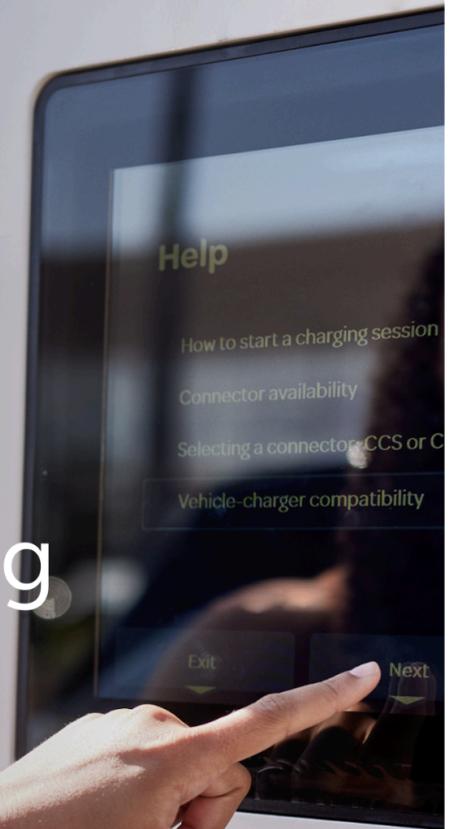


 Electric Era

# Supercharging Retail Loyalty: How EV Charging is Changing Customer Engagement

Alex Agne, Electric Era

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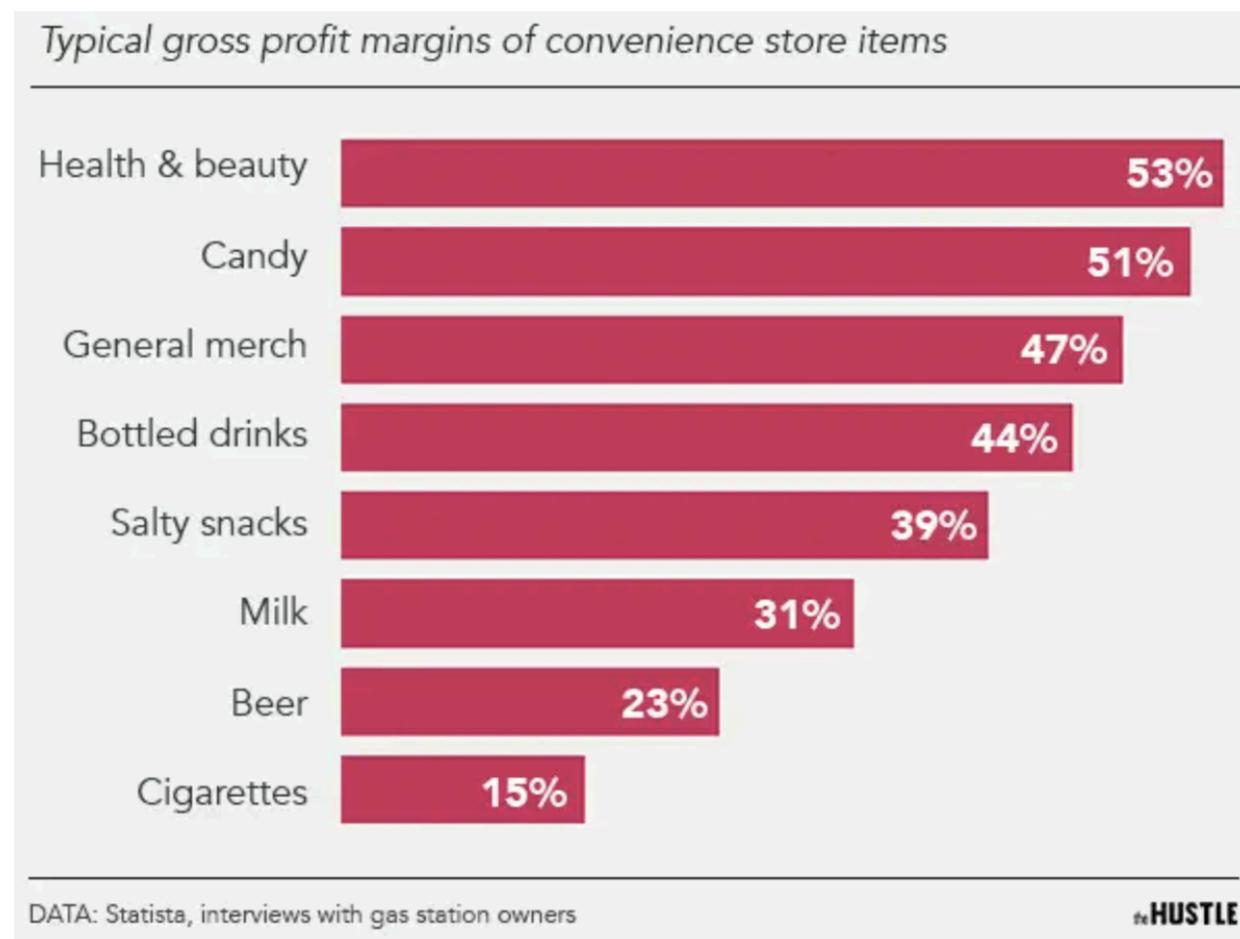


# Supercharging Retail Loyalty: How EV Charging is Changing Customer Engagement

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## 01 Overview

The electric vehicle (EV) revolution is transforming the future of transportation, physical infrastructure, real estate, as well as the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders up and down the value chain. It also signals a large shift for retailers that rely heavily on purchases from drivers. Fuel retailers' highest margin revenue often stems from in-store purchases rather than fuel sales, and their learnings over decades of operation are applicable to many other businesses. What matters is both attracting traffic to their locations and converting that traffic into in-store customers. Here's a look at the common margin breakdown of in-store items at a convenience store, where 80% of current gasoline sales occur in the US:

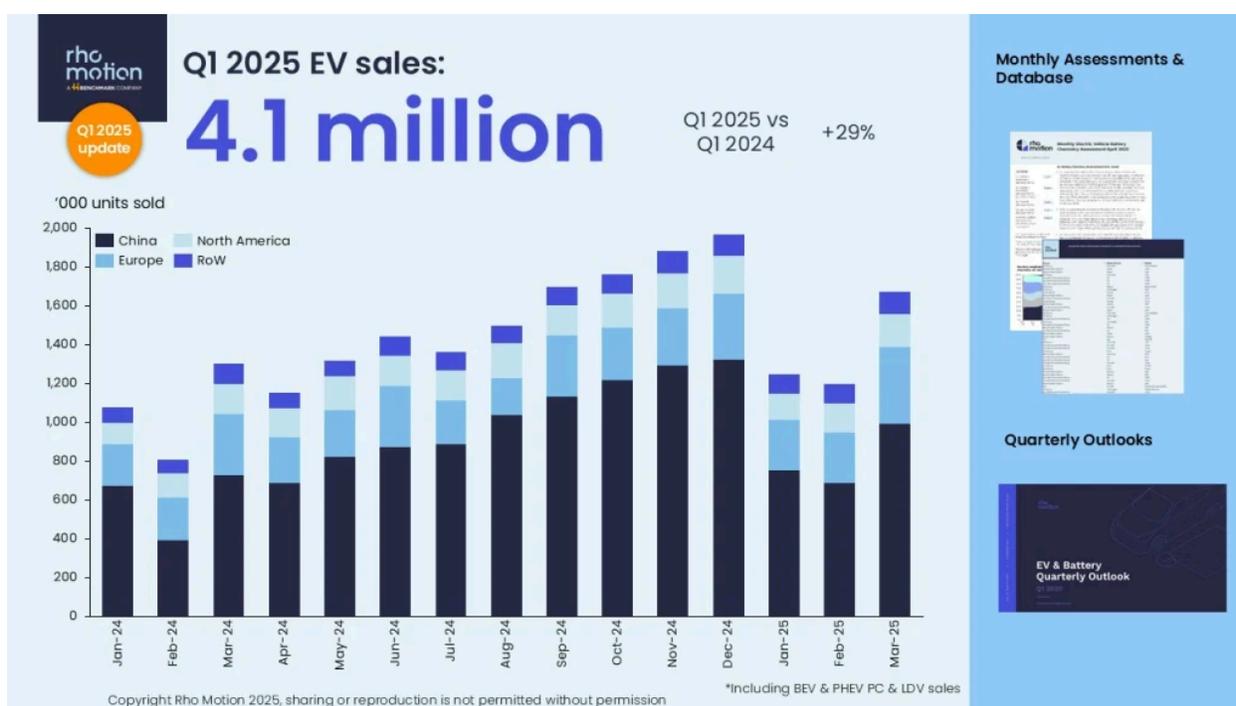


Source link: <https://thehustle.co/why-most-gas-stations-dont-make-money-from-selling-gas>



As EV adoption accelerates, forward-thinking retailers have a unique opportunity to drive increased foot traffic, grow customer loyalty, and create new revenue streams by integrating EV charging solutions into their existing loyalty program infrastructure. This white paper explores how enterprise retailers can leverage EV charging, specifically DC Fast Charging (DCFC), to increase engagement, build stronger customer relationships, and stay ahead of the curve in a rapidly evolving market.

Per Rho Motion Data, in Q1 2025, global EV sales grew 29% year-over-year, driven in large part by China and Europe, but including gains in the U.S. as well. Separate data from Cox Automotive pegged US Q1 2025 year-over-year EV sales growth at 10%+. What does this mean? We'll continue to need a lot more EV charging infrastructure, and there'll be many opportunities for forward-thinking businesses to meet that demand.



## EV Charging Landscape: A New Era for Retail

The growth of the EV market presents both challenges and opportunities for retailers. EV drivers expect convenient and reliable charging solutions. Retailers who can provide this service at high reliability integrated into their existing brand and loyalty programs can differentiate themselves from both their competitors and from other retailers offering EV charging.

This white paper serves to share the impact that EV charging can drive to core metrics for a wide range of retailers. It also aims to simplify the decision-making process for retailers evaluating available EV charging options, offering actionable insights and step-by-step guides to tackle the key considerations.



## 02 Why EV Charging Matters for Retailers

### Why EV Charging Matters for Retailers

Integrating DCFC into parking lots can offer many benefits to retailers:

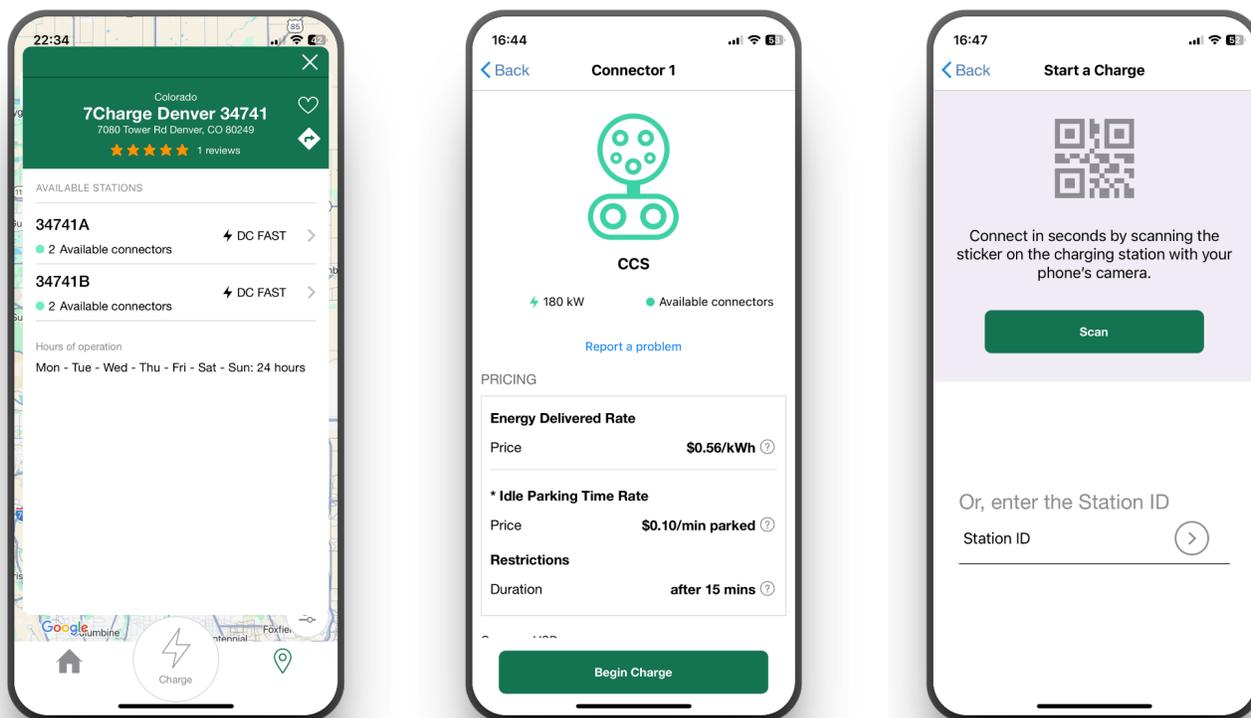
- **Increased Foot Traffic and Dwell Time:** EV drivers typically dwell on site for 15-45 minutes. This provides a valuable opportunity to drive in-store traffic and increase sales through longer time inside, while still meeting customers' needs for a relatively fast recharge. Here are some average approximate dwell times across industries:
  - Grocery: 30-45 minutes
  - Fast Casual Restaurant: 20-40 minutes
  - Quick Service Restaurant: 10-20 minutes
  - General Retail: 20-40 minutes
  - C-Store/Gas Station: 5-10 minutes
- **Why Level 3 DC Fast Charging Aligns Best with Retailers:** DCFC (Level 3) charging sessions typically take 15–45 minutes to replenish 80% battery capacity for most EVs, aligning well with existing retail dwell times. This overlap enables retailers to match natural customer behavior with charging speed, enhancing convenience and increasing the likelihood of in-store visits. [Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Alternative Fuels Data Center Charging Basics](#)
- **Enhanced Customer Loyalty:** EV drivers actively seek out locations that offer charging combined with amenities like food, drinks, restrooms, and shopping. By meeting this demand, retailers can attract and retain a loyal customer base. Features such as loyalty points linked to charging can further enhance the shopping experience and foster a stronger brand connection.
- **New Revenue Streams:** Retailers can unlock new revenue streams by selling electricity to EV drivers. Additionally, modern EV chargers with digital displays offer opportunities for advertising and promotions, creating additional revenue potential.
- **Data-Driven Insights:** EV charging stations can provide valuable insights to better shape the customer experience to their known preferences, previous purchases, and specific demographics. This data can be used to personalize marketing efforts, optimize operations, and improve the overall delivery of products and services to EV customers.
- **Mandates:** many states, including [CA](#), [WA](#), [CO](#), [NY](#), and [MA](#) have passed building codes and regulations that mandate a certain number of parking stalls be EV charging ready for new retail construction projects. Retailers and landlords must comply with these requirements, so the ability to integrate EV charging with your brand ecosystem and loyalty programs can turn a mandate into a positive opportunity to test new channels for customer acquisition and retention.



### 03 Real World Examples: EV Charging Loyalty Programs

Let's take a look at two different ways that retailers have built out apps and integrated their loyalty programs for their EV charging business.

#### 7-11

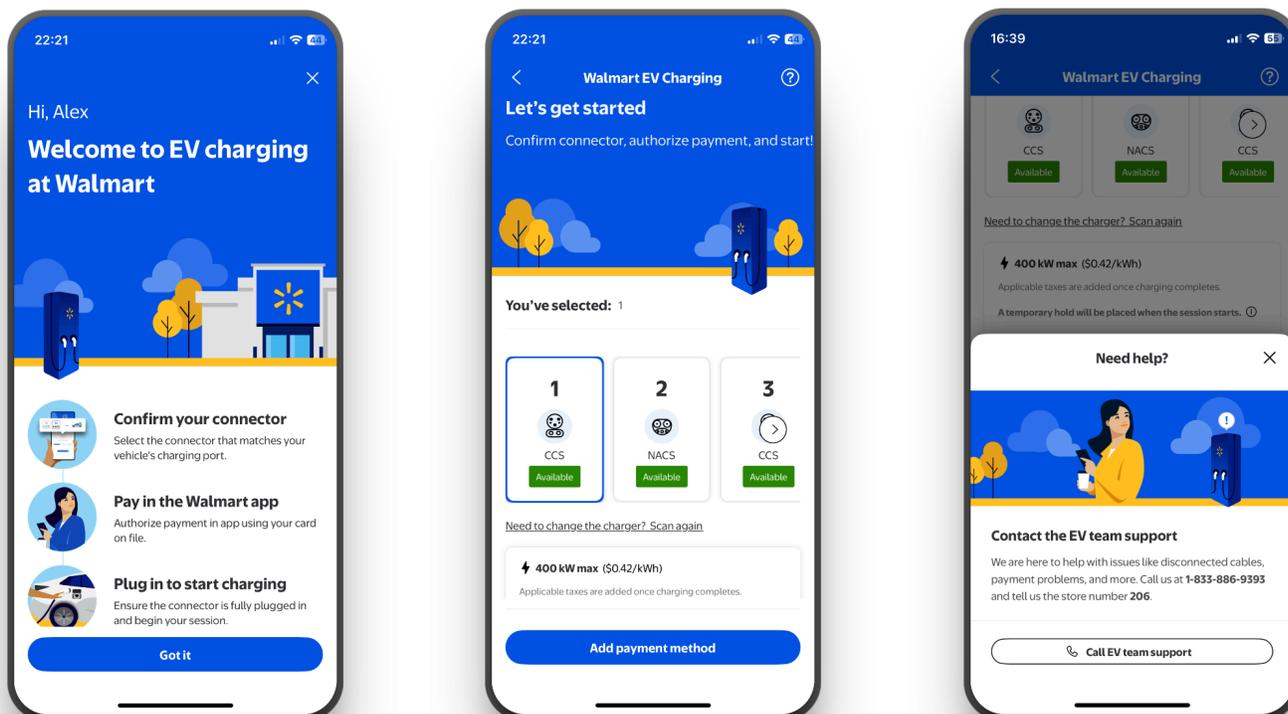


7-11 has a dedicated app, 7Charge for their EV charging customers. They've chosen to create a separate experience so they can focus exclusively on EV driving customer needs. You can integrate your existing 7Rewards details into the app, choose favorite stations, see available connector status, and retrieve data and information on your previous charging sessions.

You can also see customer reviews of the station, see hours of operation, and use mapping functionality to find other 7-11 locations to charge your vehicle. Payment for the charging session happens inside the app once you click into the specific connector and begin charging. You can also initiate a charging session by scanning the QR code on the charger or entering the station ID listed on the charging unit itself.



## Walmart



Walmart has chosen to integrate EV charging into their existing Walmart app. Walmart has also chosen to directly own EV charging hardware, separate from their existing site host arrangements with other EV charging companies like Electrify America. If you search “EV Charging” in the Walmart app search bar you’re taken to a dedicated section where you can find charging locations nearby, choose available connectors, and pay to start charging.

Payments and charging session initiation is done via the Walmart app. They likely chose this to bring EV drivers into the Walmart app ecosystem and build on an already existing platform. They have also added helpful guides on how to start a charging session, as well as an “EV team support” phone number to help anyone struggling to charge.

### Choosing the Right Partner

Retailers need a charging partner that can navigate the rapidly changing landscape and unlock the full potential of this transformative technology. We provide comprehensive solutions that integrate seamlessly with your existing ecosystem, enabling you to:

- **Attract High-Value Customers:** EV drivers represent a valuable customer segment with higher than average discretionary income. By offering EV charging, retailers can attract these customers and by integrating loyalty programs into the EV charging experience



retailers can cement customer habits around refueling at your locations. EV drivers have strongly attached to Electric Era's hardware for its ease of use (no apps to download, easy to pay and charge) and for its high uptime and reliability performance.

- **Reduce Customer Acquisition Costs:** DCFC can be a powerful tool for attracting new customers and driving foot traffic, ultimately lowering customer acquisition costs. EV drivers use mapping apps like Google Maps and Apple Maps, as well as EV charging-specific apps like Plugshare and Chargeway, to discover EV charging stations. Expanding the surface area where customers can discover your stores is key to reducing the overall cost of acquiring and retaining customers.
- **Seamlessly Integrate with Your Technology Stack:** Electric Era makes it easy to integrate your existing loyalty programs, POS systems, and other retail technologies with our hardware, creating a unified and efficient ecosystem. We have built our software from the ground up to easily integrate with backend retailer systems via API, and understand that value is only realized if the information can seamlessly integrate into existing business processes.
- **Deliver Unique Charging Experiences:** The EV charging journey is distinct from refueling for gasoline cars, and EV drivers have unique needs and behaviors. Electric Era's solutions are designed to cater to these specific requirements, creating positive and engaging experiences that foster loyalty. EV drivers are looking for businesses where they can spend time during their 15-45 minute recharging session. Providing food, drinks, restrooms, and a pleasant customer experience integrated with your brand is key to attracting EV drivers into your store. Coupling the charging experience with a loyalty program adds an extra layer of stickiness, cementing customer loyalty and habits contained within your ecosystem.

## 04 Conclusion

EV charging is a strategic opportunity for retailers to enhance customer loyalty, drive revenue expansion, increase store visits, and position themselves for success in the future of retail. By understanding the key considerations and partnering with the right provider, retailers can effectively integrate EV charging into their operations and create meaningful competitive advantages.

Electric Era is dedicated to help you navigate this journey and add to your retail loyalty strategy.

Want to learn more?

- Optimize Your Customer Lifetime Value: Use our [LTV Calculator](#) to estimate the potential impact of EV charging on your business.
- See Retailer AI in Action: [Watch the demo](#) of our retail-integrated EV charging solutions.
- [Schedule a consultation with us](#)



## 05 Appendix

### Appendix 1: Key considerations when evaluating whether, how, and with whom to implement EV Charging

Navigating the complexities of siting, financing, deploying, and then operating and maintaining EV charging infrastructure is no small feat. Factors to consider include choice of technology options, business models, operational considerations, and service providers. The wide number of players in this nascent landscape can be daunting for anyone not already knowledgeable in the intricacies of EV charging and EV industry in general.

When considering an investment in EV charging infrastructure, retailers should carefully evaluate several key factors:

**Charger Type and Technology:** Understanding the different types of EV chargers (Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3/DCFC) is crucial. DCFC is particularly attractive for retail locations due to its fast charging times and ability to drive customer turnover. Retailers should also consider the types of charging ports (CCS and NACS) to ensure compatibility with a wide range of EVs.

	Level 1	Level 2	DC Fast Charging
<b>Power Rating</b>	Standard 110-120V plug	208-240 V	50-400+ kW,
<b>Amp Rating</b>	10-12 amps	12-60 amps	100-400 amps
<b>Typical Location</b>	Home	Home, public, or business	Public charging station, private fleet charging
<b>Avg Charge Time of 10%→90%</b>	30-60 hours, not recommended	4-12+ hours	15-60+ min
<b>Avg Range/Hour</b>	+2-5 mi range per hour	+10-60 mi range per hour	+180-1,000 mi range per hour

**Reliability and Uptime:** Reliable charging infrastructure is essential for a positive customer experience. Retailers should prioritize providers with high uptime targets, strong Successful Charge Attempt Rates (SCAR), and robust payment processing systems. Industry research shows that customers are unlikely to ever return to a charging station that does not work on their first visit. Given the significant lifetime value of each EV driving customer, retailers risk missing out on revenue and repeat visits if they deploy unreliable hardware. It's important to



request your vendors and partners to share data on their uptime and SCAR metrics. [Review our paper](#) on how EV charging networks can build reliability into the foundation of their operations.

**Power Management:** EV charging stations, especially DCFC, require significant power. Retailers should consider solutions that optimize power usage, reduce electricity costs, and minimize grid impact. This is especially important in grid-constrained areas where transformer lead times and utility interconnection can take years. Battery-backed charging solutions offer a promising approach to address these challenges. By enabling a smaller grid connection, battery-backed EV charging can skip the line and unlock project timelines of 4-8 months instead of 1-2 years. We share [more details here](#) on how Electric Era sizes our battery and stations, impacting speed to market and time to value.

**Retail Integration:** To maximize the benefits of EV charging, retailers should integrate the charging experience into their broader omnichannel retail ecosystem. This includes:

- **Loyalty and Rewards Programs:** Integrating EV charging with loyalty programs can drive customer engagement and repeat business.
- **On-Screen Advertising:** Leveraging charging station displays for targeted advertising can generate additional revenue and enhance customer engagement.
- **Point-of-Sale (POS) Systems:** Connecting charging stations to POS systems enables seamless transactions and provides valuable data insights.

**Business Models and Funding:** Retailers can choose from various business models for EV charging, including direct equipment purchases or a site host model. Understanding the financial implications and operational responsibilities of each model is essential. Additionally, retailers should explore available funding opportunities, such as federal and state incentives, and utility programs.