

**“The Virtual Grocery Store:
A Proposal to Improve the Quality of Life
for Retail Customers through a Virtual Environment”**

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Abstract

With the prevalence and integration of the Internet in our lives, online shopping has become a popular and convenient method of obtaining goods. However, there is an important experience that occurs between the customer and the product as well as the customer and the space in the actual, physical store which does not yet occur in the virtual store (Raijas, 2002). Customers' increased use of new technology and the Internet illustrates that an incredible growth potential exists in the electronic grocery store industry. Currently, electronic grocery stores have not taken advantage of key components of traditional grocery retailing practices or information technology (Raijas, 2002). Consequently, electronic grocery stores have not yet provided customers with significant benefits for choosing online grocery shopping as opposed to traditional grocery shopping in the actual store. This finding suggests that a better quality shopping experience could be provided for online grocery store customers through the marriage of the benefits of online grocery shopping with the benefits of traditional grocery shopping. This study presents a proposal of how to combine the benefits of shopping in an actual retail store with the benefits of shopping online.

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