

Technology helping grocery store customers

By Andrea Chang and Tiffany Hsu, Los Angeles Times

Like many grocery shoppers, Michele Ricketts dreads long checkout lines.

But lately, she's been breezing by the cash register at her neighborhood Ralphs even with the usual crowds at the store.

"In the last month, I have noticed it was faster," said Ricketts, 27, an actress from the Miracle Mile. "I thought I was dreaming."

She wasn't. To shave precious minutes off wait times, Ralphs has been installing technology to measure foot traffic in nearly all of its supermarkets.

Known as QueVision, the system uses hidden infrared cameras with body heat trackers to figure out how many customers are shopping at any given time. Managers use that information to redeploy workers to the cash registers when things get busy.

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