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Accel Robotics to Open 10 Autonomous Stores

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Since being founded in 2015, [Accel Robotics Corporation](#), a Kearny Mesa-based retail technology company, has successfully deployed its camera-based artificial intelligence system via existing and emerging stores throughout the country. The proprietary tech enables checkout-free shopping experiences using an app that allows shoppers to pick the items they want, walk out and receive a receipt via text or app notification.

Now, Accel Robotics, with an estimated annual revenue of \$10.2 million according to reports, will launch its very first autonomous store, right here in its hometown, at the end of this month.

Located in East Village's Vantage Pointe, a 680-unit high-rise building, the Valet Market is 1,500 square feet and will feature locally-sourced items such as produce, baked goods and dairy. Advanced technology, including computer vision, shelf level sensors and artificial intelligence track items as users remove them from the shelves.

The market also offers Last Step, a delivery service option by Accel Robotics that allows the building's residents to order goods through the store's mobile app that are then delivered straight to their door. Valet runners, what the company is calling its multi-functional employees, will make deliveries from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. to start.

The company, with over 80 employees, has raised a total of \$37 million in funding to date and plans to open at least 10 total Valet Markets in San Diego. So far, Accel Robotics has signed contracts with two universities, two military bases, two gas stations, one sports arena, one pharmacy, one convenience store, and their own house brand – all located in the city.

Great Environment

"San Diego has a mix of different environments: campuses, professional sports, high-rise buildings and beautiful weather. For all those reasons, it is a great environment to launch new technology," said Brandon Maseda, co-founder and CEO of Accel Robotics, who founded the company alongside partners Marius Buibas and Martin Cseh. "The modern consumer lives here and is hopefully more adaptive to new technology as well. All the environments we wanted to showcase our technology in are here, so it was a great place for us to start. The fact that we are headquartered here is a plus on top of that."

Added Buibas: "Rather than retrofitting existing spaces, Accel Robotics creates entirely new multi-use retail models to bring brands closer to their customers. We are flexible, providing commercial spaces that range from a few shelves to a full convenience store, and we support multiple dispense options like coffee and taps, which can also eliminate packaging waste. These are the new store formats of the future."

For Maseda, the Valet Market is a direct representation of what the next generation of commerce will look like according to Accel Robotics.

This includes having a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week market located at the base of one's residential home, for example, and a delivery option that brings items straight to the purchaser's door, he said; valet runners will also moonlight as stock employees, among other typical retail functions that don't include cashier work. Valet Markets will also have a presence in commercial spaces as well as college campuses, among other industries.

Once a user enters a store, the cashier-less technology will automatically verify that the user has funds, explained Maseda. A customer can walk around the store, taking items off shelves, and once he/she has walked out the door, the person will be charged on the app and will receive a receipt via text or app notification.

Widely Applicable Technology

Simultaneously, Accel Robotics continues to expand its cashier-less technology outside of its Valet Markets. While Maseda couldn't reveal all of its partners at press time, he did name drop convenience store company Circle K, Mastercard and Aramark, the latter a food service, facilities and uniform services provider headquartered in Pennsylvania.

"The technology is widely applicable to a wide selection of sectors, including grocery, pharmacy, convenience, quick service restaurants and automated coffee shops," said Maseda. "A lot of offerings to start will be in those spaces. We just recently announced UC San Diego and have another planned launch with a stadium environment in San Diego coming soon followed by another university. There will also be some more real estate developments coming up

the pipeline as well.”

To date, the cashier-less technology is already live in multiple countries, said Maseda, although San Diego is the first city to launch a Valet Market. Accel Robotics is already in talks with various investors and partners to take the Valet Market vision global in the next few years.

