

The share price of U.K.-based online grocery specialist Ocado has sunk to its lowest level in more than a year after it was forced to cancel thousands of orders following a fire caused by a robot collision at one of its warehouses.

Customers concentrated in London and south-east England have had food deliveries canceled after the fire on Friday at the fulfillment center in Erith, south-east London.

The company uses vast warehouses with [robots criss-crossing a giant chessboard-style grid layout](#) to sort its orders, rather than relying on human pickers. However, three robots crashed on Friday, causing the fire.

The company's share price slumped by 4.6% on Monday to 1,720p, down from 1,805p when stock markets closed on Friday evening. That pushed its valuation down to a level last hit in May 2020, during the UK's first Covid-19 lockdown.

Ocado shares still remain much more expensive than they were before the pandemic, as its expertise in home deliveries became more valuable to feeding the nation. [Ocado sales soared by almost a fifth](#) year on year in the six months to the end of May.

Ocado has partnered with U.S. retailer Kroger to build e-commerce infrastructure in the North American country, including fulfillment centers with its high-tech packing robots.