

CASE STUDY

How RAI Saved 3 Hours Per Day Per Store Manager

Automating grocery replenishment for 6,000+ SKUs with buffers.ai, reducing stockouts by 5% and achieving 95% process optimization.

95%

Process Optimization

3 hrs

Saved Per Store Manager Daily

~5%

Stockout Reduction

OVERVIEW

From Manual to Automated

RAI is a grocery retailer managing 6,000–7,000 SKUs across its stores. Previously, inventory replenishment relied heavily on manual processes, making ordering time-consuming and error-prone.

After implementing buffers.ai, RAI automated its replenishment workflow, improving inventory accuracy, reducing stockouts, and saving significant time for store managers. Today, RAI has achieved ~95% optimization of its replenishment process.

THE CHALLENGE

Manual Replenishment at Scale Was Unsustainable

Before buffers.ai, replenishment was largely manual and difficult to manage at scale.

- **Manual Ordering:** Store managers spent 3–4 hours per day preparing purchase orders manually.
- **High Complexity:** Managing thousands of SKUs required constant manual calculations and frequent adjustments.
- **Planning Errors:** Manual processes increased the risk of mistakes in orders and stock planning.
- **Vendor Communication:** Differences in product naming, packaging, and weight-based items caused confusion.

- **Limited ERP:** The existing ERP system could not support automated replenishment workflows.

8–10% Stockout Rate — Negatively affecting sales and customer satisfaction across all stores.**IMPLEMENTATION**

Seamless Integration with Existing Systems

buffers.ai was integrated into RAI's existing system using FTP-based data exchange with their ERP. The Buffers team worked closely with RAI's internal developers to configure the system and adapt it to their operational processes.

- Custom configuration for RAI's replenishment workflows
- Support for fractional units and weight-based products
- Localization of product naming for vendor communication
- Handling of unit inconsistencies across suppliers
- Ongoing technical support from the buffers.ai team

OPERATIONAL IMPACT

The Transformation in Numbers

Before buffers.ai	After buffers.ai
• 3–4 hours per day preparing orders • Manual calculations for thousands of SKUs • High risk of planning errors • Inefficient use of manager time	• Order prep takes 20–30 minutes • 2–3 hours saved per manager per day • Automated replenishment recommendations • Faster, more accurate ordering

"buffers.ai also helps managers detect and resolve errors much faster, significantly improving planning accuracy. This allows managers to spend more time on store operations, merchandising, and customer experience."

SUPPLY CHAIN IMPROVEMENTS

Smarter Inventory, Stronger Operations

- Reduced Stockouts:** Stockout rates decreased from 8–10% to ~4.5%, directly improving sales.
- Better Inventory Balance:** Reduced overstock and excess inventory, minimizing waste.
- Improved Supplier Communication:** Standardized product naming and unit handling across vendors.
- Enhanced Visibility:** Built-in analytics identify slow-moving products, end-of-life items, and assortment opportunities.

MEASURABLE RESULTS

2–3 hrs Saved per manager daily	~5% Reduction in stockouts	95% Replenishment optimization	1–2 mo Expected full ROI
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Conclusion

buffers.ai is Now a Core Part of RAI’s Retail Operations

By implementing buffers.ai, RAI transformed its replenishment process from manual and error-prone to automated and data-driven — achieving major time savings, improved inventory accuracy, reduced stockouts and waste, and faster, more reliable decisions.