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Kroger hiring to support expanded delivery

The Kroger Co. announced Kroger Delivery now serves customers in south Florida with the opening of a new spoke location in Miami. The 60,000-square-foot spoke facility, in collaboration with the fulfillment center in Groveland, FL, will serve as a last-mile cross-dock location that expands Kroger Delivery's ability to serve more customers. The facility will offer job opportunities with roles in logistics, human resources and transportation to support the expansion in south Florida.

"We're thrilled to introduce customers to Kroger Delivery in south Florida," said Andrea Colby, eCommerce corporate affairs and communications manager. "We offer customers a more convenient option to access fresh food and grocery items. Kroger Delivery is an easy, seamless way to order groceries, have them arrive in refrigerated vans, delivered to your door by professional, uniformed associates all based on your demanding schedule."

This expansion represents an extension of a partnership between Kroger and Ocado, a world leader in technology for grocery e-commerce. In 2018, the companies announced a collaboration to establish a delivery network that combines artificial intelligence, advanced robotics, and automation in a bold new way, bringing first-of-its-kind technology to America. Through the hub-and-spoke delivery network, the organization now serves customers in central Florida, Tampa, Jacksonville and now south Florida, without traditional brick-and-mortar stores.

The delivery network relies on highly automated fulfillment centers. At the hub sites, more than 1,000 bots move around giant 3D grids, orchestrated by proprietary air-traffic control systems in the unlicensed spectrum. The grid, known as The Hive, contains totes with products and ready-to-deliver customer orders. As customers' orders near delivery times, the bots retrieve products from The Hive and are presented at pick stations for items to be sorted for delivery, a process governed by algorithms that ensures items are intelligently packed. For example, fragile items are placed on top, bags are evenly weighted, and each order is optimized to fit into the lowest number of bags, reducing plastic use.

After being packed, groceries are loaded into a refrigerated delivery van, which can store up to 20 orders. Powerful machine learning algorithms optimize delivery routes, considering factors like road conditions and optimal fuel efficiency. Drivers may travel up to 90 miles with orders from facilities to make deliveries.

Kroger currently operates customer fulfillment centers in Monroe, OH, Groveland, FL, Forest Park, GA (Atlanta) and Dallas, with additional customer fulfillment centers slated for California, Frederick, MD, Phoenix, AZ, Pleasant Prairie, WI, Romulus, MI (Detroit), Cleveland, OH, Charlotte, NC, as well as south Florida and the Northeast.