

WHY CLICK & COLLECT QUEUE PROBLEMS **BREAK AT SCALE**

Click & collect promises speed and convenience. But at scale, it often delivers the opposite. Long queues. Delays. Frustrated customers.



Because most systems are designed for order processing—not customer flow. At scale, click & collect doesn't fail digitally. It fails physically.



WHAT ARE CLICK & COLLECT QUEUE PROBLEMS?

Click & collect queue problems occur when customers must wait to collect pre-ordered items due to operational bottlenecks.

THEY TYPICALLY APPEAR IN:	1. HIGH ORDER VOLUME	2. PEAK TIME SURGES	3. LIMITED COLLECTION CAPACITY	4. MANUAL PROCESSES	5. PHYSICAL QUEUES FORM	THE RESULT:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Retail stores  Stadium concessions  Event merchandise areas  Transport hubs  Parcel collection points 	 <p>More orders than collection points or staff can handle.</p>	  <p>Everyone arrives at the same time (before events, after work, weekends).</p>	 <p>Too few staff, desks, or systems to process collections quickly.</p>	 <p>Order lookups, verifications, and handoffs slow everything down.</p>	 <p>Lines build. Space becomes congested. Wait times increase.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Long waiting times  Congestion in-store or on-site  Reduced efficiency  Poor customer experience



CLICK & COLLECT SHOULD BE FAST. BUT AT SCALE, POOR FLOW CREATES LONG QUEUES.



THE SOLUTION ISN'T MORE ORDERS. IT'S BETTER SYSTEMS FOR CUSTOMER FLOW.



Great online. Broken in real life.

At scale, click & collect doesn't fail digitally. It fails physically.

1 DEMAND IS SYNCHRONIZED, NOT DISTRIBUTED

Customers often collect orders:

- Before events
- During peak retail hours
- At lunch breaks or after work

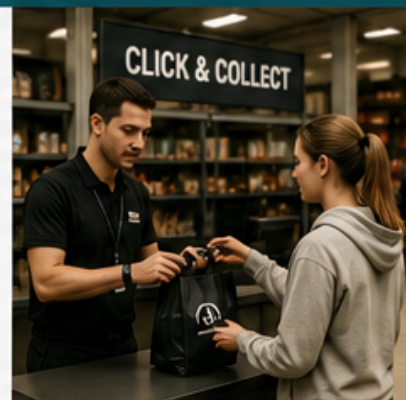


This creates **DEMAND SPIKES**, not steady flow.

2 COLLECTION IS STILL A MANUAL PROCESS

Even with digital ordering, collection requires:

- Staff locating items
- Verifying orders
- Handing over goods



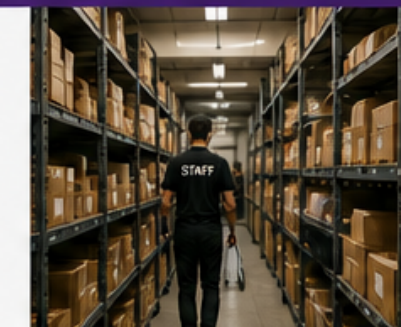
This creates a **LINEAR PROCESS**:
One staff member = one order at a time



3 RETRIEVAL TIME SLOWS EVERYTHING DOWN

Orders are often:

- Stored in backrooms
- Organised inefficiently
- Difficult to locate quickly



This leads to:

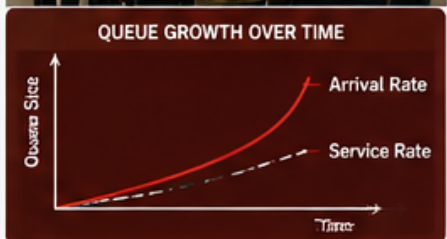
- Delays per customer
- Queue buildup
- Reduced throughput

RETRIEVAL TIME IMPACT	
■	+ 30 sec per order
■	= 30 min delay per 60 orders
■	= 2.5 hours lost per 300 orders

4 QUEUE GROWTH IS EXPONENTIAL

When arrival rate exceeds service rate:

- Queues grow rapidly
- Wait times increase disproportionately
- Customer frustration escalates



Even small delays per transaction create large-scale **CONGESTION**.

5 SPACE IS NOT DESIGNED FOR COLLECTION FLOW

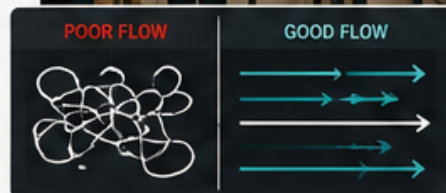
Most environments:

- Lack dedicated collection zones
- Share space with retail or entry areas
- Cannot handle large volumes of waiting customers



This leads to:

- Congestion
- Poor layout flow
- Operational disruption



6 STAFF BECOME THE BOTTLENECK

As queues grow:

- Staff are overwhelmed
- Retrieval speed decreases
- Errors increase



This creates a **NEGATIVE FEEDBACK LOOP**:



CLICK & COLLECT BREAKS AT SCALE BECAUSE SYSTEMS ARE BUILT FOR ORDERS, NOT FOR PEOPLE FLOW.



THE GOAL: DESIGN COLLECTION EXPERIENCES THAT SCALE PEOPLE, NOT JUST ORDERS.

HIDDEN IMPACT OF CLICK & COLLECT QUEUES

What starts as a small delay can create big operational and business problems.

 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE BREAKDOWN	 REVENUE LOSS	 OPERATIONAL INEFFICIENCY	 SAFETY & CONGESTION RISK
			
<p>Customers expect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Fast pickup ✓ Frictionless service <p>Instead, they experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Waiting ✗ Confusion ✗ Delays 	<p>Queues discourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Additional purchases ✗ Upsells ✗ Repeat visits 	<p>Staff spend time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🕒 Managing queues 🕒 Searching for orders 🕒 Handling complaints 	<p>Large queues create:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⚠️ High-density gathering areas ⚠️ Blocked walkways ⚠️ Disrupted flow
<p>This leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🌟 Negative reviews 📉 Reduced repeat usage <p> Poor experiences today mean lost customers tomorrow.</p>	<p>In event environments, delays reduce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🕒 Time spent inside 🛍️ Total spend per visitor <p> Every minute of delay is revenue left on the table.</p>	<p> This reduces productivity and increases cost.</p>	<p>In venues and events, this becomes a crowd management issue.</p> <p> More congestion. Higher risk. Greater liability.</p>

 **CLICK & COLLECT QUEUES DON'T JUST AFFECT OPERATIONS—THEY IMPACT CUSTOMERS, REVENUE, COST, AND SAFETY.**

 **THE SOLUTION ISN'T MORE STAFF. IT'S SYSTEMS THAT REMOVE QUEUES BEFORE THEY FORM.**

Most solutions treat symptoms, not the system.
At scale, they add cost without solving queues.

1 ADD MORE STAFF

- Increases cost
- Limited improvement in throughput



 HIGHER COST


 LIMITED IMPACT

2 CREATE BIGGER COLLECTION AREAS

- Space constraints
- Does not speed up service



 MORE SPACE REQUIRED

 NO IMPROVEMENT IN SPEED

3 IMPROVE BACKROOM ORGANISATION

- Marginal gains
- Still manual



 MARGINAL GAINS

 STILL MANUAL

4 STAGGER COLLECTION TIMES

- Difficult to enforce
- Limited behavioural impact



 HARD TO ENFORCE

 LIMITED IMPACT

 TRADITIONAL FIXES ADD COST, COMPLEXITY AND SPACE— BUT QUEUES KEEP GROWING.

THE SCALABLE SOLUTION: SELF-SERVICE COLLECTION SYSTEMS

To eliminate queues, collection must become:



AUTOMATED

Technology handles the process.



PARALLEL

Many customers served at the same time.



SELF-SERVICE

Customers collect independently.

HOW IT WORKS



ORDER PLACED
Customer places order online.



NOTIFICATION
Customer receives ready-to-collect notification.



SELF-SERVICE COLLECTION
Customer collects from secure locker or automated collection point.



COMPLETE
No queues. No waiting. Happy customer.

THE RESULT: NO QUEUES. HIGHER THROUGHPUT. HAPPIER CUSTOMERS.



Faster service
More orders collected per hour



Lower cost
Less staff dependency



Better experience
Convenient, fast and reliable



More sales
More time in-store, more spending



Safer environments
Less congestion, better flow



THE GOAL: REMOVE FRICTION. ELIMINATE QUEUES. SCALE WITHOUT LIMITS.

The smarter way to collect. No queues. No delays. Just results.

SMART LOCKERS TRANSFORM CLICK & COLLECT

Smart lockers eliminate queues and bottlenecks by automating collection and enabling instant, self-service pickup at scale.



HOW VPOD SMART LOCKER SYSTEMS WORK



ORDER PLACED
Customer places an order online.




ORDER RECEIVED
Item is prepared and placed in a smart locker.



CUSTOMER NOTIFIED
Customer receives a unique code or QR for collection.



SELF-SERVICE PICKUP
Customer collects their order anytime using the locker.

 **FAST. SECURE. CONTACTLESS. 24/7.**

TRADITIONAL COLLECTION: MANUAL & SLOW



Queues form



Staff find orders



Verify order



Hand over item



Delays and frustration



SMART LOCKER COLLECTION: FAST & SCALABLE



Order placed



Stored in locker



Customer notified



Self-service pickup



No queues. No delays.

SMART LOCKERS DELIVER REAL ADVANTAGES



INSTANT SELF-SERVICE PICKUP
Customers retrieve orders without staff involvement.



PARALLEL PROCESSING
Multiple customers collect simultaneously.



QUEUE ELIMINATION
No single service point becomes a bottleneck.



SECURE ACCESS CONTROL
Unique codes or digital authentication ensure accuracy.



STRUCTURED STORAGE
Items are organised for fast retrieval and reduced handling time.



REAL OPERATIONAL IMPACT

With automated collection systems:



Queue times are eliminated



Collection speed increases dramatically



Staff requirements decrease



Customer satisfaction improves



Throughput scales without added cost



See: </solutions/parcel-lockers/>



Compare: </manual-security-handling-vs-automated-storage-systems/>



Explore: </integrations/>





THE BOTTOM LINE

Click & collect doesn't fail because of demand. It fails because of how collection is handled.

At scale:

 Demand spikes

 Manual processes slow down

 Queues grow exponentially



The solution is not to manage queues better. It's to remove them entirely.



Vpod Smart Locker Collection Systems

Remove the bottleneck. Improve the experience. Scale without limits.



LESS WAITING. MORE FLOW. BETTER OUTCOMES.
That's the power of smart collection.