



With online delivery not fully functional and si

Pune/ Bengaluru: Your neighbourhood store just got a new saviour - supply chain firms.

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These firms are helping corner stores find solutions to cater to a demand surge from customers during the ongoing 21-day national lockdown.

GoFrugal, which helps small stores manage their inventory, recently launched an app that corner stores could customise for their customers

"In the last six months, we had about 30 customers (read, corner stores) for this. We've added 100 new customers in the last two weeks, with another 100 being onboarded," said Sridhar Vembu, CEO of GoFrugal,

It has also launched an app for drivers to manage deliveries.

Both these apps are helping stores reach out to customers seamlessly even with their limited operating hours.

Usually, more than 90% of grocery trade happens through traditional channels

With online delivery not fully functional and some amount of panic buying, there has been a spike in customer demand from neighbourhood stores.

ShopX, which helps retailers digitize their operations, said there has been a 70% increase in its app usage over the last two weeks.

"We have a feature that allows the automatic build-up of a shopping cart for retailers using our algorithms, and the retailer can check out with a single click," said Amit Sharma, CEO,

Automating the process of ordering online makes the otherwise challenging task of adding dozens of products to a cart easier

Jumbotail is helping set up small stores within large residential communities and stocking them up with essentials to minimise the need for residents to step out

"There is a large mismatch in demand and the capacity of stores to service this," said Ashish Jhina, co-founder of Jumbotail

The supply chain company is also using its demand data to advise storeowners on what products are in demand, and to stock up accordingly.

Sharma of ShopX said the company was helping rice traders also sell FMCG essentials like home and personal care products because of high customer demand.

Sumit Ghorawat, cofounder of Indore-based B2B supply chain startup ShopKirana, said empowering corner stores to provide essentials at customer doorsteps is the need of the hour since e-commerce firms cannot fulfil the entire demand.

The company has received a licence from the Madhya Pradesh government for online orders and delivery of essential goods in partnership with local stores, where the comer store acts like a dark-store pod for last-mile deliveries.

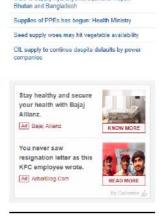
"We have created an app called Zaruri which customers (in Indore) can use to find the nearest store and order online from a customised limited inventory of about 400 items and get it delivered within a 2 km radius. This backend supply chain and technology for the kirana (corner) store is powered by ShopKirana," said Ghorawat

Thirukumaran Nagarajan, CEO of Ninjacart, said since various cities had different permissions and separate rules on how to operate, it was a difficult proposition for retailers

"Even though there is demand, a lot of shops are closed, resulting in wastage. While the supply chain is tech enabled, there are still close to 4,000 people on the ground and we use technology to manage them," he said.

Jhina of Jumbotail said that the company was using technology for better route planning which allows them to do twice as much with the same resources

The company has reported a 2-4 times increase in orders in the last two weeks, said Jhina.



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