not only talking to them directly, but also observing behavior within the app and really figuring out where there were friction points that needed to be addressed. So it really started with the customer.”

One of the key benefits of the refreshed app is a streamlined experience with simplified navigation and design. All savings offers like coupons, weekly ads and points are now in one location, and thanks to advanced data science, personalized coupons and deals are easier than ever to serve to users.

“When you think about savings in particular, this is just such an important component to our customers right now – bringing all the savings components together within one section of the app so that you’re not having to navigate around between weekly ads and digital coupons and other personalized offers,” Kalmbach explained. “You can just go to one destination and see all of it.”

The app also employs food-first storytelling with cleaner visuals and less clutter, which helps highlight fresh food, products and meal inspiration. Additionally, a next-level Shopping Assistant will go live later this year to help customers quickly put together their shopping basket through a conversational search model that can understand requests, build menus and add ingredients to customers’ carts.

For Apple iOS users, all of these features are built upon the tech company’s new Liquid Glass software design. Kroger worked extensively with Apple on the updates, which Kalmbach said was another avenue to help improve the shopper experience.

“We think leaning into Apple’s standards for their new design system is going to simplify the experience for customers,” Kalmbach explained. “We are one of the earliest adopters of it from a retail perspective and we’re very excited about the feedback that we’re getting from customers as they’re engaging with it.”

Continued Kalmbach: “I think the more and more you can deliver a sort of native experience to the device that you’re on, that again underscores the customer-centric approach that will help simplify things.”

Other key features of the refreshed app include a renewed focus on discovery, as well as bringing mission-based experiences to the forefront. That discovery hinges on using what Kroger knows about its customers and delivering relevant new products, meal ideas or recipes directly to them within the app. Mission-based experiences tap into all the ways customers shop, whether they’re looking for dinner ideas or restocking their usuals, and making it as personalized as possible to do exactly what they need to do in the moment.

For Kalmbach, the launch of the refreshed app is another exciting beginning for Kroger. “This is really sort of day one of this next level of the simplified experience,” she mused. “We’re just going to continue to optimize it, both with where we know the customer wants us to go, but also based on feedback that we receive.”