

Self-Checkout Automation Reaches Retail Marijuana

The scope of retail automation is reaching the retail marijuana business. A Massachusetts company, *anna*, has announced the installation of retail self-serve marijuana vending machines in Pueblo, Colorado, where customers can now buy flower, edibles and vape oils. Each machine can hold and dispense over 2000 products. More machines will be in Colorado and Massachusetts later this year.

The vending machines do not eliminate the need for human interaction at the retail locations, largely for compliance with regulatory requirements. A local agent must verify the customer's driver's license and age and obtain any other locally required information. The agent can then unlock a machine, where the customer can then place his or her order. Once the agent approves the order, the customer makes payment, the agent authorizes the machine to dispense the order, and the customer can be on his or her way.

Although retail employees are still required, the machines are designed to reduce customer waiting time and reduce operational costs for the retailers and dispensaries. If successful, the machines may also reduce the number of employees needed for retail operations, while increasing the number of customers each employee can service at a time. The machines will also free up retail employees to spend more time with customers who are not as familiar with the products and need more education. The machines also have the potential to provide more sales to cannabis brands, who otherwise have to compete for limited shelf space.

Partridge Snow & Hahn's [Cannabis Advisory Practice Blog](#) provides updates on marijuana law and policy, covering some of the risks and opportunities in the industry, and makes recommendations regarding best practices. If you are interested in receiving these updates via email, please email us at marketing@psh.com.

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