CONNORS GROUP

WEGMANS ELEVATES CUSTOMER CHECKOUT EXPERIENCE WITH CONNORS GROUP

THE CLIENT

Wegmans is a growing regional supermarket chain with over 110 stores located along the east coast. The family company, recognized as an industry leader and innovator, celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2016. Wegmans has been named one of the '100 Best Companies to Work For' by FORTUNE magazine now 27 years and #6 in 2024.

THE CHALLENGE

Wegmans, renowned for its unwavering commitment to quality and service, has collaborated with leading business engineering consultancy Connors Group to transform the customer checkout experience for their recently opened Manhattan location. The store posed unique challenges, mainly limited space and high customer counts. Competitor benchmark data showed that grocery customers in Manhattan were experiencing long lines at the check-out, well above industry standards. Wegmans set a new goal to create the best check-out experience in Manhattan.

Wegmans Astor Place, New York

APPROACH AND SOLUTION

This collaboration was spearheaded by Wegmans, who brought forward a dedicated team of designers complemented by the strategic insights of their Metro New York/New Jersey Operations team. Connors Group contributed their expertise in front-end strategy and customer journey, offering a range of design options backed by concrete data analysis to bring the vision to life. They have effectively combined creative design with practical execution, setting a new standard for efficiency and customer satisfaction at checkout.

SOLUTION SUMMARY

FORECASTING TRANSACTION DEMAND: Connors Group partnered with Wegmans planning teams to develop a profile of the Manhattan customer and their shopping patterns. The profile was developed utilizing customer journey studies, internal and external benchmarks, and focus groups.

LEVERAGING DISCRETE EVENT SIMULATION: Connors Group aided Wegmans in developing advanced discrete event simulation scenarios, which enabled Wegmans to increase customer flow through checkout lanes. This approach optimized the front-end requirements within the available space.

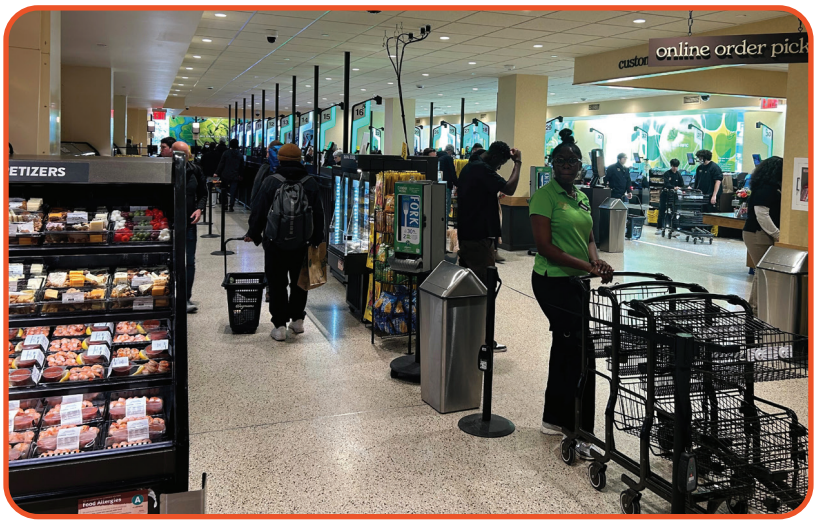
REAL WORLD SIMULATIONS: Wegmans and Connors Group performed full scale "dress rehearsals" with proposed layouts mocked up to scale. Wegmans employees acted as customers arriving at projected volume levels throughout the day. This approach provided further confidence to the operations team in the design and allowed the team to iterate on ways to operate the front end which unlocked key staffing insights.

IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

HEIGHTENED CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: This joint effort has resulted in a marked increase in customer satisfaction, with shoppers enjoying greater convenience and a faster checkout experience compared to other stores in Manhattan. The majority of customers are not required to wait in line, which has resulted in overwhelmingly positive feedback.

INCREASE IN EMPLOYEE MORALE: The redesigned checkout process, primarily driven by Wegmans, has also positively influenced employee morale. The design enables staff to quickly react to changes in volume and serve the needs of the customer. This further reflects the successful integration of innovative practices into the workplace.

This initiative between Wegmans and Connors Group is a testament to the power of innovative thinking and strategic partnership in the Grocery industry. It highlights how a customer-centric approach and applying Industrial Engineering principles in new contexts can lead to remarkable advancements in operational excellence and customer loyalty.

ABOUT CONNORS GROUP

Connors Group is a leading provider of productivity and operational improvement solutions, helping clients maximize efficiency through their continuous improvement, performance management, and WFM system implementation services. The firm builds upon and honors the legacy of H. B. Maynard's success in Industrial Engineering and Lean business practices to deliver on-time and on-budget world-class solutions that drive sales and profitability.