


# Robots are taking strides in retail workforces

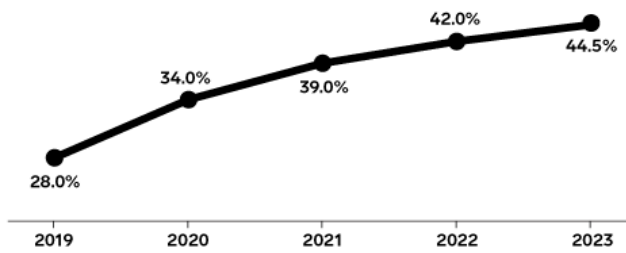
Article



**The forecast:** In 2020, **34.0%** of medium to large US warehouse and fulfillment center operators (with more than \$10 million in annual revenues) had robots deployed in one or more of their locations. That number will rise to **42.0%** in 2022. In-store robots among retailers with more than \$10 million in annual revenues will see similar increases: **31.0%** had robots in-store in 2020, and **36.5%** will have them in 2022.

## US Warehouse and Fulfillment Center Robots, 2019-2023

% of warehouse and fulfillment center operators



Note: autonomous units and systems operating in locations where companies' goods are stored, including warehouses, distribution centers, and fulfillment centers, by an operator with more than \$10 million in annual revenues  
Source: eMarketer, July 2021

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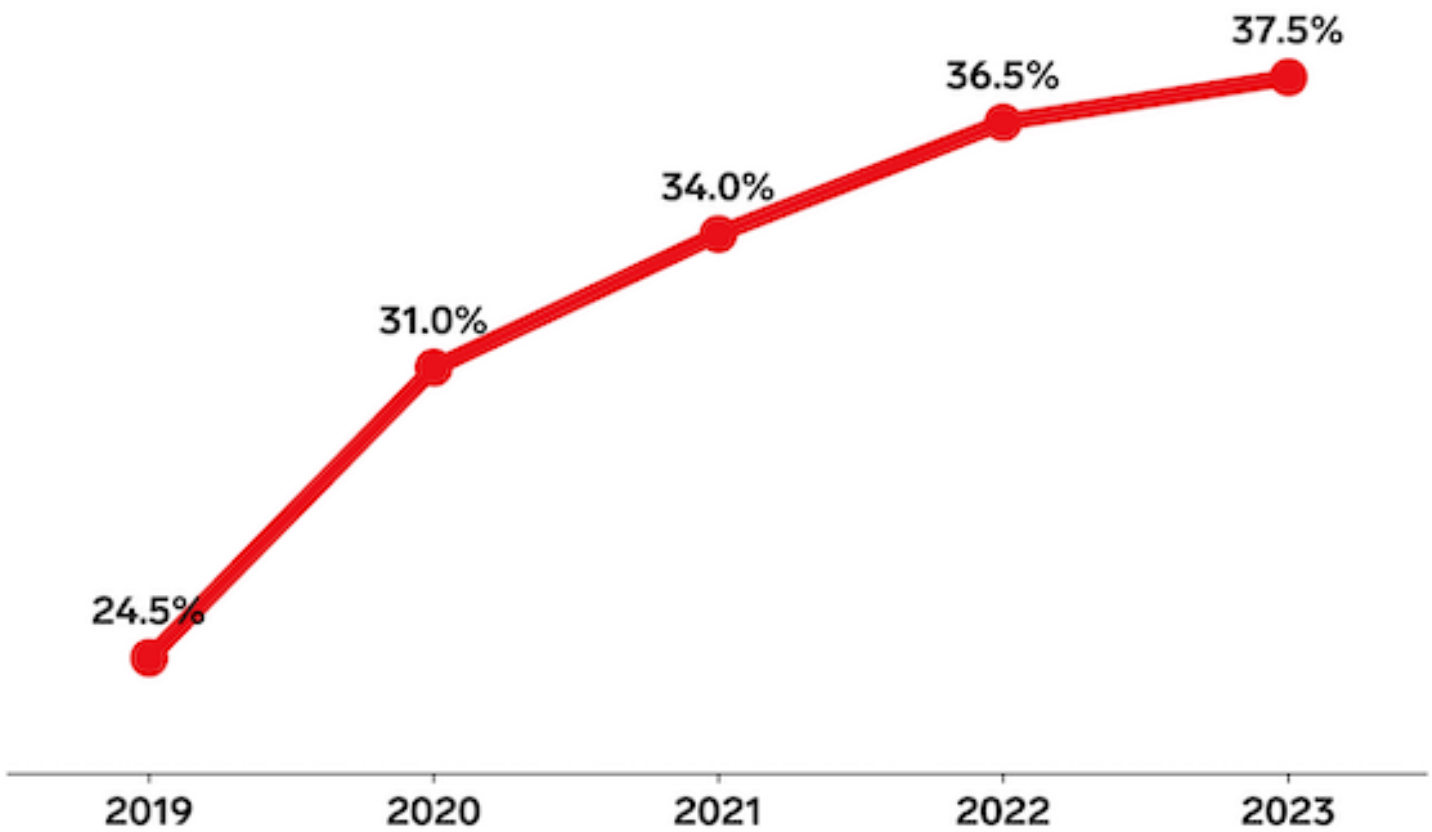
eMarketer | InsiderIntelligence.com

### Dive deeper:

- Robots help retail companies reduce their labor requirements while also performing tasks without needing to bring employees and customers into close proximity.
- Robots in retail stores perform a range of functions, including cleaning, stocking, inventory monitoring and management, and product transport.
- These systems are limited to larger retail operators with the capital and resources to invest in these projects, which have require high upfront investment to realize larger long-term gains.

# In-Store Retail Robots

US, 2019-2023, % of retailers



*Note: Autonomous units within a retail location operated by a retailer with more than \$10 million in annual revenues. Robots are defined by the International Organization for Standardization as an actuated mechanism programmable in two or more axes with a degree of autonomy moving within its environment, to perform intended tasks; includes units to perform tasks such as inventory monitoring, cleaning, stocking, and in-store product transportation.*

*Source: eMarketer, July 2021*

*Methodology: Estimates are based on the analysis of survey and traffic data from research firms and regulatory agencies, sales projections, historical trends, company-specific data, and demographic and socioeconomic factors.*

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**Looking ahead:** Penetration rate growth for robots in both warehouse and in-store roles increased significantly between 2019 and 2020 but will taper off some in years to come. By

2023 we project **44.5%** of warehouse fulfillment operators measured will have robots deployed to locations, and **37.5%** of retailers measured will have robots working in-store.