



**MISSION:
FRESHNESS**

MEET THE RETAILERS

As the grocery industry changes, regional chains like Ray's Apple Market in Kansas and Rob ert Fresh Market in Louisiana tackle new challenges by adjusting their merchandising strategies. The new focus is freshness, something that brick-and-mortar retail stores are particularly equipped to deliver, and each partnered with Zero Zone to accomplish this mission.



Ray's Apple Market, Kansas



Mike Floersch, Owner

In 2017, Ray's Apple Market transitioned to a new Zero Zone refrigeration system. Founded on excellent customer service, the rural grocery store has grown from a single-aisle store, through four expansions, and into a six-location chain over the past 50 years. Owner Mike Floersch understands a key to success is winning the loyalty of customers, and he says Zero Zone earned his trust.



Rob ert Fresh Market, Louisiana



Marc Rob ert III, General Manager

In 2018, Rob ert Fresh Market opened their sixth location, marking a milestone as they overcame their losses from Hurricane Katrina. General Manager Marc Rob ert III chose Zero Zone for his refrigeration support. "I worked with many vendors to get this store open, whether it was equipment vendors, d cor vendors, lighting, and so on. I found that Zero Zone was an excellent vendor to work with."



Reveal Merchandiser® at Robért Fresh Market

FRESH PRODUCE IN THE REVEAL MERCHANDISER®

Both Robért Fresh Market and Ray's Apple Market focus on fresh produce. After the hurricane, Robért Fresh Market rebranded their identity around serving local, organic, high-quality produce, fresh meat, and prepared foods. Likewise, Ray's Apple Market emphasizes freshness. As Owner Mike Floersch puts it, "You can buy groceries about anywhere today, but if we have the freshest meat, freshest produce, people will shop with [us]."

Both stores selected the Reveal Merchandiser for displaying produce, citing the natural appeal of fresh fruits and vegetables being enhanced in open cases. General Manager Marc Robért III explains that "so much of produce is about the impulse, the visual, the pop of the colors, the appearance, and the appeal of the freshness." When entering the newest Robért Fresh Market store, the eye-catching Reveal Merchandiser is the first thing you see. "We have a very high [volume] produce distribution, and we wanted to make that our big, impactful showstopper when you walk through the door." The Reveal Merchandiser suits itself well as a fresh produce case.

NO REASON TO SWEAT WITH REACH-IN CASES

Some retailers still prefer open cases for certain applications because they believe doors create a barrier between products and shoppers. Mike Floersch of Ray's Apple Market even admitted, "I was a little nervous about putting things behind doors, but I'm so glad I have."

Marc Robért III and Mike Floersch chose reach-in cases for many refrigerated products and frozen food. While some people may claim doors obstruct the shopper's ability to see product, Zero Zone cases actually provide a wide-open view of product by keeping door rails and mullions narrow on the Zero Zone CoolView™ doors. Robért says the reach-in cases give his frozen food department a clean presentation, and the combination of reach-in and open cases from Zero Zone "brought the décor and the feel of the whole store together."

Zero Zone reach-in cases are also advantageous for stores in humid regions, such as Rob ert Fresh Market in New Orleans. To prevent condensation from forming, Zero Zone cases include heaters in the doors, door rails, mullions, and sills. Rob ert has been especially pleased with the Highlight Merchandiser[®] in his frozen food department. “With our high humidity environment, I have found that [Zero Zone] has been a perfect match and that we’ve had zero issues with sweating and humidity issues coming onto our product. That’s always a major plus when we’re talking [about the] frozen food department.”

When asked about displaying products in reach-in cases, Rob ert confidently stated, “I feel that our customers have received it very well and that they actually buy better for the dairy items out of the doors than they do out of an open case.” Zero Zone offers both reach-in and open cases to give retailers choices that fit their merchandising style and sales objectives.



Highlight Merchandiser[®] at Ray’s Apple Market



Highlight Merchandiser[®] at Rob ert Fresh Market

FRESH MEAT MERCHANDISING STRATEGIES

In addition to produce, General Manager Marc Rob ert III uses the Reveal Merchandiser for their fresh meat displays. “That bright red meat color really pops, and it’s all about ‘eye appeal is buy appeal,’” Rob ert explained. “I feel that the Reveal case does a better job at showing the fresh meat program.” He also emphasized the accessibility of fresh meat in open cases.

While Rob ert Fresh Market finds success in merchandising meat in open cases, Mike Floersch of Ray’s Apple Market has found success in merchandising meat in reach-in cases. “Our product is lasting longer. We don’t see the shrink. The product behind the doors is phenomenal how it does keep longer.” The clean appearance of reach-in cases makes the meat appear fresh, Floersch also mentioned. Shrink can be reduced by up to 50% by switching to Zero Zone reach-in cases. While their fresh meat strategies are different, each found that Zero Zone offered a solution that matched their individual merchandising styles.



Reveal Merchandiser[®] at Rob ert Fresh Market



Reveal Merchandiser® and Crystal Merchandiser® at Ray's Apple Market

CHILLBRITE™: MAKING PRODUCT POP

Zero Zone cases exhibit product particularly well because of the Zero Zone ChillBrite LED lighting. When describing ChillBrite, the word “pop” is always on the tip of the tongue. “The colors pop very well. The LED lights within the case really help bring [product] to life,” said Marc Rob ert III.

“As the product is bought, you get enough lighting that it still pops even if it’s back [on the shelf],” Mike Floersch said. “The ChillBrite lighting has been phenomenal.” He also added that LED lights emit less heat and energy into the case than old fluorescent bulbs, which means less heat that the refrigeration system needs to move out of the display cases.

AN EFFICIENT SYSTEM & A COMPLETE SOLUTION

In addition to display cases, Rob ert and Floersch chose Zero Zone for refrigeration systems. Rob ert Fresh Market has turned to Zero Zone for years, and Ray’s Apple Market transitioned to a Zero Zone system in 2017.

Owner Mike Floersch says only good things about the transition. “We had [several] single compressor units running all of our different cases, and now we’re on two Zero Zone rack systems. As the months went along, we could see our kilowatts lowering. I’m thinking we’re going to be looking at about a 20,000 kilowatt drop, which is about 25 percent drop in energy usage.” These dramatic energy savings allow Ray’s Apple Market to maximize profits and pass savings on to their shoppers.



Parallel System at Ray's Apple Market

Ray's Apple Market also changed from multiple refrigerants—a different one for each compressor—to a single refrigerant across the store. Floersch recalled some of their old refrigerants: "We had some R-22 yet. We got rid of that, which had gotten expensive. I think we had a unit or two that was R-12!" Floersch chose R-448A, a high-glide HFO refrigerant, and he is pleased after the installation. "The copper tubing was smaller. We had less cost in installing the equipment. We ran all new lines. When you compared the lines we took out to what we put in, it was almost like, 'Really? Is this going to work?' And it's been great." He also praised everybody—refrigeration contractors, electrical technicians, and the Zero Zone sales representative—for working together to achieve a smooth transition.



Parallel System at Robért Fresh Market

Not only does a Zero Zone rack system perform better than multiple smaller units, the system achieves its full potential when combined with the Zero Zone display cases, particularly the Crystal Merchandiser®, which can reduce energy consumption by up to 84%. “There is a bottom line cost savings that the owners of the grocery store see, but there is also an appreciation for energy savings [from] our customers,” Robért explained thoughtfully. “I’ve been very happy with my choice to go with the Crystal Merchandiser doors. We’ve been very happy with the energy efficiency.”



Crystal Merchandiser® at Robért Fresh Market

RESPONSIVENESS & PARTNERSHIP

While great cases and systems drew Marc Robért III and Mike Floersch to Zero Zone in the first place, they stayed because of the excellent responsiveness and personalized service that only Zero Zone provides. Both have had equally positive experiences with Zero Zone. “I found that Zero Zone was an excellent vendor to work with,” Robért said. “When I did have issues or changes or adjustments, they were quick to work with me, they were very responsive, and they didn’t try to nickel-and-dime me for every little change that I had to make.” Robért confirms that as Robért Fresh Market continues to grow, he will choose Zero Zone.

Floersch disclosed that this level of responsiveness is “not what I’m used to” with other vendors. Floersch praised his Zero Zone sales representative for attending each installation—even arriving before Floersch—to make sure everything happened as planned. He also praised Zero Zone for fulfilling their promises. “It’s exactly what they told me. They told me my energy costs would go down, and they did. They’re our preferred supplier from now on.” Zero Zone treats Mike Floersch the way he wants to be treated. “We have a partnership with our customers. We want our customers to trust us. That’s how I feel about Zero Zone: they’re a partner. They trust me, and I trust them. I don’t have to buy equipment from Zero Zone. But when I get the kind of response they give me, then I’m sold.”



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