



🕒 07:30

MORNING RUSH

Young workers in a hurry



🕒 10:30

SENIORS BROWSING

Time to explore and plan



🕒 12:30

HEALTHY LUNCH

Quick, fresh and good for me



🕒 17:30

DINNER INSPIRATION

Family time, meal ideas

The Power of Rotation

I once attended a retail conference where the CEO of a major supermarket said he wished he could rotate the front of store four times per day:

1. Once after the morning rush hour when young workers in a hurry are replaced by seniors in no hurry,
2. a second time for lunch when the nearby business workers attempt to eat healthy-on-the-go,
3. a third time in the afternoon when schools let out,
4. and finally in the evening when a wide mix of people come looking for inspiration for the evening meal.

I would summarize this story in one word: Rotation.

Suppliers face constraints on rotation in two directions: Factory/production capacity and marketing/demand creation.

Retailers face constraints on rotation in four directions: Floor/shelf space, storage/warehouse space, labor/task capacity, and marketing/demand creation.

When you compare the list of constraints between supplier & retailer there's just one overlap: marketing/demand creation.

Unsurprisingly, if we were to create an all-time best list of retailers that manage rotation best, the list would be dominated by retailers that create alignment problems for suppliers.

The reason for this is simple: To manage rotation grocers must build their own marketing/shopper education narratives – and leading supplier brands may/may not fit neatly into those narratives.

However, if you asked another question, "which retailer-supplier partnerships have delivered extraordinary results?" you may be surprised to discover that when great suppliers and great retailers align their rotation efforts, consumers reward them with growth in traffic, basket, and repeat purchases.

Aligning on Rotation in 2026

Whether I'm in Germany, Scotland, Belgium, Romania or Poland the same story emerges: Consult our app if you want to see what's coming next week? Gone are the days where supermarkets published leaflets (prospectus). This became particularly evident in this year's back to school campaigns – which were better seen via apps than anywhere else.

I have heard some say that the shift from paper to app does not change the fundamentals of rotation and that the leaflets were just ways to justify promotional spend.

I would ask you to pause if that's how you think and remember the supermarket for seniors in the morning, a third for healthy lunch-seekers, and a fourth for evening meal inspirations.

The one thing an app can do that a leaflet cannot is rotation. It can change the message for each shopper, mission, location and time of day – without physically rebuilding the front of store.

And now for self-reflection: Have you aligned on app rotation so that your demand creation activities reach those four different shopper missions?

One final question: Who does rotation by time-of-day in the app best?

The top of the list is dominated by digital-first companies like Instacart, Amazon, Ocado, Flink, Deliveroo, UberEats, Glovo, Bolt and others.



Morrisons & Instacart Caper Cart Launch

Instacart's Caper Carts – smart trolleys that surface personalised deals, recommendations and recipes while you browse – launched in Morrisons, Preston on 28 July 2026, following a successful test in Austria with ALDI SOUTH (Hofer) in 2024.

[Learn more →](#)



I would be willing to bet that the Instacart test & learns have taught both Aldi and Morrisons a few things about rotation. If you believe that everyone follows the leader, like I do, you will also realize that the gap between the retailers that do it best and the rest is closing quickly now that the age of leaflets is well and truly in the rear-view mirror.

As the shift from summer to autumn grows profound, there's never been a better time than now to ask whether you're fully aligned to manage rotation in the coming rotation cycles → Back-to-School → Autumn → Halloween → Black Friday → Christmas/New Year's.

The team @RetailCities wishes you best of luck (managing rotation) in the week ahead.

About European Retail This Week

European Retail This Week has been running on LinkedIn since 2013. The work summarizes research that I, Ray Gaul, participate in or lead. The stories are shaped by real conversations with Europe's commercial leaders and the questions they are asking. We keep individual identities anonymous and publish the research at a high level.

Ray Gaul

All-Star Archive – Start Here



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