

## Choice Market's New Format Will Offer Three Payment Options

DENVER — Choice Market will be the latest convenience store retailer to enter the autonomous checkout space with the opening of its third location.

The new, 2,700-square-foot format will open during the second half of 2019 at 2200 East Colfax and feature fuel pumps, electric vehicle supercharging, a bike share terminal, electric scooter charging stations and solar collection on the canopy.

It will also offer autonomous checkout, order and pay ahead via the Choice mobile app and traditional checkout.

"There's nothing more valuable than our customer's time and we are really excited to offer this new format which allows them to combine several different shopping occasions in one stop, while providing them the option to skip the checkout process all together," said Mike Fogarty, founder and CEO of Choice Market. "If customers cannot make it to the store, we will deliver any of our products to their doorstep within 45 minutes. That is true convenience."

Fogarty was a featured speaker at the 2018 *Convenience Store News* Convenience Foodservice Exchange in September.

To enable the autonomous checkout, Choice partnered with Ava Retail, which uses artificial intelligence, computer vision and internet of things to track customer's purchases within the store. This platform uses less hardware and infrastructure than other competitors while still leveraging the powerful Microsoft Azure cloud, according to the company.

"Real convenience is what Choice Market is doing using our technology — offering their customers a truly automated experience," said Ava Retail CEO Atul Hirpara. "Retail is undergoing a major transformation. With the power of Ava's technology, Choice Market is pioneering this transformation."

Choice currently has one location open in downtown Denver. A second store, which is under construction, is set to open in the second 2019 in south Denver. With the upcoming changes to liquor laws, Choice will also be one of the first companies in

Colorado to offer delivery of prepared foods, groceries, and full strength beer in one transaction, according to the company.



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To facilitate the company's growth, the company hired industry veteran John Varsames as its chief operating officer. Varsames has more than 30 years of experience with opening and operating natural groceries, including leadership positions at Wild Oats, Whole Foods and Alfalfas.

"I am thrilled to be joining the Choice Market team to help lead business operations and grow this exciting brand," Varsames said. "Healthy convenience is a fast-growing segment and our innovative approach will be a great addition to Colfax."

"We're honored to partner with Choice Market to create a fresh, new concept at the intersection of healthy living and convenience. Chute Gerdeman and Choice Market share similar brand values — belief in doing good for the people and communities that we serve," said Chute Gerdeman CEO Brian Shafley.

"As creators of brand experience and customer engagement, we look forward to our collaboration with this future-looking brand partner, and are confident our work together will further propel the mission of Choice Market," he added.

For this project, Choice has partnered with local developer St. Charles Town Co., which has a history of adaptive reuse and urban revitalization in the Denver area.

"A contemporary, fresh, and local market will fill a huge void in this dense part of the city. It has been nearly two decades since we had Wild Oats next door to this site," said Charlie Woolley, principal at St. Charles Town Co. "We are pleased to partner with Choice to bring fresh food and innovation to the neighborhood."

Denver-based Choice Market combines the operating hours, store size and transaction times of a traditional convenience store with the product selection of a natural grocery and fast casual restaurant.