

# Zero Zone helps a large retailer drive strategic revenue with refrigeration



Crystal Merchandiser® Lineup - Glendale, WI.



***“The board is very focused on success in grocery because it drives traffic and grows top-line sales and profitability in other departments.”***

Refrigeration Vendor Manager

## Business Overview

**Locations:** 1,950

**Employees:** 400,000

**2024 Revenue:** \$107.4 billion

**Partners:** Since 1998

This leading national retailer operates over 1,800 locations across the United States, combining traditional retail merchandise with an extensive grocery offering. Partnered with Zero Zone since 1998, their stores average 130,000 square feet with 40% of floor space dedicated to refrigerated and frozen goods and 60% allocated to general merchandise, including apparel, home goods, electronics, and seasonal items. This dual-purpose layout has helped them capture both weekly grocery shoppers and general retail customers, driving consistent foot traffic throughout their locations. Their stores feature modern refrigeration systems that maintain fresh produce, dairy, frozen foods, and perishables while creating an inviting shopping environment in their retail sections. This hybrid model has proven successful in suburban markets, where their locations serve as one-stop shopping destinations for families seeking both everyday essentials and discretionary purchases.



2RVLC30 Dual Temp Case - Glendale, WI.

## Three Challenges



**Driving Foot Traffic**



**Cost Justification**



**Sustainable Technologies**



## Driving Foot Traffic

Grocery has become table stakes for retailers looking to generate larger basket sizes and increase purchase frequency. For this retailer, grocery discounts have also proven to be a surprise boost for clothes and beauty sales. The strategy of providing daily essentials at a discount has led to an increase in foot traffic and resulting sales of higher margin products like this retailer's private-label apparel and beauty products. Zero Zone provided, sleek, guest-visible refrigeration systems that enhance store aesthetics and give shoppers a reason to stop in more frequently. As one representative shared,

***"Looks take a higher priority in the cases world because it's guest visible and contributes to the store's overall image."***

Zero Zone has played a pivotal role in meeting these aesthetic demands by providing high-quality case designs that align with the retailer's branding and customer experience goals. This attention to design has helped this retailer differentiate itself in a competitive market.

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## Cost Justification

The retailer's decision to partner with Zero Zone hinges on the supplier's commitment to customer service and problem resolution. As noted in discussions,

***“The partnership and willingness to fix issues...is why we continue with Zero Zone.”***

The Zero Zone proactive approach, including go-back projects to rectify issues across all installations, demonstrates the added value they bring beyond initial pricing. According to this retailer,

***“Zero Zone is a lower-cost supplier all in.”***

Store design greatly influences case aesthetics and writes the specification on how much the case needs to hold.

***“The most important factors on cases are always going to be price and then look is equally as important.”***

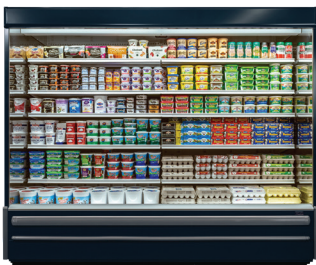
This has solidified their position as a trusted partner. “We like the performance that we receive out of the Zero Zone cases.” This retailer does separate sourcing events for racks and cases in their stores.



Outdoor Parallel Rack - Otsego, MN.

***“There’s a strong partnership. Our teams are very involved in their products and how they work and invested in the equipment and improving it.”***

Refrigeration Vendor Manager



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Outdoor Parallel Rack

***“Zero Zone participation in sourcing feels effortless, in a good way, because they know it/us so well. They meet timelines, submit everything that’s required, know what we are looking for, and know how to do it. I also don’t see errors.”***

## **Sustainable Technologies**

The adoption of CO<sub>2</sub> systems, critical for this retailer’s aggressive carbon neutrality goals, presented challenges like higher costs and system reliability issues. According to insiders,

***“We have taken a strong goal in being the leader in these categories and refrigerants play a big role in scope one emissions.”***

They mentioned, “CO<sub>2</sub> systems have cost us more at this point,” reflecting the premium on this sustainable option. However, Zero Zone willingness to address these challenges collaboratively has been crucial.

***“Zero Zone investment in ensuring these systems improve has kept us engaged. I am confident Zero Zone will be the lowest cost supplier in the future.”***

Refrigeration Vendor Manager



Outdoor Parallel Rack - Dayton, MN.

## Summary of Metrics and Outcomes

The retailer's collaboration with Zero Zone illustrates the importance of balancing cost, sustainability, and customer experience. Key lessons emphasize the value of strong partnerships, proactive problem-solving, and innovative design in achieving long-term goals.

- ✓ **Top-Line Revenue:** Efficiency in refrigeration allows discounting essentials to improve shopper frequency, increase basket size, and sell higher-margin goods.
- ✓ **Customer Experience:** Enhanced refrigeration aesthetics and functionality have contributed to improved customer perception and increased foot traffic.
- ✓ **Cost and Sustainability:** Leader in CO<sub>2</sub> systems despite higher costs, aligning with its carbon neutrality goals. This reflects the prioritization of long-term sustainability over short-term savings.

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