

Kroger Co., the U.S.'s largest grocery retailer, and Ocado, one of the world's largest dedicated online grocery retailers, today broke ground on a new venture - constructing the nation's second customer fulfillment center (CFC), which will serve as a new market for the retailer.

Kroger is investing US\$55 million to build the CFC in Florida. The retailer said it expects the center's opening to generate up to 400 new jobs.

The retailer's chairman and CEO Rodney McMullen added that the project's completion would also "redefine the customer experience".

He elaborated: "There's a substantial demand for Kroger products and services in the state. And we're eager to offer a new and seamless experience through the customer fulfillment center, leveraging advanced robotics technology and creative solutions to provide customers with anything, anytime, anywhere."

Kroger's commented that it is currently constructing its first CFC in Monroe, Ohio. Once finished, it will be an automated warehouse facility with digital and robotic capabilities, it added.

Additionally, it is replicating this CFC model in Groveland. The retailer said his expansion will continue in cities across the U.S. to serve customers, it added.

Two additional sites have been established in [Forest Park, Georgia](#), and the [Mid-Atlantic](#) region.

In total, Kroger intends to open 20 CFCs as it develops into an omnichannel retailer, it said.

"This is another significant milestone for Kroger and Ocado, and a big step toward a nationwide revolution in how Kroger customers experience grocery e-commerce," said Tim Steiner, CEO of Ocado Group.

"Our partnership is also creating exciting opportunities for technologists and engineers to work with Ocado's cutting-edge robotics and automation. As this site develops, we look forward to welcoming new talent to our skilled, dedicated and growing teams across the U.S."

The companies say the new CFC will be operational by 2021.