

Family Mart Tests 'Face Pass' Technology at Yokohama Store to Save on Manpower

Family Mart recently opened a next-generation test store, which uses the latest facial recognition technology "Face Pass" designed by Panasonic.

Face Pass, a high-tech system which can be used for payment and other services, was developed through collaboration between Family Mart and Panasonic to tackle labor shortages. Family Mart hopes the system will enable them to reduce the number of staff in their stores across the country.

Family Mart Saedo in Yokohama became the company's first test store, opening its doors to the public and press on April 2. Its facial recognition payment system works by scanning the face of a pre-registered user onto a screen. After granting access into the store, customers choose their desired products and use the system again to complete payment.

Not only is payment cash-free and therefore convenient, the company also anticipates that using the system will enable them to reduce the number of employees needed to run the store. During the test run at the Yokohama store, the company expects to iron out any potential issues with the new system.

Over 80 in-store cameras and sensors have been installed under a new monitoring system, which can record customers' physical outline and movements. The system also collects data on items on sale, store congestion, and inventory shortages. The data is then sent one by one to an employee's computer terminal.

This employee assistance feature enables the smooth running of the store with only a few staff members. The data is subsequently analyzed and used for marketing purposes, such as increasing sales.

Carrying out a demonstration of the facial recognition system, Family Mart company president Takashi Sawada showed his eagerness to tackle labor shortages: "When it comes to tackling this issue, it's now or never. We plan to test this new technology across our stores as soon as possible."

Convenience stores have recently come under scrutiny for the wide range of measures they are taking in an effort to tackle labor shortages head on, such as ending 24-hour operation. Companies are competing against each other in the race to develop the latest technology to save on manpower.

7-Eleven Japan introduced an automatic facial recognition payment service produced by NEC in December 2018. It is concentrating its efforts on an in-company manpower reduction initiative, which was launched last March.

Lawson has introduced "Lawson Smart Till," whereby customers can use their smartphone to scan barcodes and pay for items without the need for staff in over 100 of its stores. The new technology will be deployed in 1,000 stores by October 2019.

Source: **Family Mart Tests 'Face Pass' Technology at Yokohama Store to Save on Manpower**

<http://japan-forward.com/family-mart-tests-face-pass-technology-at-yokohama-store-to-save-on-manpower/>

ファミマ「顔パス」実験店を公開 先端技術駆使し省力化に挑戦

ファミリーマートは2日、パナソニックと組み、顔認証技術を用いた“顔パス”決済など多数の先端技術を駆使した次世代コンビニエンスストアの実験店を横浜市にオープンした。人手不足を背景に、ファミマはパナと協業して省力化・省人化を可能にする次世代モデルの構築を進め、早期の全国展開を目指す。

ファミマは同日、実験店「ファミリーマート佐江戸店」を報道陣に公開した。顔パス決済は、あらかじめ顔写真を登録した人が機器の画面に顔をにかざして認証。入店許可の後、商品を選び、再度認証を行って決済を終える仕組みだ。

レジで現金を扱わないため利用者の利便性が向上するほか、店舗側もレジに必要な人員を減らせる省人化効果が見込まれる。当面、パナ社員の利用に限定し課題などを洗い出す。

また、80を超すセンサーやカメラを使い店内を把握するシステムも構築。来店客の属性や動き、棚の状況などのデータを収集。レジの混雑や商品の欠品などの情報を店員の端末に逐一通知し、限られた人員でも店舗運営がスムーズにいく「業務アシストシステム」を整備した。収集データは解析し売れ筋の把握などマーケティングにも生かす。

ファミマの沢田貴司社長は実験店で顔パス決済を実演。沢田氏は「業界の人手不足は待ったなしだ。すぐに利用できる技術も多くスピーディーに展開していく」と、早期に実店舗に応用する意欲を示した。

コンビニ業界は24時間営業の是非がクローズアップされるなど深刻な人手不足に直面する。各社はこのため、先端技術を活用した省力化店舗の開発を急ピッチで進める。セブン・イレブン・ジャパンはNECと組んで昨年12月、“顔パス”で支払いが完了する無人レジの実証実験に着手。今年3月には社内組織「省人化プロジェクト」を設置し取り組みを強化する。

ローソンは、利用者が自分のスマホを使って商品のバーコードを読み取った上で決済する「ローソンスマホレジ」を100店以上で導入済み。今年10月までに1千店で展開する。

出典:ファミマ「顔パス」実験店を公開 先端技術駆使し省力化に挑戦

<https://www.sankei.com/west/news/190402/wst1904020021-n2.html>