



The Fresh Market Scales Smarter Replenishment with Upshop



95%

forecasting accuracy

3-5%

sales increase

~50%

unadjusted orders

The Customer

The Fresh Market, a specialty grocer known for its high-touch service and elevated focus on fresh, operates 160 stores across the U.S. The brand's reputation depends on delivering exceptional quality and availability across both fresh and center store departments from produce, meat, and bakery to vitamins, health and beauty, and household staples.

The Challenge

As the business scaled, managing inventory across this wide product mix became increasingly complex. The Fresh Market uses a Direct Store Delivery (DSD) model across all categories, which allows them to bypass distribution centers and work directly with trusted vendors. Their strong supplier relationships ensure high order accuracy and fulfillment rates, but the model also lacks true visibility into what inventory is actually en route.

"The guest is at the center of everything we do, and our focus is on delivering the freshest experience possible to them. Upshop enables us to deliver on that commitment."

John Bishop

Chief Operating Officer



While The Fresh Market uses robust analytics to track receiving rates and ordering frequency, they only know what's arriving once it's received in store.

This made replenishment difficult to scale, especially in a business with a large number of daily vendor orders to manage. Each department manager had to build and review their own orders, relying on institutional knowledge, historical trends, and gut instinct.



This guesswork was especially problematic in fast-moving fresh categories, where even minor errors in ordering could lead to out-of-stocks, shrink, or missed sales.

Additional complexity came from ultra slow-moving products such as vitamins and health and beauty items, which don't follow traditional sales patterns. These products often have long shelf lives and low purchase frequency, making them difficult to forecast demand using conventional methods. A single customer purchasing two jars of vitamins after several weeks of no sales doesn't necessarily indicate a demand spike, yet traditional systems might overreact. This created a risk of overstocking slow-turn items that took up valuable shelf and backroom space. With increasing pressure to ensure high availability without over-ordering, The Fresh Market recognized the need to modernize their ordering and inventory approach, especially in center store. They sought a smarter, scalable way to:

- **Achieve real-time inventory awareness:** Move beyond analytics-based assumptions to a live understanding of what's in store and what needs to be replenished.
- **Simplify and streamline the DSD ordering process:** Reduce the manual burden on department managers while maintaining accuracy across many vendors.



- **Improve demand forecasting for all product types:** Support both fast-moving perishables and fresh products, and ultra slow-moving goods with a dynamic, category-aware forecasting engine.
- **Eliminate over-ordering and unnecessary replenishment:** Avoid waste and clutter by aligning inventory decisions with actual sales patterns and shelf-life realities.
- **Free up store labor for higher-value tasks:** Replace manual order writing with computer-generated orders that don't require departmental expertise to approve.

To continue delivering a differentiated customer experience while scaling operations, The Fresh Market needed a platform that could unify their ordering, inventory, and demand forecasting and do so with enough nuance to handle every product in the store, from strawberries to supplements.



The Solution

The Fresh Market began its operational transformation by first implementing Upshop's Ordering and Recipe Management solutions in fresh perimeter departments like produce, meat, deli, and bakery. These solutions introduced a more intelligent, consistent way to manage fresh inventory, moving away from manual counts and order sheets to a system powered by real-time perpetual inventory data and demand forecasting.

While The Fresh Market initially adopted Upshop's Production Planning, Recipe Management, and Grind Logs to streamline fresh operations, the implementation of Ordering drove one of the most significant shifts in store operations. Rolled out across perimeter departments like produce, meat, deli, and bakery, Upshop's Ordering solution replaced manual counts and order sheets with real-time perpetual inventory and demand forecasting bringing consistency, accuracy, and efficiency to fresh inventory management.

After initial success in fresh, The Fresh Market expanded its use of Upshop to cover center store categories. The decision to unify store operations under one platform was driven by the need to bring visibility, accuracy, and efficiency to a diverse and often unpredictable product mix.



One of the most critical challenges Upshop helped solve was the visibility gap created by The Fresh Market's DSD model. Without centralized distribution centers, store teams had previously lacked insight into what was en route or available to replenish. With Upshop's perpetual inventory and demand forecasting solutions, The Fresh Market could now make smarter, data-backed decisions.

Backroom management also improved significantly. While many of The Fresh Market's slower-moving items—such as vitamins and specialty goods—required smarter forecasting due to irregular sales patterns and long shelf lives, fresh departments had an entirely different challenge: speed. With highly perishable items like produce and seafood turning over quickly, the system needed to be just as adept at managing fast-moving inventory as it was at optimizing slow movers. Upshop's real-time forecasting and inventory management allowed store teams to confidently manage both ends of the spectrum reducing excess inventory and clutter in the backroom while ensuring fresh items were always available and ready for sale.



Labor efficiency was another major gain. Manual ordering processes had once required hours of store team attention each week. With Upshop's computer-generated ordering, orders are generated automatically, eliminating the need for associates to write orders entirely. This hands-off process frees up store teams to focus entirely on the customer and in-store execution.

This phased, strategic rollout laid the foundation for a nearly end-to-end store ordering and replenishment system tailored to the unique needs of a fresh-first, DSD-driven retailer.



The Results

The Fresh Market's rollout of Upshop's store ordering solution has delivered measurable improvements across departments, creating operational consistency and freeing up valuable labor without sacrificing accuracy or control.



50% of all orders now run automatically, without store review or intervention. By relying on Upshop's computer-generated ordering, store teams have the confidence to let nearly half of their orders process without manual approval. This shift represents a major reduction in time spent on order writing, which traditionally required hours each week per department. In an industry where labor is one of the most significant costs, this hands-off efficiency translates into substantial savings and reallocation of resources to higher-value tasks.

Forecasting accuracy reached 95% across departments. The ability to align orders with actual demand (across both fresh and center store items) meant stores could better maintain in-stock conditions without over-ordering. In produce and other fresh departments, this translated into greater shelf presence for high-velocity items and fewer gaps during peak demand windows."

Sales increased 3–5% following implementation. With optimized replenishment, stores were better able to meet customer demand, keep shelves stocked with high-demand items, and reduce missed sales opportunities. The gains were especially noticeable in fresh departments, as this translated into greater shelf availability for high-velocity items and fewer gaps during peak demand windows.

Operational consistency improved across 160 stores. By moving away from store-specific manual practices and toward a standardized, data-driven process, The Fresh Market now operates with greater confidence and control regardless of location, department, or vendor.



Smarter management of slow-moving and specialty items. The forecasting engine's ability to differentiate between short-term sales spikes and true demand trends helped avoid unnecessary reorders for ultra slow movers like vitamins or health items. This not only preserved shelf space but also reduced shrink and improved long-term inventory health.

Higher on-shelf availability. With AI-based forecasting and real-time inventory updates, The Fresh Market ensured products were available when guests shopped, especially in fresh departments where availability directly impacts sales and customer satisfaction.

Reduced shrink, especially in fresh. By ordering only what was needed (based on real-time data and predictive modeling) The Fresh Market minimized overstock and shrink in perishable categories, preserving margins and reducing waste.

Together, these results mark a major step forward in The Fresh Market's journey toward more unified store operations, proving the value of connected solutions that work together as a foundation for Total Store Ordering.



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Upshop is a global leader in total store operations technology. Our platform streamlines forecasting, ordering, production, and inventory optimization for food retailers. Serving over 450 retailers and 50,000 stores, we enhance operations across Fresh, Center, DSD, and eCommerce, driving improvements in sales, shrink reduction, food safety, and sustainability. With a focus on simplifying tasks and connecting teams, our technology empowers retailers to operate smarter and more efficiently.