

RN

RETAIL NEWS THAT MATTERS ● £2.40 ● 31.03.2017

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Vol 128 No 13
FOR TRADE USE ONLY



9 770961 520190

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Shaping the future
of independent retail
since 1889



Editor

Chris Gamm

@ChrisGammRN
020 7689 3378



Associate editor

Chris Rolfe

@ChrisRolfeRN
020 7689 3362



News editor

Charlie Faulkner

@CharlieFaulkRN
020 7689 3357



Features editor

Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski

@TomGK_RN
020 7689 3361



Reporter

Dave Songer

@DaveSongerRN
020 7689 3358



Reporter

Jennifer Hardwick

@JenniferH_RN
020 7689 3350



Head of production

Darren Rackham

@DarrenRackhamRN
020 7689 3373



Senior designer

Anne-Claire Pickard

020 7689 3391

Designer

Emma Langschieid

020 7689 3380

Production coordinator

Billy Allen

020 7689 3368

Director of sales

Mike Baillie

020 7689 3367

Account director

Will Hoad

020 7689 3370

Account managers

Marta Dziok-Kaczynska

020 7689 3354

Erin Swanson

020 7689 3372

Sales executive

Khi Johnson

020 7689 3366

Marketing manager

Tom Mulready

020 7689 3352

Marketing executive

Tom Thorn

020 7689 3384

Financial controller

Parin Gohil

020 7689 3375

Finance executive

Abi Sylvane

0207 689 3383

Managing director

Nick Shanagher

07966 530 001

If you do not receive your copy of RN please contact **Tom Thorn**
on 020 7689 3384 or email tom.thorn@newtrade.co.uk

Printed by Southernprint, Poole, on 80gsm Galerie Fine Gloss paper
Distributor Seymour Distribution, 2 East Poultry Avenue, London, EC1A 9PT

Audit Bureau of Circulations

July 2015 to June 2016 average net circulation per issue **13,316**

Annual Subscription

UK	1 year	£150	Europe	£302
	2 years	£237	Rest of world	£354
	3 years	£333		



To subscribe contact 020 7689 3384



Newtrade
11 Angel Gate, City Road, London EC1V 2SD
Tel 020 7689 0600
email letters@newtrade.co.uk

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WELCOME

Food to go is
anticipated to grow
by 60% by 2020, but
only one in four stores
have a food counterMY
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Editor

Chris Gamm

@ChrisGammRN

020 7689 3378

The standout feature of Siva Thievanayanagan's Peterborough Nisa Local, which featured in last week IAA study tour Lookbook, was his six-metre food counter, which he'd recently doubled in size.

It features homemade pizzas, fresh juices, high-quality baguettes, deli meats and cheeses and smartly-merchandised snacks and drinks to promote upselling.

Siva is not alone in responding to customers' needs in this way. The food counter is the must-have feature of virtually every new store RN has seen this year. And with good reason:

the food to go mission is anticipated to grow by 60% to £7.8bn in convenience by 2020, but only one in four independent stores have a food preparation area of some sort, industry data shows.

Siva invested in his great counter offer because fresh is pulling in more customers. Office catering is also growing because customers say his offer is better than Waitrose's.

Like many others, retailers on the study tour told me managing wastage remains the major challenge with fresh food. But Siva's counter means he can use short-dated products such as pizza toppings and sandwich fillings, instead of slashing prices (and his margins with it).

For this week's issue, we've spoken to four great retailers about the things to consider when setting up your own food counter, from location and training to marketing.

It needn't be on the scale of Siva's offer, which he's fine-tuned over 15 years. One retailer on the tour told me he'd always doubted his store's food to go potential, but returned inspired to give it a go. You'll find plenty of inspiration in this issue.

BREAKING NEWS

Businesses hold back until rates fallout ends

Retailers preparing for the impact of business rates revaluation and increasing employment costs are holding back on investing in their stores, according to the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS).

New figures show that between December 2016 and February 2017 retailers invested £154m in their businesses, down from £299m in the previous quarter. "There is a hesitance to invest when business rates bills are going up and the National Living Wage rates are too," said ACS chief executive James Lowman.

Kesser Mahmood, owner of Go Local in Stockport, said: "It's a difficult environment due to Brexit too. I've put off buying new fridges."

Divyesh Patel, owner of a mini-market in Surrey, added: "I want to update my freezers but I can't at the moment. Updating the store has become more difficult."

Hashtag # to success

A social media marketing company has pledged to help retailers grow their digital influence and drive footfall through a dedicated hashtag.

Maybe said it would help retailers who used the hashtag #WDYT (what do you think) to extend their social media reach.

"By 2020, 80% of retail will still be offline but 46% of those transactions will be influenced by digital," said Polly Barnfield, the company's chief executive. "It's about asking how you can draw people in and speed that process up through social media."

Sunder Sandher, of S & S One Stop in Leamington Spa, said he plans to use the hashtag and monitor his social media analytics.

Display helps boost Mother's Day sales 300%

The McBride's Scaffog Spar store in Enniskillen, Northern Ireland, achieved a 300% increase in Mother's Day flower sales compared to last year after putting together its biggest flower display yet. "It was the busiest flower event we've ever had," said Damien Wardman, store manager. Mr Wardman credits the success to a recent shop refit, which has allowed space for bigger displays since Christmas.



Shop owners want guidance as sugar levy looms 'We'd like to offer more choice'

Retailers call for more help on healthier lines

by Dave Songer

dave.songer@newtrade.co.uk

Retailers have called for more support on healthier lines including promotions and guidance on growth areas to help them adapt to the sugar levy coming into force next year.

Manjit Samra, who owns Samra Newsagent in Smethwick, told RN he needed more support from his wholesalers to tell him about the "changes, implications and possible opportunities" that will

arise from the sugar tax.

"Wholesalers are the platform where we pick up our stock and they need to adapt to the sugar change," said Mr Samra.

"It's the whole picture we want what is happening in the background and the implications it can have on retailers. The whole chain needs to change and not just talk about it so we can educate customers."

The request comes following the latest report from the House of Commons health committee. It strongly

recommends manufacturers pass on the higher cost of sugary drinks to consumers to incentivise a switch to healthier alternatives.

The levy will introduce a charge to soft drinks companies for drinks with added sugar and total sugar content of five grams or more per 100 millilitres, but manufacturer Britvic has already said it will not absorb the cost when the charge comes into force.

Sunil Patel, owner of Norwich Road Food Store in

Leicester, is looking to increase his range of low or no-sugar varieties and echoed the call for wholesalers to drive a move to healthier products.

"We'd like to widen our selection and give customers a greater choice, but we're not being told about them at the moment," he said.

Retailers also told RN they fear other products could also be taxed. "It will undoubtedly affect other products like chocolate," said Martin Ward of Cowpen Lane News in Cleveland.

Indies can cash in after 99p stores close

The closure of 60 99p Stores as a result of the company going into administration could present an opportunity for independents, retailers have told RN.

Retailers said the closure of the Poundland-owned stores was good news because their customers' appetite for items priced at £1 remains strong and it

meant they faced less competition.

"If I can sell something for £1 I will and it always goes," said Marija Lewis, of Bargain Booze in Bridgend. "Any multipack bags of crisps for a pound or any £1 promotions always go quickly. I'm surprised they've gone into administration."

Naresh Purohit, of Marseans in Dartford in Kent, said: "People expect to pay a pound now and will often buy something purely because it's that price. In the last five years we've been offered a lot more £1 promotions."

"I'm not surprised they're closing, though. If you sell everything at that

price you don't get a high enough margin."

A Poundland spokeswoman said the closing stores are all in close proximity to Poundland units.

She added: "The administration has no impact on Poundland itself which is a robust, thriving business."

RN analyses buying prices from six wholesalers Bestway, One Stop and Booker cheapest

Retailers expect Booker merger price advantage

by **Charlie Faulkner**
and **Chris Gamm**

charlie.faulkner@newtrade.co.uk

Retailers are braced for Booker symbol operators to benefit from lower wholesale prices should a merger with Tesco increase its buying power.

RN analysed the prices six retailers served by different wholesalers paid for a basket of 10 popular convenience lines, including Rekorderlig cider, Wrigley's Extra gum and iceberg lettuce.

Bestway and One Stop were the only wholesalers charging retailers less than

Booker, by 14.9% and 6.1% respectively. Palmer & Harvey charged the same as Booker, while Nisa charged 5.3% more and Spar 13% more.

David Ramsey, of Best-one Byram Park Stores in Knottingley, West Yorkshire, said he wasn't surprised Bestway stood out as the cheapest.

However, he expressed apprehensions about what the Booker-Tesco merger would mean for the industry.

"I'm sure Booker retailers will gain an advantage as a result of the merger, especially as One Stop stores are already getting a better deal.

I think we are all a little worried," he said.

Londis retailer Chris Herring said he expected the merger to result in better buying prices for Booker customers.

However, a One Stop retailer, who asked to remain anonymous, said: "The difference will be if all Booker customers benefit from increased buying power, not just symbol stores."

He was surprised Bestway was cheapest as he expected buying power to be a result of highest store numbers.

Charles Wilson previously told RN Booker is committed

to delivering better prices for its customers.

Speaking to RN in February, he said: "Retailers are right to say, with Tesco's buying scale, we should be able to do a better job for customers. Yes, we are committed to that."

Spar retailer Susan Connolly said she was not surprised her wholesaler was more expensive than Booker on eight out of 10 lines.

While Nisa was the same price or cheaper on seven lines, its basket cost was pushed up by being significantly more expensive on three products.

Tesco owners express concern over deal

The Booker-Tesco merger faces uncertainty following the retail giant's third biggest stakeholder calling for it to withdraw from the deal.

Schroders is the second stakeholder invested in Tesco to express concerns over the link-up, believing the "high price" of the deal will destroy value for both Tesco and Booker shareholders.

Meanwhile, Tesco must pay a £129m fine and £85m in compensation to shareholders following a two-year fraud investigation into false accounting at the supermarket.

Comic Relief is a community affair for village shop

Itteringham Village Shop in north Norfolk embraced the spirit of Comic Relief by selling brightly coloured cupcakes made by local baker Victoria Jane Bakes last week. "The cakes sold out each time we displayed them. They promoted Red Nose Day, made people smile and helped to show we change displays to maintain customer interest," said Mike Hemsley, who volunteers in the community-run shop.



Be dynamic and defeat inflation

Retailers who provide innovative, dynamic and convenient offerings are best placed to face rising inflation according to Kantar Worldpanel and the Association of Convenience Stores.

The news comes one month after UK inflation jumped to 2.3% – its highest level for three and a half years.

Fraser McKevitt, Kantar Worldpanel's head of retail and consumer insight, said: "Any retailer who can offer healthier ranges and more convenience in an exciting way has found the way forward."

James Lowman, chief executive of the ACS, added: "People want to spend more time in their local area but want more options to be able to do that."

He encouraged retailers to "not be afraid to try new products and new areas".

P&H 'rescue' not a worry to retailers

A potential rescue investment in Palmer & Harvey by JTI and Imperial Tobacco is not expected to have a negative impact on retailers, store owners have said.

Last week it was revealed the tobacco giants are in talks with P&H about substantial investments in return for equity stakes.

Jayesh Parekh, who

owns a Costcutter in Manchester, said: "The tobacco companies are probably not making enough profits on their own products now. That's why they are looking to do something else. I don't think it would have any impact on retailers."

Vip Panchmatia, who owns a Mace store in Gloucestershire, added:

"P&H is an old company and they have come back from difficult times before."

The company also brought in restructuring expert Andy Leeser this week, according to Sky.

Robert Madden of Costcutter R & D Madden in Manchester said: "They need someone to go in and make some changes."

A P&H spokesperson said: "As part of the planned refinancing process, we are in discussions with our lenders and stakeholders."

A spokesman for JTI said it is in discussions with P&H to develop future business plans while a spokesman for Imperial said it is talking about a "range of potential options".

STORE LOOKBOOK



Jag Aytain has updated an out-of-date village shop in Derbyshire into a community hub

My way saves £100k

In his search for a better work/life balance, Derbyshire retailer Jag Aytain took on the mission of his life – refitting his ultra modern village store. Here, he tells **Charlie Faulkner** why his DIY approach was right

Having watched both his parents and grandparents work “all hours” for the family business – and being left disillusioned by the hierarchy and unsociable hours of life as a Hilton Hotel manager – Jag Aytain decided to change path and build a business that gave him a better work-life balance.

“I saw my grandfather dedicate his whole life to work, even after he retired. He passed away while trying to build the family a home in India,” says Jag. “I knew I had to do something different.”

In 2010, Jag bought a tired village shop in Linton, Derbyshire, which faced closure and – despite some local protest – went about creating a modern, progressive convenience store.

“It was tough, don’t get me wrong,” says Jag. “But you have to get on with it and do it with a smile – you’ve got no choice if you want your business to succeed.”

The Rural Hub and Post Office is the result. Operating under a combined Costcutter and Mace fascia, Jag made the bold decision to plan, initiate and complete an in-depth renovation independently. Having been initially quoted £120,000 for the work by Costcutter, his spacious store with its rustic shelving and newly-extended back area, has so far cost him just £15,000 to create.

This experience convinced Jag that too many retailers make the mistake of letting symbol groups manage their refits – and miss out on the opportunity to tailor their store to their community exactly.

“It’s the same mentality a shopper paying for a bottle of water in a forecourt store has – they don’t mind paying that extra £1 for the convenience,” says Jag. “And retailers are happy to pay symbol groups to renovate their shops for them because it’s convenient.”

“Because I’ve done this on my own I’m not dictated to. It’s taken time and a lot of research but I can say it is my store and I’m able to run it exactly how I want.”

Thanks in part to the nearby primary school and a bus stop used by secondary schoolchildren nearby as well as the “sweet tooth” the former mining community has always harboured, confectionery and crisps are the most popular categories for his store. This is reflected both in terms of merchandising – a large wall space opposite the till showcases his range – and in the size of his orders.

“On a weekly basis I spend up to £500 on sweets, £300 on crisps and £240 on traditional cakes,” he says.

Jag has tapped into the lunchtime trade, selling £1 sandwiches, which are very popular, as well as sausage rolls and hot dogs. “On the three days when we get





RN provides an advice platform which equips me with the tools to be able to make decisions and implement new ideas within my business.” **JAG AYTAIN**



“On the three days when we get a fresh delivery of sausage rolls we sell up to 18 a day”

INFORMATION

Location

The Rural Hub and Post Office,
54 Main Street,
Linton, Derbyshire

Size

1,000 sq ft

Key categories

Confectionery, snacks

Average basket

£6.21



STORE LOOKBOOK



With food to go and a new coffee machine, Jag is able to offer a coffee shop-style service and keep customers in store for longer

a fresh delivery of sausage rolls we sell up to 18 a day."

Jag's knowledge of his local area helps him make decisions about pricing. Rather than implementing symbol-led promotions, he provides the local school teachers with a 10% discount, for example. "I know they will be good advocates of my store and you hear so many teachers say they don't feel appreciated, so this is to help a little bit."

This community focus is also shown by the work placement opportunities he offers teenagers – which is so successful there is now a waiting list. The local paper has also lauded Jag for his policy of not selling energy drinks to children under 12.

After years of hard work, Jag has now built a business that allows him (and his team) to work flexible hours. And though he has ambitious plans for the store – including a possible butchery counter – he has certainly achieved his main goal of living a more balanced life.

"Define success," he says. "Is it owning 50 shops and not being content until I've opened more, or is it operating a business without constraints that allows me to watch my children grow up? I know which one it is for me." ●



Want to see more of Jag's store?
Go to betterretailing.com/jag-hub-linton

SYMBOL NEWS

Find out others' refit best practice

Find out how other shop owners have executed store refits to get the best deal possible, retailers who have carried out renovations have told RN.

"It's about seeing what's happening in the industry," said Susan Connolly, a Spar retailer who is concluding a store refit this week. "My advice would be to ask other retailers – they will always be able to offer advice."

"I'm part of a retailer WhatsApp group which has been very useful."

Mahesh Odedra, of Lake Avenue Store and Post Office in Bury St Edmunds, said cutting corners could be costly in the long run. "We went for higher fridges so we had extra shelving," he said. "It was an extra cost but it has been worth it – you need to think about the long term."



New cider festival from Nisa

Nisa has launched a Cider Festival to help retailers to drive footfall and profits after last year's event resulted in £1m additional sales.

The symbol group will provide retailers with themed PoS material, as well as offers on a range of different drinks for the festival, which runs until 16 April.

Ciders featuring in the promotion include 500ml bottles of Rekorderlig, Stella Cidre and Old Mout ciders at three for £5; Kopparberg 330ml at 10 for £10; bottles of Magners, Stella Cidre and Blind Pig at £1.50 each; and Kingstone Press 440ml at 12 for £5.99.

Variety and quality vital to maximise sales Retailer sells 300 meals in three weeks

Get ingredients right for dinner meal deal success

by Helen Lock & Charlie Faulkner

charlie.faulkner@newtrade.co.uk

Dinner for tonight meal deals can offer a great opportunity for independent retailers but suppliers need to provide more variety and better quality options to help them cash in, store owners have told RN.

Harj Dhasee, of the Village Store, a Nisa in Gloucestershire, ran a frozen meal deal for three weeks earlier this month which gave him a 20% margin. He sold around 300 meals during this time.

"The £5 meal deal included a frozen Chicago Town pizza, a garlic bread and a Ben & Jerry's ice cream and it sold really well," he said. "It flew out in the first week and we even ran out of stock initially."

However, Mr Dhasee said variety is key to keep sales momentum up. "The trouble for independents is the symbol groups give us components and we don't get to pick them and experiment with what works. We need to be able to offer a variety."



Siva Thievanayagan's meal in a bag offer

Mark Barnard, operations manager of forecourt operator JSK Services, has called on suppliers to find better solutions for independents to offer.

"If you go to M&S, Waitrose or Booths, you can buy great ready meals. They're so good you could serve them to your friends

and they wouldn't know you hadn't cooked the meal from scratch," he said.

"I want suppliers to start delivering that kind of level of ready meal range for independents."

"We've got to find solutions for the new type of customer who is focused on healthy ready meals."

Siva Thievanayagan, who runs a Nisa Local in Fletton, does well with a meal in a bag which includes a curry, rice and a naan for £2.99, supplied by Birmingham-based Classic Cuisines. He sells around £270 worth on a weekly basis and earns a 30% margin.

● Food counters – p38.

Landmark sheds 100 stores to drive standards

Landmark has dropped 100 Lifestyle Express shops in a bid to improve store standards but said those who work with the wholesaler to improve the quality of their businesses could see prominent sales uplifts.

In a bid to boost store quality across its estate, Landmark has increased its entry level requirements and worked with retailers to help them achieve the required standard, or remove them from its estate.

Terry Singh, of Lifestyle Express in Birmingham,



Landmark unveiled a new premium fascia last October

began working with Landmark four weeks ago, and has seen a 50% increase in his bread sales. "I had

everything cluttered up and now everything looks much cleaner and customers can walk around much

more easily," he said.

"Landmark has moved the chilled products to one side and the freezer to the other, and all the promotions to the front. It looks great."

He will now receive regular visits to keep him informed on promotions.

Sarbjit Kaur, of Walsall Road Post Office, also in Birmingham, received help with her layout following a store refit.

"The store looks great and we are hopeful sales will improve," she said.

NEWS & MAGS

PPA calls for no VAT on digital editions

The Professional Publishers Association (PPA) is calling for a halt on VAT across digital editions of magazines and newspapers, instead encouraging investment in journalism, in a bid to boost sales.

VAT is not charged on print editions of newspapers and magazines but the full 20% is applied to any paid-for online content.

Owen Meredith, the PPA's head of public affairs, said the change would allow publishers to invest in both their print and online products.

Chris Duncan, managing director of Times Newspapers, said: "This would help us to continue our investments in journalism across all formats."

Mike Brown, of Browns Newsagents in Stokesley, Yorkshire, said improving the quality of newspapers could attract more readers to them.

Ebooks on the decline

UK ebook sales declined by 4% in 2016, the second consecutive year digital has shrunk, according to industry research group Nielsen.

The group's annual books and consumer survey, meanwhile, showed a 7% rise in printed books.

Steve Bohme, research director at Nielsen Book Research UK, said: "We are seeing books are a respite, particularly for young people who are so busy digitally."

Paul Patel, of WH Smith Local in Southampton said: "Serious readers will always buy books. We had strong sales last year with the new Harry Potter play and colouring-in books also do well."

RN survey reveals true extent of wholesalers' failures 'There is no room for error anywhere'

Newspaper distribution system at breaking point

by Jennifer Hardwick

jennifer.hardwick@newtrade.co.uk

The newspaper distribution system is "close to breaking point" as wholesalers struggle to meet RDTs despite publishers hitting their cut-off arrival times, retailers have warned.

A survey carried out by RN using the National Distributor Monitor showed a total of 1,148 deliveries from 25 randomly selected wholesaler branches were late on the days chosen – which if applied nationally, would mean 3,500 late deliveries daily.

However, the survey

also showed just 70 of the late deliveries occurred on days when one or more titles missed their cut-off time into wholesale.

In fact, the three days with the highest number of missed RDTs – at 209, 208 and 151 – were on days when all titles arrived at least 22 minutes ahead of their cut-off times.

Cardiff retailer Matthew Clark, of Penylan News, said: "The whole system is just as close to breaking point as it can get. There is no room for error anywhere."

"The window of opportunity for sales shrinks the later the newspapers

come in."

Kate Clark, of Sean's News in Worcester, said it is very hard to get answers on the real reasons why newspaper deliveries are late.

While the figures point to faults in the wholesale system, the NFRN's head of news Brian Murphy added publishers need to bring their print times forward to address the issue.

"Our own research shows if printing times were brought forward by 15 minutes, around 65-70% of the problem would disappear," he said.

A spokesman for Menzies said comparing

retailer arrival times with publishers' cut-off times does not give a complete picture of the dynamic between the two.

"The original programme which established RDTs used scheduled arrival times for each publisher to determine whether delivery windows could be met, with cut-off times acting as a final deadline to avoid double-running," he said.

"Given that these scheduled times are no longer achieved in many cases, it is substantially more difficult to achieve RDTs than in the past."

● Column – p32.

Far-sighted retailer puts 2018 calendars on sale now

A Scottish retailer has already begun stocking calendars for 2018. Andrew Howell, of Loch Lomond Stores, is selling the calendars at two for £5 as his store enters its busiest period. "This is a bit of an experiment for us as we normally put them out after summer, but we want to have them out throughout the tourist season," he said.



Trinity Mirror rolls out loyalty scheme

A pilot loyalty scheme launched by Trinity Mirror, which saw a 40% increase in retention rate, is set to be rolled out nationally.

Plus, which offers subscribers access to two exclusive offers from local businesses each month, is set to be rolled out across Trinity Mirror's daily re-

gional titles across the UK over the next six to nine months. The move follows a trial at 19 former Local World titles last year, with Trinity Mirror stating it has improved annual retention rate at those titles by up to 40%.

The scheme also enables retailers to recommend

customers who do not subscribe but do buy the title on a regular basis, allowing them to become Plus members.

Craig Willetts, retail business relationship manager for Trinity Mirror Regionals, said: "This is about retaining our loyal customers and

keeping them loyal to their newsagent as well. If customers redeem all of the offers they can actually get back the cost of their subscription."

The Coventry Telegraph was the first new title to be included in the scheme, and was added on 13 March.

**NEW
PACK**

**MAKE A
MINT**



For illustrative Purposes Only.

• **POLO SUGAR FREE is
the No.1 Sugar Free Mint***

• **POLO ORIGINAL is
the No.4 Sugar Single***

* Source IRI 52wks w/e 28th January 2017.

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Good Food, Good Life

PRODUCT TRENDS

Mondelez airs Brexit concerns

Mondelez has not ruled out reducing the size of its confectionery following Brexit, the company has said.

It admitted it could face reducing the size of its Cadbury products despite maintaining the same price – a process known as shrinkflation.

A Mondelez spokesperson told RN it would “carry additional costs within our business for as long as possible” to keep its products affordable. “However, like all food manufacturers, we sometimes have to make changes to ensure people can continue to buy chocolate at affordable prices.”

Jason Birks, who owns a store in County Durham, said: “We’re having to sell pricemarked packs, which have lower margins, so it will affect my bottom line.”



40%
boost in crisps and
snacks sales thanks
to KP Snack's
programme



KP's 'fresh approach' works

by Dave Songer

dave.songer@newtrade.co.uk

Retailers have boosted crisps and snacks sales by 40% thanks to KP Snack's Snack Partners programme.

The first six retailers to be take part in the initiative, which is aimed at stores under 3,000sq ft, experienced a 40% uplift in

category sales and 21% when it was rolled out to 150 retailers a year later.

Atul Sodha, a London retailer who was one of the original six Snack Partners and is still involved, told RN being included in the scheme helps him better understand the category and increase sales.

“We wanted a fresh approach to the category and what they were saying

made sense,” said Mr Sodha.

“We now have more money in the till by taking steps such as placing McCoy's at the centre of the shelves. A sales uplift of 21% shows we must be doing something right.”

The initiative provides retailers with advice to maximise their crisps, snacks and nuts sales by offering tips and advice on core products and merchandising across the entire category.

It is for that reason

a second Snack Partner, Raaj Chandarana, who owns Tara's News in High Wycombe, believes the initiative stands out against others he has been involved with. “KP takes a category-wide approach and promotes all brands, not just KP,” he said.

Matt Collins, trading director for convenience at KP Snacks, said the company provides retailers “with the facts that tell them the simple things they must do” to boost their sales in the category.



**BLACKCURRANT
BLISS**

LUCOZADE
ENERGY
SUMMER
FLAVOURS

Trend highlighted at International Food & Drink Event Nielsen figures support healthy drive

Healthy drinks hold the spotlight at trade show

by Dave Songer

dave.songer@newtrade.co.uk

Healthy drinks were a major focus of the International Food & Drink Event, highlighting a clear trend for healthy hydration among consumers.

The four-day, trade-only exhibition, which took place at ExCel London last week, hosted a large number of fruit juice and flavoured water producers promoting their products.

Speaking to RN, Harrison Spencer (pictured right), owner of Juice A Day, said the company produces 100% cold press fruit juice with ingredients including watermelon, grapefruit and cucumber. The entire process is done in-house, which Mr Spencer said meant the company could be flexible and work around the needs of independent retailers.

"We can work with retailers to reduce our smallest minimum order because it is such a new market for so many of them," said Mr Spencer.

He believes people are prepared to pay a premium for fresh juices with Juice A Day priced at £3.95 per 250ml bottle.

"We were the consumers and weren't happy with what was on the market; many fruit drinks still don't offer 100% fruit because of how they are made," said Mr Spencer.

Latest Nielsen figures show low-sugar and sugar-free soft drinks make up 11% and 18% of the total impulse market in convenience.

Also at the show, J.F. Rabbit's Veg Water, which produces flavoured water containing one calorie, is flavoured with natural ingredients



and no sugar.

"Smoothies are perceived as healthy but the calorie count can be very high. For those looking for flavour but with low-sugar there are limited options," said Verity Davis, sales manager at J.F. Rabbit.

Drinks made using

green tea were also well represented at the show, with two examples using kombucha, a naturally fermented drink made from the tea, Karma Kombucha and Equinox Kombucha.

Britvic's Refresh'd hydration

Britvic has launched Refresh'd in a bid to meet the growing demand for healthy hydration with a low sugar content.

Refresh'd contains 55 calories in each 500ml bottle and is available in Raspberry & Apple, Orange & Lime and Apple & Kiwi variants, with a £1.29 RRP.

Kevin McNair, GB marketing director at Britvic, said: "We know healthy hydration is the fastest growing segment in soft drinks, so the opportunity for retailers to stock new options in this area is clear."

The product will be

supported by a marketing investment including TV and digital and in-store activation materials and PoS will be made available.



PINEAPPLE PUNCH



EXCLUSIVE TO
WHOLESALE
DRIVE INCREMENTAL
SALES WITH THE
#1 ENERGY
BRAND IN THE UK¹

BRAND SNAPSHOT



More pricemarks

Walkers has extended its range of £1 pricemarked packs to include Squares Salt & Vinegar, French Fries Cheese & Onion and Walkers Max Steak.



C-store exclusive

Vimto has added a new flavour to its Vimto Remix range – Raspberry, Orange & Passionfruit – exclusively to convenience retail.



Ginger Pepsi Max

Britvic has bolstered its Pepsi Max range with a ginger variant. The latest flavour contains no sugar and is available in a range of formats.



Golden opportunity

Shoppers are being offered a chance to win £10,000 by finding one of five golden crisps. The promo runs across McCoy's grab bags and selected multipacks.



Chocolate Protein

Weetabix On The Go has added Chocolate flavour to its Protein range, supported by a £7m advertising campaign throughout April.



Quick Pot hat-trick

The oats company, Stoats, has introduced three Porridge Quick Pot flavours – Raspberry & Honey, Rhubarb & Bramble, and Pear & Vanilla.



Gallo's fourth Spritz

Gallo Family Vineyards has widened its Spritz portfolio with a Wild Strawberry variety. The fourth in the range, it has an ABV of 9%.



Fanta-stic new recipe

Coca-Cola European Partners Fanta brand has developed a new recipe and spiral bottle. The latest drink contains a third less sugar.



Limited edition KP

KP Nuts will launch two limited edition summer caddies in May, a format the company says lends itself well to impulse purchases.

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Febreze upgrade

P&G has upgraded its Febreze brand with OdourClear. It promises to offer twice the odour elimination. The technology is available across its range.



Singha in 330ml can

Molson Coors has released its Singha Beer brand in a 330ml can – a format that has become very popular in the craft ale sector.



Quorn's £10 rebrand

Meat-free brand Quorn has launched a TV campaign as part of a £10m relaunch. The nine 20-second adverts will run for 49 weeks.

ON A MISSION:



Hot Beverages on the Go

29%

of chewing occasions happen directly after drinking hot drinks*

Chewing sugarfree gum helps keep teeth **clean and healthy** after drinking on the go**

97%

Over of Wrigley's gum sales are from sugarfree products†



Tom Lynch, Senior Category Manager, Wrigley, says:

“Take advantage of this growing **shopper mission**, by placing a small gum display beside your coffee machine to encourage additional **impulse purchases**. Up-weight basket spend by offering a **cross-category promotion** with coffee and gum, and make sure gum is visible to all shoppers by having the **best sellers** displayed at till point.”

Work with your Wrigley representative to help maximise your gum sales, or visit www.wrigley.com/uk

* Ipsos Reasons to Chew 2014

**Extra sugarfree gum is beneficial for dental health as it helps to neutralise plaque acids

†Nielsen Scantrack, Total Gum, Total coverage MAT w.e. 5.11.16

WRIGLEY
A Subsidiary of Mars, Incorporated

WHAT'S NEW



The Mango Girls

The Mango Girls juices are tropical purees made with English apple juice, not from concentrate. They are available in Apple & Mango, Apple & Passion Fruit and Blood Orange.

RRP £2.10-£2.40

Contact 01580 212261



Yumm Protein Crunchers

Yumm Protein Crunchers are high-protein, gluten-free, vegetarian sweet bites with no added sugar. Available in Milk and White Chocolate, each single pack contains 100 calories.

RRP £1.29 (24g)

Contact contact@eatyumm.co.uk



The Raw Chocolate Company

Raw Chocolate Almonds are made from Spanish nuts. They are coated in caramel and raw chocolate and dusted with cacao powder. They are vegan and organic, sugar and gluten-free.

RRP £1.49 (25g), £5.99 (110g)

Contact 01273 495193



Cookie Mix

Cookie Mix contains Belgian Chocolate and requires the addition of water to make the dough, which can also be eaten raw. They are free from gluten, dairy, eggs and soy.

RRP £4.99

Contact hello@cookie-mix.com



Calon Lân

Calon Lân condiments, chutneys and preserves are handmade in small batches and all 18 lines are based on traditional recipes. Bright labels are designed to grab shoppers' attention.

RRP £1.99 (condiments), £2.99 (chutney), £3.25 (preserves)

Contact blas@madryn.co.uk



Hillery & Son

Hillery & Son Premium Rum Punch is a smooth blend of fruits mixed with Jamaican white rum. The range has an ABV of 11.6% and is available in three ready-to-pour flavours.

RRP £3.39 (250ml), £9.99 (750ml)

Contact info@hilleryandson.com

Dave Songer
 dave.songer@newtrade.co.uk
 020 7689 3358

Focus

Ice Cream

With temperatures just beginning to climb, now is a good time to think about stocking a new range of ice cream. This week our selection includes biscuit-flavoured, free-from and low-sugar varieties



Get Fruity

Made from a blend of fruit, fruit juice, oats and virgin coconut oil, Get Fruity is available in six flavours. The bars are vegan-friendly, gluten- and dairy-free and contain no added refined sugar.

RRP £2.49

Contact hello@getfruitybar.co.uk



Squbes

Squbes is a range of bite-size savoury seed cubes available in two varieties – Spiced Sesame & Almond and Sea Salt & Black Pepper. They contain no wheat and are high in fibre.

RRP 90p (30g), £2.50 (100g)

Contact 07805 443437 / estelle@virginiafoods.net



New Forest

New Forest received a Gold Star at The Great Taste Awards for its Lotus Caramelised Biscoff flavour ice cream. It is made with fresh milk and double cream, infused with a Lotus Biscoff spread.

RRP £1.50

Contact 01590 647611



Oppo

Oppo is made with fresh milk, virgin coconut oil, and the natural sweetener, stevia leaf. Each pot contains up to 60% fewer calories and sugar than regular ice cream and is available in five flavours.

RRP £4.99

Contact team@oppoicecream.co.uk



Jollyum

Jollyum's plant-based ice cream is free from dairy, gluten and refined sugars. Flavours include Summer Strawberry, Maple & Pecan and Double Chocolate.

RRP £1.89 (125ml), £5.89 (500ml)

Contact info@jollyum.com

Andy Howell

Loch Lomond News, Balloch

Ice cream sells all year round but key times are Easter to October.

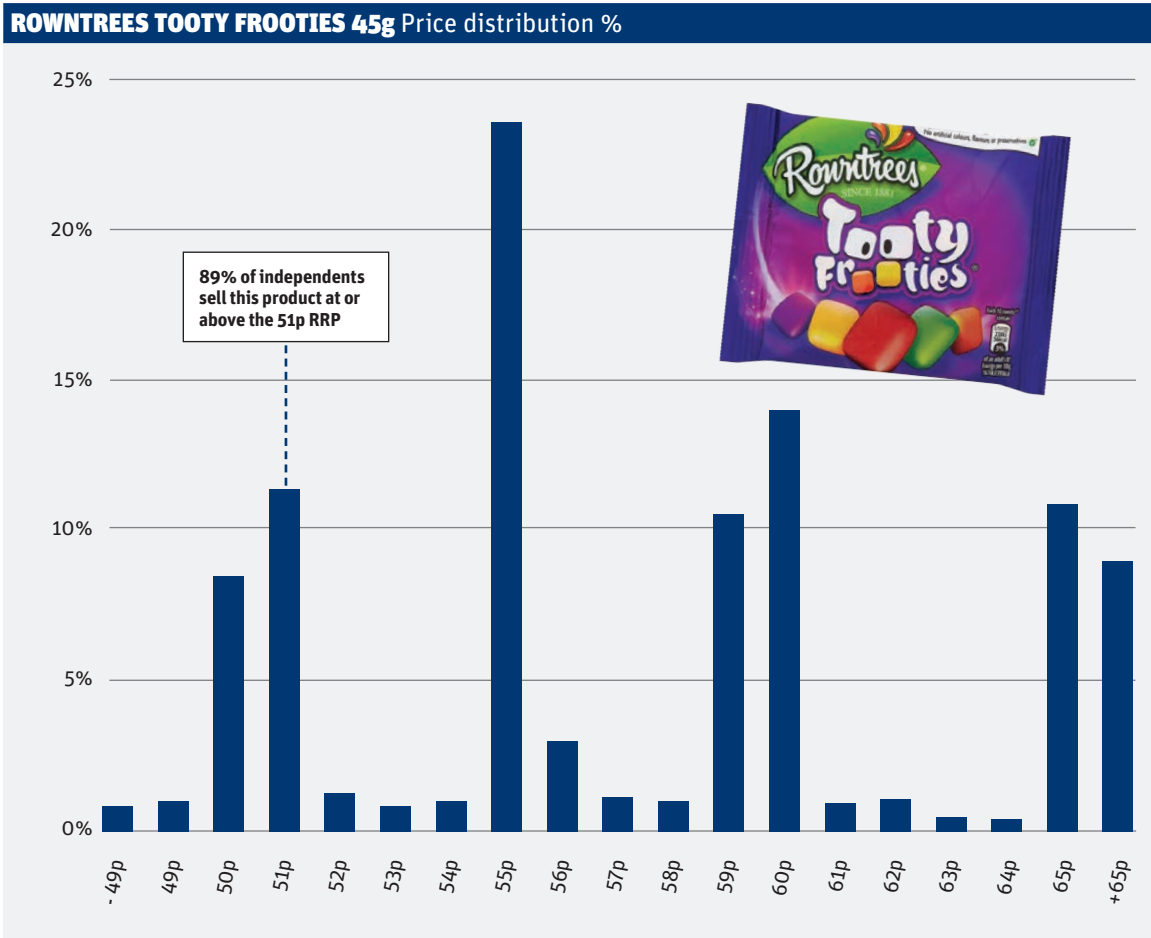
A range of flavours is important and we like to chop and change for a bit of variation. Our customers love the fact we use ice cream from a very local supplier.



PRICEWATCH

Profit checker Children's confectionery

Price checker



Analysis

While larger formats such as chocolate blocks prove their worth by driving sales for the retailers we spoke to this week, our graph highlights why child-friendly impulse lines like Rowntree's Tooty Frooties remain must stocks. At

its 51p RRP the product provides a relatively modest 19.3% (or 9.3p) margin, according to Booker's wholesale price. Yet nearly as many retailers (11.4% to 11.2%, respectively) go all the way up to 65p, supercharging their margin to 36%

or 23.8p per sale – the same cash profit as from selling one £1 priced block of Cadbury's Dairy Milk. A middle way is found with the most popular price, just 4p higher than RRP at 55p – which offers a 25% margin (13.8p).

PRODUCT
Rowntree's Jellytots 42g
Ferrero Kinder Happy Hippo Biscuit 20.7g
Rowntree's Tooty Frooties 45g
Haribo Sour Suckers 80g
Happy Shopper Jelly Babies 85g
Haribo Little Jelly Men 80g
Millions Strawberry Tube 65g
Happy Shopper Jelly Beans 85g
Swizzels Love Hearts Giant 24s
Kinder Chocolate with Cereal 23.5g
Swizzels Giant Refresher Original 18g
Haribo Rhubarb and Custard Splats 80g

How we drive our profit

Justin Taylor

STORE Spar
LOCATION Bristol
SIZE 2,500sq ft store
TYPE forecourt

TOP TIP Use a queue former if you have space, ours has encouraged sales because we can put baskets of sweets there



Our margins depend on the size of the product. Our counter sweets have a 34% margin but with the larger family-size bags it's a bit lower at 31%. We tend to price higher than RRP because we are on a forecourt and don't have other shops nearby to compete with on pricing. A RRP can be 62p or 63p for a single product and we'd round up to 65p or 69p. We are a fairly large grocery store, so we get a mix of small impulse purchases and people who come and do a larger shop here, we still get people picking up confectionery by the till, visibility is key.

Kath Hitchin

STORE Lifestyle Express Kath's Convenience
LOCATION Caernarfon
SIZE 1,200 sq ft
TYPE small town shop

TOP TIP Customers tend to go for the priced bags of sweets, because they know what they are getting, they've done well



Chocolate and sweets sell really well, they're probably our biggest sellers. The margins are quite low but there is a high rate of sale. I like to get novelty things in that are popular with children. That brings people into the shop and it drives sales. I don't tend to run promotions anymore because they're not that good. Cadbury's will do two smaller bars for £1 but I'd prefer to sell two different, larger bars for £1, which more customers want. I find priced blocks are great because customers see that the smaller bars can be up to 75p and they think: why not buy a larger block for a £1?

RNeditorial@newtrade.co.uk
020 7689 3357

Data supplied by



EDFM is a specialist in helping leading suppliers to the UK's independent convenience channel get value, insights and business benefits from EPoS data. To find out how they could help you call 07976 295094

BOOKER RRP	AVERAGE UK RETAIL PRICE*	RETAILER 1 C-STORE IN GLASGOW SUBURB	RETAILER 2 SUBURBAN MANCHESTER MAIN ROAD C-STORE	RETAILER 3 WEST MIDLAND VILLAGE STORE	RETAILER 4 C-STORE IN CENTRAL SCOTTISH VILLAGE	RETAILER 5 RESIDENTIAL SHOP CENTRAL PORTSMOUTH	RETAILER 6 WEIRSIDE TOWN CENTRE SHOP
51p	58p	59p	65p	–	51p	55p	55p
35p	39p	40p	35p	35p	35p	39p	35p
51p	58p	50p	–	65p	51p	–	–
50p	50p	–	50p	–	–	50p	50p
59p	59p	–	59p	59p	59p	59p	–
50p	50p	50p	50p	50p	–	50p	50p
75p	78p	–	75p	–	65p	–	–
59p	59p	59p	59p	59p	–	59p	59p
30p	36p	–	25p	–	25p	25p	25p
25p	25p	30p	–	30p	30p	30p	30p
10p	10p	–	10p	10p	10p	10p	–
50p	50p	–	50p	–	–	50p	50p

* from a sample of 3,500 stores

MY LOCAL HERO

Retailers reveal the most profitable produce on their doorsteps

Chris Shelley

Shelley's Budgens, Horsham



Sussex Ice Cream Company
(£4.99 per 500ml tub)



How did you discover them?

I stock a lot of local produce but every few months I try to give our range a refresh, so we've decided to stock this ice cream company ahead of summer. I approached a local bottled water company called Southdowns Water first about stocking them and as the ice cream company uses their water in its sorbets, they passed on my details.

Who is buying them?

They're aimed at adults more than children. The flavours are strawberry and meringue and rum and raisin, that sort of thing. The person who runs the company trained as a pastry chef, so they really are luxury ice-creams. When the weather warms up they are going to come by and do a tasting with us.

Why are they so successful?

We started selling them two weeks ago, priced at £4.99 for a 500ml tub, so a similar price to Ben and Jerry's and Häagen-Dazs. We've sold about 10 tubs each week and that's the same as the other ice creams. We've tried to be competitive on pricing. My margins are about 24% on these, but normally with a local product my margin would be closer to 30%.

Mital Patel

STORE Bargain Booze Select Convenience
LOCATION Brentwood, Essex
SIZE 750sq ft
TYPE residential

TOP TIP Stock limited editions of chocolates and sweets and rotate them, different variations encourage sales



Our margin for sweets is quite high, between 30% and 40%. There's a high rate of sale too and it helps drive people into the shop. Our £1 sections are popular, all the main bags of sweets are £1, and Haribo is the bestseller. We make sure there's a designated area for them, and pricemarked bags seem to encourage people to buy because if they don't know the price they can assume it's expensive. Sweets should be visible and near the counter to encourage impulse buys.

Nishi Patel

STORE Londis Bexley Park
LOCATION Kent
SIZE 1,600sq ft
TYPE residential

TOP TIP Use your reps. Mondelez and Mars will have PoS materials available and they help sales



Our margin on chocolates and sweets are between 20% and 30%. We can't go above RRP on the larger products because most are price-marked but we do on the small impulse products, so we make up our margin on those. Twirls are our bestseller. All Cadbury's larger size chocolate bars are pricemarked at £1 each now and they fly out. Haribo sweets are popular and we can price them quite high because people specifically come for them. American products like Reese's and Hershey's have become popular too recently. We've gone from stocking four or five lines to a range of 25.

YOUR VIEWS

YOUR LETTERS

■ We'd welcome help from a good BDM, but we're just not getting it

The article on symbol retailers needing more support from their BDMs (RN 10 March) really resonated with me.

We're out on our own a bit with our symbol group. We used to have a great BDM, but he left in October last year. We have not seen anyone since. Our old BDM was great, but it was still only a small conversation about retail that we would have, before moving on to other topics like the weather.

He would simply check whether our deliveries were arriving on time, and that was about it. I feel like any business growth was actually down to us, rather than anything our symbol group has done.

I have spoken to another retailer from the same group who is thinking of leaving, it's got that bad. He's looking at his options right now.

For me it is a decision about whether to change, or if it's better the devil you know.

We had a merchandising expert



I would like to see someone on a regular basis, who will take the time to get to know our business. But this simply isn't happening

RN reader

from our symbol group in our store last summer, but that was only because we asked for it. He came in, did a great job in an area that we were struggling with, and we've maintained that ever since. But we have to keep moving in retail and that's now been in place – apart from small changes that we've made – since then.

What we need is to get someone with retail experience to look at our store to get a fresh pair of eyes on what is going on. It is vital to do this, so we know what else is out there.

I would like to see someone on a regular basis, someone who will take the time to get to know our business. But this simply isn't happening.

Name and address supplied

■ Newspapers need to help us promote home news delivery

My wife and I have recently taken over our home newspaper delivery (HND) business from my father – now retired – but who has worked tirelessly over the last 40 years to grow his business into something successful.

Although I have helped out over the past 14 years or so, since I have taken over the business I have



noticed that there seems to be little or no help from the newspapers to help us promote them and their subscription services, with the exception of the Telegraph.

We do actively market our own business through local advertising and leaflet drops, but it seems that unless you own a shop there is no support or very little from the newspaper companies themselves.

We have more than 300 customers ourselves, which is considerably more than some of the newsagents in town.

Does this seem to be a problem for other home delivery-only businesses?

Kevin Passmore

Passmore Newspapers, Somerset

YOUR SAY If confectionery and drinks brands are the next to be put in plain packaging, do you think it would have a negative impact on your sales?



Paul Bridgewater

The Cabin, Freshwater, Isle of Wight
It would definitely have a negative impact on sales. Sales have already been hit as a result of the sugar scare in the media. Part of branding something is the name and the packaging, and if it's a blank box you lose the power of that branding. My customers have definitely become more health-conscious and I think people would be even less likely to buy it if it came with a health warning.

Navin Bhuptani

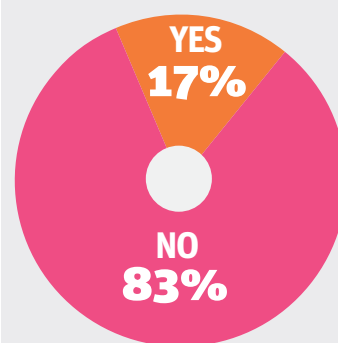
Goswell News, Islington, London
It would definitely put people off. It would be really hard for retailers as well because it is already so confusing with the

plain packaging on cigarettes. Think about how time consuming it would be to do it with the chocolate as well. Customers don't have time to find what they want. They don't have time to queue up as it is.

John Vine

Newsworld, Church Stretton
I don't think they'll do it. Where are they going to draw the line? I don't think it would affect sales. It does worry me when people come in with their children and they pick the full fat, sugar-filled drink. I always think they can choose what they want for themselves, but they should be thinking about what their children should have.

RN READER POLL



Has the growth in popularity of the discounters benefited your own label sales?

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION

Do you want more promotions on healthier products from your wholesaler?



Vote now at
betterRetailing.com

MY WORST FEARS OVER SMITHS NEWS MOVE BECAME REALITY

On 23 January I wrote an open letter regarding Smiths News transferring news from Northampton to Milton Keynes and said I had my reservations regarding delivery times, and I did question publishers' views regarding this.

Well, on 18 March my reservations became reality. The Times, The Sun, The Daily Mail and The Telegraph came extremely late.

I hope wholesalers will be good enough to refund delivery charges and compensate for lost sales. I am not holding my breath that any circulation manager or Smiths senior manager will bother to reply.

Since Smiths have started delivering from Milton Keynes I have had nothing but lost sales.

They do not have any



Plan B for late delivery or re-run. Surely the publishers don't want their business destroyed?

This is another prime example of monopoly at its best. I have said before and say it now: Smiths News is not fit for purpose.

Just look at the attitude of the company and its senior managers. Stop charging for the service which you have failed to fulfil.

Vijay Patel
Higham Newsagents,
Higham Ferrers, Northants

A spokeswoman for Smiths said: "Our operational team are reviewing the matters raised by Mr Patel and are focused on improving this performance quickly, and are pleased to see that services are improving."

100 YEARS AGO

31 March 1917

The war could not have been successfully waged without the aid of newspapers, according to Sir Horace Brooks Marshall. He encouraged people in the trade to help where they could.

AROUND WITH THE ROUNDSMAN

Blanche Fairbrother



Just what is going on with these wretched delivery times? It's Friday 17 March and my driver has just told me the earliest he can deliver will be 5.20am. It's beyond a joke.

In the last two weeks the Daily Express and Daily Star have been on a re-run twice.

On the first occasion, I went without them because I couldn't wait and I told people they hadn't bothered to get to me on time.

They weren't too bothered but last week the Daily Mail was also on a re-run. I really don't think the publishers care whether their papers are sold or not these days.

The Mirror has not done itself any favours with its 35p-a-week price increase and I've got folks who have cancelled the Sunday Mirror because of

the hike. Why can't they see they are pricing themselves out of work?

I am having to do a detour for a couple of weeks around Doley and Adbaston as the council is doing a major road repair job, fixing potholes – and there are a lot of them.

My van has had some serious wheel trouble, caused by the dreadful state of the lanes I have to drive along each day.

Of course, this will mean another nervous breakdown for my bank balance.

I'm still trying to get my head around the Cheltenham Festival racegoer who placed a cash bet of half a million pounds on one horse to win but it finished in fifth place.

It is beyond comprehension to me – and slightly obscene – but at least the bookie will be smiling.

YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENTS THIS WEEK

contact us facebook.com/ThisisRN and @ThisisRN



V. happy shopkeepers - We've been trading for 6 months, made lots of new friends & tripled the turnover!

Tom, Trudy & Josh
[@tywardreathshop](https://twitter.com/tywardreathshop)



Wow new Coca-Cola rustic stands looking great
@ccep

Raj Aggarwal
[@Spar_Wigston](https://twitter.com/Spar_Wigston)

You would have to drive a long way to find a better deal than this one. #shoplocally
@tickhilltaylor. You know it makes sense.

Taylor's of Tickhill
[@tickhilltaylor](https://twitter.com/tickhilltaylor)



When double facing, try front page and back page facing up, also our free stands, impactful and all an aid to guarantee those extra sales

Jeanett Harris
[@Jeanett_NewsUK](https://twitter.com/Jeanett_NewsUK)



Why not spend your first new £1 coin in a local shop, or better still, donate it to charity!

Watts' News
[@newswatts](https://twitter.com/newswatts)



Come & see our range of gifts & Cornish goods in store now #local

Spar Kilkhampton
[@SparKilk](https://twitter.com/SparKilk)

YOUR NEWS

Groceries delivered in digital mission

A Huddersfield retailer is trying to tap into the digital trend by signing up with Deliveroo and developing a grocery delivery app.

Imran Ahmed, of Premier Poplar Stores, told RN he is trying to get ahead of other retailers in the town, by offering delivery services before any of his competitors.

"We have started working with Deliveroo to offer our customers delivery on sweets, soft drinks and alcohol," he said.

"The idea is they will order the items alongside takeaway orders because we offer a better range of things like craft ale."

Mr Ahmed is also developing his own digital loyalty card-come-delivery app to provide grocery deliveries too. He hopes it will be up and running in four weeks.

Planning loophole to close

A loophole which has allowed empty pubs in England to be converted for retail use without planning application is to close in a move supported by the government.

Vip Measuria, of One-Stop Draycott – a former pub in Derby, said: "Former pub sites offer great opportunities for independent retailers because they are usually in residential locations and have car parking."

"It would have been very difficult for me if this site hadn't been available because there was nothing else suitable in the area."

The move comes following a campaign by the Campaign for Real Ale.



Spar and Budgens retailer designs bespoke refrigerator Low unit ideal for cross promotions

Susie's got designs for improving chilled sales

by Jennifer Hardwick

jennifer.hardwick@newtrade.co.uk

A retailer in Warwickshire has designed her own refrigeration unit to maximise her chilled and frozen sales.

Susie Tew, a director at the Simon Smith Group, which runs five Spar and two Budgens forecourt stores, had the island unit installed at the group's newest store in Cubington, ahead of its opening in January.

Mrs Tew worked with manufacturer Pastorfrigor to create the design, which is unique to the 1,800sq ft Compton Garage store. It includes extra shelving in the low height cabinet, which stands at just 1.5 metres tall.

"I wanted as low a fridge as possible but I didn't want to compromise on range," she said.

"You can get these big 2.2-metre-high fridges but I find them quite austere when you come into a small convenience store, which

this one is."

The site faces a large amount of competition from a number of other convenience stores and supermarkets within a mile radius. As a result, the group has been focused on making sure it stocks as many products as possible to drive footfall. Mrs Tew said that meant the chilled range had to be extensive.

"These days you have to offer a big chilled range," she said.

"People are generally

buying for tonight or at the most tomorrow night, and cans and tins and even frozen products are now in decline.

"I really am thrilled. The island is situated near the produce section, so it's ideal for cross promotions, link deals and cross merchandising. It's easy for our customers to get everything they need."

The group is now considering implementing the same unit in another one of its stores.

'Do food to go differently' and grow

Independent retailers need to find new ways to offer innovative food to go to remain competitive.

That was the key message from leading retailers at last week's Retail's Best event, in the West Midlands.

Speaking to RN following the event panel member Jonathan James, of James

Retail, said he stressed the importance of being reactionary to customers and identifying what they want.

"I think the days of stodge have gone," he said. "Youngsters, particularly, are far more health-conscious and they like to see where it's been prepared – if you can prepare it in front of

them, even better. We need to move away from the hot bake."

Londis retailer Chris Woodruff told guests that having installed an open kitchen and offering locally sourced food to go, he now sees a monthly turnover of £30,000 just on food to go – compared to £1,000 – 10 years ago.

"It's a massive growth area," he said. "We've seen 12% growth year on year for the last three years."

Mark Barnard, operations manager of JSK Services, meanwhile, highlighted food delivery as an opportunity for independents. "We are going to miss out if we, as retailers, don't tap into that demand," he said.

YOUR NEWS

Stores with no self-checkout losing sales

Retailers who do not use self-checkout tills could be missing out on an opportunity to drive sales, after a Spar store saw a 28% uplift in card transactions in the first week after installing four.

Spar Lancaster Uni implemented the tills in April last year, which are card payment only and do not use scales – offering

a quicker method of payment for its customers.

“Lancaster Uni went from eight tills to four and it grew its card sales from 18% to 46% in one week,” said Dominic Feeney, managing director at CBE – the installation company – who presented at last week’s ACS Technology Showcase.

“There’s no reason that

uptake won’t happen in other convenience stores.

“It’s a case of looking at your sales data – we can identify when your tills are under pressure and when they are idle.”

The company has also launched self-checkouts in Spar Hull University and Abbeyside Filling station in Selby – the first independent petrol station

in the UK to use cashless checkouts.

Sheridan Hindle, ICT director at James Hall & Co, said: “The store opted for the small footprint checkouts without scales to reduce cost and complexity. Speed of transaction is increased as is the space available to maximise the number of checkouts installed.

Smiths’ MK move rings alarm bells over delivery

Retailers are continuing to lose sales following Smiths News’s closure of its Northampton distribution centre, despite the wholesaler’s assurance the move was focused on improving performance.

Vinesh Patel, of Happy News in Northampton, said he has lost at least £150 worth of sales a day since 14 March, the day after his delivery was switched to the Milton Keynes centre.

“Customers understand for a day or two but after 10 days they are just going elsewhere,” he said. “The service is absolutely disgusting. When I call up they say a manager will call me back but they don’t.”

The closure resulted in 544 retailers being transferred to the wholesaler’s Peterborough and Milton Keynes distribution centres, as reported by RN last week.

Vijay Patel, of Higham Newsagents in Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, has also been receiving his newspapers past 8am consistently since the closure.

A Smiths spokeswoman said services are improving.



Mahesh and Arti Odedra are delighted with customers’ response to their newly-refurbished Bury St Edmunds store

£80,000 store development is paying off for retailer ‘We’ve made food to go a big focus’

Delight after store refit boosts basket spend 30%

by **Charlie Faulkner**

charlie.faulkner@newtrade.co.uk

An £80,000 store refit led to a change in customers’ shopping habits, resulting in a 35% uplift in turnover and a growth in average basket spend.

Speaking to RN, Mahesh Odedra, of Lake Avenue Store and Post Office – a Premier in Bury St Edmunds – said he has seen the average basket spend rise from £5.00 to £6.50, after increasing his store from 1,000sq ft to 1,350sq ft.

“We finished the £80,000 refit at the end of last year and saw a 20% increase year on year in the first couple of weeks,” said Mr Odedra, who bought the store in November 2015 with his wife Arti.

“We’ve made food to go a big focus, increasing our offering with Country Choice hot food and baked goods. We added a coffee machine, a slush machine and we now have a dedicated kid’s zone with confectionery aimed at them.”

He added: “People seem to want quick snacks and ready-prepared food as opposed to conventional sandwiches.”

The store has also increased its alcohol offering from one metre to six and has gone from accounting for 8% of the turnover to 25%. Two upright freezers have also been added and the store now sells £1,200 of frozen products on a weekly basis.

“I’ve been surprised how quickly people have taken to the new store but my

customers’ shopping habits have changed,” said Mr Odedra.

“People have become more reliant on the store and come in more frequently as a result.”

“Independent retailers need to make sure they’re offering a good variety to their customers and that’s going to be our focus going forward,” he said. “The last owner had become too comfortable and it needed a lift – I think we’ve been successful in doing that.”

Retailer sees the light and saves £100

A retailer in Shropshire has saved more than £100 on his energy bill by switching his light bulbs to LEDs.

John Vine, of Newsworld, Church Stretton, swapped a number of bulbs in his store last year, enabling him to go from using 25 regular bulbs to 13 LEDs.

“It has made the bills much cheaper and the store also looks much brighter,” he said.

“It was really easy and it didn’t take us long at all, but it’s saved us so much money so it’s definitely worthwhile.”

YOUR NEWS



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YOUR REGION



SCOTLAND NFRN CONFERENCE REPORT 20-21.03.2017

Fiona Davidson reports from the annual NFRN Scotland conference

NFRN must adapt to industry change

The NFRN must adapt to the changing industry and identify how best to do so by engaging with its members.

Speaking at the Scotland district's annual conference in Dundee last week, national president Ray Monelle told delegates the federation needs to change and focus on issues such as members' profitability if it is to move forward.

"We have a lot more to offer than just the news side," he said.



Ray Monelle

"Our main aim is to get money in our members' tills. Influencing law and policy is a role

we must address more than we have ever done before."

Paul Baxter, NFRN chief executive, highlighted the importance of engaging with the industry. "It is important we understand the political climate and consumers' views," he said. "We have to get the views of members but we mustn't think it is only our views that matter."

"The market is changing. Are we engaging with political changes? Are we engaging with economic changes?"

He added: "The job of the organisation is to plan for the future."

New president Gail's message

Moving with the times will be a key theme for the Scottish district in the year ahead, Gail Winfield told delegates, as she took over as their



Gail Winfield

New Scottish president Gail Winfield and outgoing president David Forbes



newly-appointed president.

Addressing the meeting, she said: "Make no bones about it, we must adapt to survive. We must, as a solid unit, work together for the common aim to stay in business."

In other elections, Edinburgh member Abdul Qadar was elected as Scottish vice president.

The Scottish executive committee now comprises Arshad Ahmed (Edinburgh), Aleem Farooqi (Edinburgh), James Brown (Ayrshire), Shahid Razzaq (Lanarkshire), George McCall (Dumfries), Tom O'Connor (Lanarkshire), Mohammed Ashraf (Edinburgh) and David Woodrow (Paisley).

Sharon Sisman, a former Scottish president and Fife retailer, joined the district's roll of honour, marking her decision to leave the retail business after many years of active service.

"I have made a lot of acquaintances and friends in the membership, staff and the trade," she said. "I hope that will continue."

Restitution 'is not working'

Ray Monelle urged retailers to submit invoices

Influencing law and policy is a role we must address more than we have ever done before

Ray Monelle

NFRN national president

to Menzies for loss of income as a result of late deliveries, because restitution was not working.

"Members who have lost business through supply and delivery failures should invoice the wholesaler for the amount of lost business and we can look at the possibility of taking legal action," he said.

The council also called for automatic restitution for supply and delivery failures, instead of members applying for it.

Sharon Sisman, who attended a meeting with other NFRN representatives at Menzies in Linwood, reported delivery runs were still being reviewed, but this would now be rolled out in stages. She added a proposal to fly newspapers to some Scottish islands again, instead of delivering them by ferry, had now been introduced.

Paul Baxter also emphasised problems with distribution of newspapers by wholesalers. He said: "Maybe we should stop asking for it to be done on a bit-by-bit basis and try and do it ourselves."

Lanarkshire member Des Donnelly highlighted the steady decline of

printing and distribution costs over the years.

Milk voucher scheme details

Scottish retailers are to have a say in which local shops become involved with the milk voucher initiative once the Scottish government takes over allocation of vouchers to low-income families.

David Woodrow reported some 34,000 Scottish households with young children were entitled to milk vouchers, worth £3.10 per child. Around 26,000 were currently using the scheme – an estimated take-up of 70%.

However, the Scottish government is to take over responsibility from Westminster for distributing the vouchers to households with an income of £16,800 or less.

"The Scottish government has approached retailers before they do anything about introducing the project – this has to be commended," said Mr Woodrow. "With an income limit of £16,800, those families entitled to the milk vouchers will be pushing their prams and buggies to the nearest local shop, to our members' stores, not jumping in the car and going to the supermarket."

"The Scottish government already knows where the 34,000 families who qualify are so we can go out and identify retailers in these areas."

The project was in its early stages, he added, but there was a £5.2m budget for Scotland.

"They are looking at ways of doing it securely and as effectively as possible," he said.



David Woodrow



Sharon Sisman

YOUR REGION



YORKSHIRE NFRN DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT 14.03.2017

John Dean reports from the NFRN Yorkshire district council meeting

Menzies hear it for themselves

Delegates raised concerns about the poor service from Menzies when they met representatives of the company in Wakefield earlier this month, council heard.

The meeting came after members at the district meeting in January discussed problems including inadequate documentation, late deliveries and missing titles.

Chesterfield member Stuart Reddish told delegates at the meeting, Menzies said it was not investing further in the newspaper distribution system.

"They said for the first time that they are not prepared to put money into the system. They are not listening to us, they are doing what they want to do, and the ones who suffer are our members," he said.

District vice president Tas Sangha, who also attended the meeting, said: "They are saying that if a delivery is late then it's late. We are at the bottom of the pile here.

"We have to keep going, we have to keep flagging up the problems, but we are not going to change their business model."

York member James Wilkinson said the matter should be taken up at a national level, adding: "They have just put our carriage charges up so they are getting more money in."

Barnsley member Ian Sanders, who said



his print trade was faring well, said it was important the federation fought as hard as it could. "It is no good rolling over and putting our feet in the air," he said.

Incoming district president Jay Banning said the district would continue to take the issue to future meetings with Menzies. "We have to keep working on this until something positive comes out of it," he said.

Ex-president's work praised

Leeds member Jay Bann-



Andrew Taylor has been a first-class district president

Roy Turnbull

Hull retailer

ing was selected to serve as district president as Andrew Taylor's two-year term came to an end.

Accepting the role, Mr Banning said he would do his best to serve the district and would seek guidance from the large array of experienced people on the committee.

An election was held for the role of district vice president between Five Towns member Kate Brown and Bradford member Tas Sangha, which Mr Sangha won by 15 votes to 12.

As Andrew Taylor stood down, he said the highlight of his time in office had been the presentation of two cheques to members whose businesses had been hit hard by flooding.

"Visiting them gave such an insight into what the district and this organisation can do to help members get back on their feet when things like this happen," he said.

Mr Taylor also praised the sense of unity the district had shown during his time as president.

Paying tribute to Mr

Taylor, Hull member Roy Turnbull said: "He has been a first-class district president and has been well supported."

Deputy hopefuls win support

Members voted to give their support to one of the two Yorkshire candidates who had put their names forward to stand for the post of national deputy vice president.

Stuart Reddish received 20 votes and fellow candidate Kate Brown received seven.

There was no debate at the meeting, but both candidates presented their cases for election at the January vote.

After members voted to support his candidature, Mr Reddish said, if elected to the national role, he would always remember the Yorkshire district and would keep members informed of national developments.

Three national councillors elected

The district voted to select its three national councillors for the coming year.

There were six candidates standing for the roles and the three elected were Andrew Taylor, who received 23 votes, James Wilkinson, 20 votes, and Stuart Reddish, 18 votes.

Branch remains in operation

Grimsby member John Grice said, despite fears the Grimsby and Scunthorpe branch would have to close due to low attendances, members have decided it will continue to operate.



Your say

Do you offer, or would you consider offering, parcel deliveries and collections in your store?



We have signed up to three services, including Smiths News's Pass my Parcel, and we do it because it increases footfall in the store. It has worked, it really does get more people visiting us.

Kishor Patel
Riddlesden Convenience
Keighley



We try to offer as many services as we can. We started doing parcels because it is a way of getting people into the store who might not normally visit. It has worked and we are making a profit from it.

Mark Coldbeck
Wharfedale Premier,
Hull



We have started the Smiths service and we like the idea because it gets a good quality of customer into the store. A lot of the people we see have not been customers before so we are attracting new people.

Stephen Hunter
Old Road News,
Bradford

YOUR REGION



WALES NFRN DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT 23.03.2017

Jenny Sims reports from the NFRN Wales district council meeting

New president sets out his stall

Mark Dudden outlined his priorities for the year ahead as he took up the position of president of the newly-formed Wales district.

At the first ever annual general meeting of the new district council, Mr Dudden, former South Wales district president and Cardiff retailer, said: "One of my priorities in the coming year will be addressing business rates."



Mark Dudden

In Wales, the devolved government has said any increase would receive taper relief. Mr Dudden also expressed concern over diminishing profit margins on newspaper sales. He told delegates he was disappointed an invitation to Media Wales for a speaker to address the meeting about issues with deliveries, distribution and other problems had been declined.

Media Wales was not supporting members, Mr Dudden said, and pledged to continue to pursue the matter.

In other elections, Cardiff retailer Dee Goberdhan was voted in as the Wales district's vice president and Pembroke retailer Peter Robinson and Mr Dudden were elected as national councillors.

Penrhyn Bay retailer John Parkinson retained his position as national councillor as part of the merger agreement between the former South Wales and Mersey Dee and North Wales districts.



Retailers will visit the Welsh Assembly next month

Retailers talk to Welsh Assembly

Welsh retailers will have the opportunity to express their concerns about the industry to the Welsh Assembly at a Senedd reception in Cardiff Bay on 4 April.

Council members asked which Assembly Members (AMs) would be attending and whether they had particular interests and responsibilities for business, so they could target them appropriately on the night.

They also requested information about what



One of my priorities in the coming year will be addressing business rates

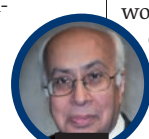
Mark Dudden

First president of NFRN Wales district

control the Senedd had over setting business rates.

Swansea member Dev Aswani told members information about AMs was available on the Welsh government's website.

Meanwhile, members, including Peter Robinson, raised concerns about the NFRN's support of a pilot bottle deposit scheme. Council members agreed they would seek the Welsh Assembly's support in opposing its introduction in Wales.



Dev Aswani

Anger over extra time for football

Members expressed anger at News Media's announcement that publishers had agreed to implement another cut-off extension.

The move, which affected wholesalers in Swansea and Newport on Saturday 25 March, was due to the World Cup football qualifier game between Wales and Ireland.

Retailers in the area are already experiencing delays caused by the closure of Cardiff printing works for Media Wales, deliveries having to travel from Watford and Birmingham and disruptions on the M4. Members said this, coupled with the cut-off extension, meant they feared they would not have any papers to sell.

Survey support

Members were encouraged to respond to the NFRN's Connect Improvement Surveys.

Membership services manager Chris Appleton said the Wales district's membership stood at 797 on 5 March, but between then and 18 March there had only been nine registered complaints to NFRN Connect.

Meanwhile, Mr Appleton also reminded members EUTPD II regulations come into effect on 20 May and warned them to make sure their ranges were fully compliant by this deadline.

"If your stock does not conform to the rules, on 21 May you will be non-compliant and could be fined," he said.

Members were also told the NFRN's Independent Retail Report 2017 is available to download from the NFRN website.

Your say

How have you used feedback from customers to improve your range and services?



We've cut queueing at the post office counter

by letting people buy stamps elsewhere in the shop. We've relocated newspapers, magazines and cards and ordered specialist magazines. We've also delisted products sold cheaper at Home Bargain and improved training after a complaint.

Vyas Sharma
Albany Post Office,
Cardiff



I use feedback all the time to influence

what I stock. Recently, I started ordering Bacon Grill - a type of spam - for a customer. Another wanted a honey I used to sell, so I've started reordering it. Keep customers happy and they keep coming back.

John Rowlands
Broadway Premier News,
Penrhyn Bay, north Wales



We're always looking to improve

things. We've been doing food to go for 10 years, and by listening to what people want we've recently increased our takeaways by 20 to 30 day. We've also recently started the Pass My Parcel service for the village.

Clive Birkby
Maescymmer Stores,
Cwm Rhymni

YOUR REGION



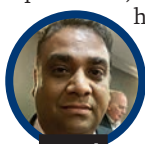
LONDON NFRN DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT 21.03.2017

Tim Murray reports from the NFRN London district council meeting

Smiths' move is a cause for concern

London district members are concerned about Smith News' plan to move its operations from Borehamwood to Hemel Hempstead.

Hetal Patel, of Berks and Bucks, said: "The problem is, they don't



Hetal Patel

have a clue which shop is where. They've passed my shop, delivered to four more, then

came back to mine."

Other delegates highlighted a need for home news delivery customers to be given priority.

Peter Wagg confirmed delegates had been in talks with Smiths News. He said: "There are always going to be problems, but I'm quite confident they are doing all they possibly can to do it right."

"We did, however, raise the issue of RDTs. I'd implore all of you to get in touch with Smiths and ask what your RDT is."

Retailers facing news challenge

Members warned news distribution companies are encroaching on traditional news retailers' territory.

Companies such as Gold Key Media and the Smiths-owned Martin-Lavell and Menzies-owned JYL, which distribute to hotels, offices, businesses and hospitals, among others, are damaging their businesses, it was claimed.

Peter Wagg informed delegates the NFRN has been in discussions with the respective companies and their parent operators, with the hope of "drawing a line in the



London NFRN members are worried delivery drivers don't know where their shops are located

sand" to prevent their further incursion into traditional newsagents' territory.

Rajendra Wadher, delegate for Berks and Bucks, said: "I think they're getting an unfair advantage over us."

Call on RDMs to boost numbers

Concerns were raised about the dwindling number of members in the South-end branch, with a call



Adrian Cooke



I'd implore all of you to get in touch with Smiths and ask what your RDT is

Peter Wagg

London retailer

for more support from RDMs. Adrian Cooke told London delegates he is anxious about filling positions in the branch.

"We're at the tail of one long line down to the coast," he said. "But I'm worried about the numbers dwindling. What can the RDMs do to support? We've built up a lot of expertise over the years and we'd like to pass it on, but we need help. We've tried a lot of different things."

Peter Wagg said he would talk to the NFRN's membership services

team. "We'll see if there's anything we can do to get people to assist," he said.

A social event to replace more traditional branch meetings was also suggested as a means by which to drive engagement with retailers in the area.

Pravin takes on president's role

Pravin Shah took over as London district president from Ravi Raveendran.

In his outgoing speech, Mr Raveendran said:

"I have enjoyed my year, I attended a lot of meetings and worked with wholesalers and trade partners for the betterment of our members."

Mr Shah, who was unable to accept the role when previously nominated, said: "It's been a while coming. With all your support, we'll get the year going smoothly."



Pravin Shah

Call for southern awards entries

Members were encouraged to submit their entries for the annual Southern District Awards.

Ralph Patel, of Croydon and South London, said: "We're looking for more entries for this. If you think your store or other stores are looking good, we'd encourage you to enter them."

Combined event

The London East and Central branch is hosting a combined branch meeting, social event and trade show on Sunday 23 April at the City Pavilion, Romford, combining the best of all three events to attract a higher turnout.

Your say

Have you installed, or would you consider installing, digital advertising screens in your shop?



I installed our own digital screens five years ago and we're about to replace them. We have magazines and confectionery on there. It's really worked for us. We've encouraged suppliers to come and see them in action and I'd encourage any retailer to get them.

Peter Wagg

News On The Wharf, Canary Wharf



I'd definitely have them in my shop. We're in a village so as well as advertising, it would be good to use it as a community message board. We'd use it in the way retailers used to use message boards with notes stuck on them.

Ralph Patel

The Look In, Woodmansterne, Surrey



I haven't done it yet, but I'd definitely be interested. I would like to have some sort of control over it. I'm a Londis retailer, so I'd like to have our offers on there and would like to work with them.

Ushma Amin

Londis North Cheam, Surrey

Which five products could make you an extra £8.5k in sales per year?



Find out only in RN's What to Stock 9 June

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ADVICE CENTRE



How to make international titles work

Perry Thaker, of Charlotte Street News, Fitzrovia, London explains how he drives sales of international newspapers and magazines

While not for everyone, retailers near business parks, universities, city centres or major transport hubs could be missing a trick if they don't stock international news titles.

This is particularly true in the current political atmosphere: the US election and change of president triggered an uplift in sales of US

titles, while a similar surge is anticipated this year as French and German national elections take place.

Perry Thaker has been stocking international titles for 30 years in his central London store, Charlotte Street News, in Fitzrovia.

In this week's Advice Centre, he shares his expertise in handling this niche category.

1

Assess whether your store is suited to international titles

International news titles can be expensive – the New York Sunday Times retails at £12.60 – so not every outlet will be able to sell them. “A lot of ours are demanded by offices, so I think it works better in city centre areas where there are lots of businesses, travellers, and wealthy residents,” says Perry.

2

Decide what range of titles to stock

Getting the right range involves a careful analysis of the demographics of your local area. “We stock a lot of European titles,” says Perry. “We have French and Italian restaurants near us and their staff will buy a paper to see what's happening back home. I don't sell Middle-Eastern titles where I am – but if I was in the Edgware Road area of north-west London, I definitely would.”

3

Contact the publishers

A first point of call for well-known publications is QuickMarsh, a distributor specialising in foreign news, which offers more than 100 titles. In the case of more niche papers, retailers may need to do some research of their own. “People ask ‘do you have this one?’ and if we don't have it, we Google it, contact the publisher and get it in stock,” Perry says.

4

Display your range effectively

Perry places his international range on a stand at the front of his store, highlighting to passers-by that he has a range of international titles. This immediately flags up a point of difference in his business. Furthermore, if you are located near a major transport hub, glimpsing a familiar title from back home is a good way of catching a prospective customer's eye.

5

Communicate with your customers

Perry says for much of the three decades he has owned his store, his range has been very stable, and he has stocked the same international titles. But his customers know that if they can't find something in stock, they can always ask him to order it in. “Sometimes people only want something for a limited period of time, and we can arrange that for them,” he says.

If you've had a great idea for your business or would like advice from other retailers to get started contact Chris Rolfe at chris.rolfe@newtrade.co.uk

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Customer Service

The IAA's Chris Rolfe and Post Office's Peter Johnson met Paresh Vyas to discuss how to engage shoppers and meet their needs.



Name: Paresh Vyas
Shop: JND Stores
Location: Manchester
Size: 900sq ft
Staff: Four part-time

The Independent Achievers Academy is a learning and development programme. Academy in Action shows how retailers like you are working with our partners to use the Academy's advice to increase sales and profits



At the heart of a large housing estate and with two schools on its doorstep, Paresh Vyas's Premier shop is popular with a huge number of regular shoppers.

But space is at a premium in the 900sq ft business, so offering a quick and friendly service to grocery shoppers, while also serving customers who have come in for the store's Lottery, PayPoint and parcel services can be a challenge, and tempers can fray if queues get too long.

Paresh understands that to offer great service and drive sales, he needs to set high service standards, engage with his customers, handle their complaints and ask for their feedback.

He is also keen to introduce new products to meet his customers' wide-ranging needs and increase their basket spend.

The IAA joined Paresh at his shop to offer tips on improvements he can make to better the service he offers.

Paresh's Challenge

With one till serving a mix of grocery shoppers and people using in-store services, impatient customers can be a challenge.



PARESH SAYS

I've been in this shop since 1979 but it's always good to get new ideas and advice. I wanted to get a fresh pair of eyes to look at what we're doing here and to get some advice on how to handle some of our more difficult customers. It's tricky managing queues and introducing the right new products so I'd like to try some new ideas.

IAA ADVICE

1 Handle complaints effectively

"Some customers have no patience, so when someone is collecting a parcel, people queuing won't wait," says Paresh. It's important, says Peter, to understand these customers' issues, but also set clear standards about what behaviour is acceptable. "Try to understand the problem, and model a clear standard about behaviour you will and won't accept for your staff. Remember, customers have friends and family and word will spread about what's acceptable in your shop." He also advises Paresh to be on hand at busy times and talk to unhappy customers. Paresh adds he equips his staff to handle tricky situations through weekly role playing where he acts as angry shoppers.



Action:
Write down how you want to handle complaints and tricky situations

2 Anticipate and exceed customers' needs

Paresh encourages staff to link-sell related products to drive basket spend. Peter agrees this is an effective way to drive sales, but warns Paresh to avoid over-selling. "Ask about additional products frequently, but not every time, so shoppers don't think you're being pushy. You can ask if they found everything they needed and show them where things are if they didn't. Ask if they've seen new products you're stocking too."

Paresh is keen to introduce new products, but to make sure he stocks the right ones, he recently conducted shopper surveys. As a result, he's introduced locally-sourced sour dough and olive bread. Peter suggests Paresh survey about his customer service as well.



Action:
Ask for feedback on your customer service and make changes to improve

3 Present your staff and shop professionally

While Paresh has owned his shop for 38 years, some staff members have only been with him a few months, and he is keen to instil high standards in them. This, says Peter, can be achieved by modelling the behaviour he expects to see. "Your customers shop here because they know and trust you. You need to set standards on how to greet customers, dress and behave." He suggests Paresh introduces a uniform or asks all staff to wear certain colours and name badges to help customers identify them. This will also make new employees feel part of a team. "I ask everyone to wear trousers or jeans but not track suits," says Paresh, who adds he'll consider introducing a standardised dress code.



Action:
Introduce a dress code and name badges so staff stand out to customers

PARTNER ADVICE

“ The visit to Paresh's store has been very positive. He is clearly a community man who wants to offer a great service to his customers, and he has a good relationship with his staff and shoppers. Today has been about a very important principle for customer service – looking at how Paresh can set high standards himself then encourage staff to meet them.

Peter Johnson
Senior Network Transformation Manager
The Post Office



BENCHMARK YOUR SHOP

& save your progress at betterRetailing.com/IAA

Tick all that you see evidence of

Presenting your staff and shop professionally

- ☐ Is your shop floor clean, presentable and well lit?
- ☐ Are you and your staff dressed professionally with easy-to-read name badges?
- ☐ Are your aisles clear of clutter, stock waiting to be put on shelves and rubbish?

Engaging with customers so they feel welcome

- ☐ Do staff greet customers with eye contact and a smile?
- ☐ Do staff manage queues so customers are served quickly?
- ☐ Do staff get to know customers names and engage in conversation with them?

Setting the standard and sticking to it

- ☐ Do you have customer service standards in place?
- ☐ Do you share these with your staff so they know your expectations?
- ☐ Do you check to ensure standards are upheld and staff are going the extra mile?

Handling suggestions and complaints

- ☐ Do staff apologise and try to make things right when a customer complains?
- ☐ Do you have a process to record customer suggestions or complaints including when to escalate them?
- ☐ Do you make changes based on what customers suggest or complain about?

Anticipating and exceeding customer expectations

- ☐ Do staff get to know customers' needs by asking for feedback?
- ☐ Do staff openly offer help to customers with things like packing their bags?
- ☐ Do staff know what you sell so they can advise customers on where something is?

What's working and things to fix

Your action plan

- ☐ Review this week's benchmarks in your shop, then save your answers at betterRetailing.com/IAA
- ☐ Go to betterRetailing.com/Academy-in-Action to see more of Paresh's shop
- ☐ Call the events team on **020 7689 0600 (Option 3)** to find out how you can take part in a future visit

COLUMNIST



Neville Rhodes

Ever get that flat feeling?

As refreshing as it is to hear a publisher fighting back when a wholesaler points the finger for lateness, a collaboration to find a solution would be a better idea

A sales manager for one of the national newspapers told RN recently he had lost count of the number of times he had been told late delivery of his supplies to shops was caused by a flat tyre.

When blame for lateness is being dished out it's usually the publishers that are in the firing line, and it's rare to hear somebody from their end of the supply chain fighting back with a suggestion that it's the performance of the wholesalers that needs to be looked at.

So I decided to make a start by checking what happened at some randomly chosen mainland UK wholesale branches on randomly selected days. My survey, using the industry's National Distribution Monitor, covered the performance

of 25 wholesale branches on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday during the first two weeks of this month.

Most of my findings were depressing. Less than half of inbound deliveries – 154 out of 328 – were compliant with the publishers' scheduled arrival times (SATs), and on six occasions one or more titles arrived at or after the wholesaler's cut-off time.

None of these late arrivals required a re-run or second delivery, and in four of the cases the vast majority of delivery times to retailers (RDTs or SDTs) were met – a noteworthy effort by the wholesalers involved.

That was the good news: retailers elsewhere weren't so fortunate. A total of 1,148 deliveries from the 25 wholesalers in my survey ar-



Has wholesale news distribution succumbed so much to wave after wave of cost-cutting that it's now just a 'chuck it and chance it' operation?

rived later than the retailers' RDTs or SDTs.

If this were typical across the network of 76 mainland UK wholesalers, it would suggest there are around 3,500 late deliveries a day.

As my findings show, the publishers are partly to blame, but when the last title arrives at the wholesaler 25 minutes or more before the cut-off time it is surely the wholesaler's fault if retailers' supplies do not arrive on time.

I have argued before that cut-off

times which are too late to allow retailers' delivery times to be met are pointless – other than to provide the publishers with an opportunity to miss their SATs with impunity – and that in their present form they should be scrapped.

Cut-off times are only one of the problems the wholesalers should be questioning.

Are their packing lines adequately staffed for the quickest possible finish? Can the drivers who start their rounds on time meet the RDTs or SDTs of all the retailers?

Or has wholesale news distribution succumbed so much to wave after wave of cost-cutting that it's now just a 'chuck it and chance it' operation?

News retailers are entitled to ask these questions, particularly now carriage charges have reached such eye-watering levels. Paying between £4 and £8 a day for the delivery of time-sensitive supplies that frequently arrive late are not just an outrage: coming from a monopoly supplier they are an abuse of market power.

The wholesalers are still telling the world about their 'nightly miracle', but the evidence from my small survey suggests their delivery service is an early morning nightmare for some of their customers. Pumping up the tyres of their contractors' vehicles won't solve the problems.

Neville Rhodes is a freelance journalist and former retailer

★ Don't blame Living Wage

+ **Menzies Distribution's recent** letter to customers announcing yet another increase in carriage charges cited next month's rise to £7.50 an hour in the National Living Wage (NLW) as a factor in the decision. Really? If, as I believe, many of Menzies' delivery drivers are self-employed contractors, they are not covered by NLW regulations, and so will not qualify for an automatic increase. If, on the other hand, some of Menzies' drivers are employees, it is very unlikely they would accept the NLW as their hourly rate, particularly given the unsocial hours of their work. Why not be honest with customers and just say that "rising costs have made the service unsustainable without an increase"? Retailers know why the charges are being increased – and it's got very little to do with the cost of deliveries.

INDUSTRY PROFILE

Taylors of Harrogate

With more people than ever looking for variety in the hot drinks category, Taylors of Harrogate's Helen Boulter says it is important for convenience stores to ensure they have a good range of bestsellers. Chris Rolfe finds out more

RN How is Yorkshire Tea performing in convenience at the moment?

HB The brand is going from strength to strength. It is the fastest growing major black tea brand and Yorkshire Tea Decaf 80 is the number one decaf tea. Yorkshire Tea's sales increased by £2.2m from 2015 to 2016. We were also delighted to see the brand cementing its position as the only FMCG brand to be listed in the top 10 YouGov Brand Index, ranking at number seven on the list for the second year running.

RN You're adding to your premium coffee range at the moment. Is premium coffee a big trend in convenience?

HB Premium coffee definitely has a role in convenience. This year we are focusing on our convenience listings and are launching new pricemarked packs of our best-selling Taylors of Harrogate Rich Italian and Decaffe coffee. There is a great opportunity for us to work closely with independents on this launch and make sure we are delivering great value for convenience retailers and consumers.

RN Which other big trends are driving sales and product development in the tea and coffee market?

HB We continue to see an increase in pricemarking. There is no doubt pricemarked packs are important in convenience stores as they give shoppers confidence in the store's pricing in comparison to larger outlets. Another trend influencing the drinks sector is the pursuit of healthier lifestyles. We want to

make sure Yorkshire Tea buyers who are looking to reduce their caffeine intake don't miss out, which is why we've worked to ensure Yorkshire Tea Decaf doesn't compromise on its quality or taste.

RN How are you working with convenience retailers to help them improve their tea and coffee ranges and sales?

HB The convenience sector is extremely important to us; we understand how crucial it is to work closely with this channel to reach new customers and access impulse sales. In smaller locations, a convenience store may be the first or only place where a consumer is able to shop and we want to ensure they can access their favourite tea or coffee brand. We have created a website, Brew View, which offers impartial advice on how to grow hot drink sales and profits and includes planograms and useful tips.



Premium coffee definitely has a role in convenience

RN What are the main mistakes you see independent stores making and how can retailers put these right?

HB We always recommend paying close attention to listings – in particular smaller pack sizes such as 40s and 80s offer lower pricemarks and great value. It's also important to bear your location and demographics in mind. If your store is in an affluent area, for example, you may wish to stock premium products such as Yorkshire Gold or Rich Italian coffee.

RN You've just launched £7m TV ads for Yorkshire Tea. Tell us about that.

HB Yorkshire Tea is the only major UK tea brand that has delivered growth in the tea market, where standard black tea sales are declining. Our new campaign was introduced to sustain sales growth and celebrate how the home of Yorkshire Tea is a place "where everything's done proper". It features celebrities such as Sir Michael Parkinson and the Brownlee Brothers, plus some of our staff. We couldn't think of more passionate people than our staff and there is no-one who better represents the brand.

** Company CV **

Company Taylors of Harrogate
Channel controller Helen Boulter

Profile Taylors of Harrogate was founded in 1886 and produces brands such as Taylors of Harrogate coffee and Yorkshire Tea – the UK's third biggest tea brand. It provides retailers with sales, ranging and category advice via its Brew View website.

Latest news Taylors recently launched a £7m TV ad campaign for Yorkshire Tea to maintain sales growth and promote the message that Yorkshire Tea is a place "where everything's done proper".

**

**

HOT DRINKS



Where is the growth?

Tea bags and instant coffee may still be the most popular hot drinks in the UK, but it's the swathe of new products entering the market which are responsible for most of the growth. **Dave Songer** hunts out the gaps in the market where suppliers are concentrating their efforts

GROWTH AREA 1

THE "HEALTHY TREAT" MARKET

Healthy indulgence may sound like a contradiction in terms but not in the hot drinks category. Cadbury Highlights, one of the first in this subsector, has been relaunched by Mondelez with a rebrand and new 38-calorie-per-portion recipe. The company's trade communications manager Susan Nash says the new look is designed to "increase shelf stand-out" and points to the new recipe's lower salt content as a further boost to its health credentials.



Julie Tate
Addison News,
Stockton-on-Tees



Cadbury Highlights is really popular in our store in January with our female customers, who want to be good in the new year and cut back on sugar.

GROWTH AREA 2

KID-FOCUSED PRODUCTS

Grandparents might have been serving up cups of Bournville Cocoa to children for decades, but Mondelez believes there is a gap for even more child-centric products on the market. This has led to the launch of Freddo Drinking Chocolate. With its place in consumers' hearts cemented thanks to its decades-long position as the pocket money-friendly chocolate bar, Freddo is already one of the 10 best-selling drinking chocolates on the market, according to industry data. It also ranked high with a Mumsnet consumers panel, with nearly four out of five people saying they would purchase it again.



We make sure we cater for children with hot chocolate, but the children who buy it in our store tend to favour Maltesers and Wispa varieties.



Andrew Taylor
Taylor's Premier Value
& Convenience Stores,
Hull



We make sure we cater for children with hot chocolate

GROWTH AREA 3

ETHICAL PRODUCE

Clipper was one of the first tea producers to gain Fairtrade accreditation, while coffee company Cafédirect was among the first for coffee in 1989. It has now become such big business, however, that leading major producers are also getting involved. Mondelez's Coffee vs Gangs campaign for Kenco is currently appearing on TV and online, while Nestlé's Nescafé Plan, which helps support farmers in coffee-growing areas, is also currently running.



Vip Panchmatia
Hexagon Stores,
Andover

We have only had ethically-sourced teas for a few months now and sales have been steady. People are more aware now, so they're good things to stock.





The only major black tea brand in growth -
with £2.2m new sales added last year*



Where everything's done proper



*Source IRI 52 w/e 31.12.16

HOT DRINKS

GROWTH AREA 4

THE AT-HOME BARISTA EXPERIENCE

What's a great way to get more people making coffee at home? Provide ready-to-use coffee pods that cut out the mess and waste of using a traditional espresso machine. While this market has been growing for over a decade, the likes of George Clooney (whose is the celebrity face of Nespresso) have helped bring these devices to the mainstream. Taylor's of Harrogate and Lavazza Blue are two brands which have now joined the pod-making game, pushing this format into the core ranges for stores of all kinds.



We have sold specialist coffee pod-maker Cru for a couple of months after the company approached. They have been well received and we sell three varieties, with 12 pods costing £3.99.



Nicholson Boyd
Pickles of London,
East London



Andrew Taylor
Taylor's Premier
Value & Convenience
Stores, Hull

We sell Twinings green teas, stocking a few different varieties. While they don't sell as quickly as traditional tea there is definitely a demand for something a little different.



Specialist teas sell well, so we make sure we keep them in stock

GROWTH AREA 5

THE ANYTHING-BUT-BUILDERS TEA MARKET

From the exotic sounding Russian Caravan tea and lapsang souchong to the manifold flavoured teas and infusions available today, teas come in a huge number of forms. Unilever has developed a range that helps open the category to those who are a little newer to it, with a range of teas that, it believes, will help to demystify the category and make it easier for anyone to try a different brew. Released to market in March, each of the 10-flavour range – including Himalayan Darjeeling, Black Tea with Vanilla and Gunpowder Green Tea – has an RRP of £3.99 for 16 pyramid tea bags, while loose leaf is £5.99.



We began stocking specialist teas, like mint, around a year ago. They sell well, so we make sure we keep them in stock.



Vip Panchmatia
Hexagon Stores,
Andover

GROWTH AREA 6

SHOPPERS NOW HAVE A THIRST FOR GREEN TEA

As the launch of Pure Leaf shows, green tea's moment in the sun is continuing apace (three of its 10-product range contains green tea as a base). Pure Leaf's Unilever stablemate PG Tips saw sales of its green and fruit teas soar by 64% in 2016 over the previous year, and the manufacturer has introduced a range that includes a simple green tea alongside green teas with lemon, mint, orange and even strawberry cupcake flavours.

Thanks to the rise of coffee shop culture more of us (74% according to one supplier) are picking up hot drinks out of home. What can retailers do to take advantage of this opportunity? We asked one great retailer and one top supplier for their five-steps plans to success

THE RETAILER

Chris Keeble

Constantine Stores,
Padstow



SET YOURSELVES APART

Standing out from your competitors is vital. We offer a premium barista-style service that focuses on espresso rather than bean-to-cup machines.

USE DRINKS TO SELL FOOD

Hot drinks go well with food and we take advantage of this to drive sales. It works particularly well in the form of a meal deal, such as our pasty and a coffee offer for £5.

PROMOTE LOYALTY

Loyalty cards are great incentives for our customers, who get a free coffee with every 10 purchases.

chases. For our regular customers we keep them by the till so they don't forget them.

ENCOURAGE CUSTOMERS TO STAY

We have a seating area outside that's there all year round, bringing in more in the summer. Having that encourages people to buy a cake or a sandwich.

CUSTOMERS LOVE LOCAL

We use Origin Coffee Roasters beans, which come from nearby Helston. We think that makes a big difference for coffee sales, which account for 2.5% of our total store sales.

THE SUPPLIER

Steve Causton

sales and operations manager,
Allied Drinks Systems



CHOOSE THE RIGHT POSITION

Putting a coffee machine in the right place can make all the difference. The branding on the equipment is often bold, so position it close to the door to catch attention.

ENCOURAGE LINK SALES

Putting chocolate, sandwiches and snacks close to coffee machines is a good way to drive basket spend, as very often customers will want them with a hot drink.

PICK A RECOGNISED BRAND

Customers are brand aware, so offering a product like Millicano

will work well. It's Kenco, so people know it. That association is important.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Offer one size and charge the same price for everything. Overcomplicating the transaction with a different size and price will confuse customers and increase waste.

...AND MAKE IT THE RIGHT SIZE

We recommend 12oz (340ml) to be the most appropriate size – 16oz cups are too big and the bottom of the drink gets cold – and £1.25 is a reasonable price point. ●

BE YOUR OWN

Barista

STOCK UP ON THE
#1 BRAND
IN THE
SUPER PREMIUM
INSTANT COFFEE
SEGMENT



*Source: Global Data 52 w/e 28th January 2017

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It all starts with a
NESCAFÉ

COUNTERS

Opportunities worth taking

There was a time when only the bravest, most ambitious retailers would consider introducing a fresh food counter in their store. Not anymore. **Toby Hill** speaks to top retailers to top retailers to learn why the time is right for stores of all kinds to consider this leap

With the continuing growth in demand for high-quality fresh food, stores across the UK are taking the plunge and building in-store deli and butchery counters into their businesses. For some, this means showcasing a range of cold meats, cheeses and olives and letting customers pair them in sandwich fillings and take-away salads.

Others have joined forces with local businesses to offer a full butchery service to local shoppers.

Margins can be excellent – “easily over 50%”, according to David Heri-

tage, owner of Barns Green Village Stores in Horsham. But hefty start-up costs, high levels of waste, and the challenges of staff training and food hygiene deter many from taking the plunge. Here, we explore how several retailers have overcome these problems to establish thriving counters in their stores.



A number of stores have opted to introduce a butchery service



While others provided cheeses and cooked meats as part of a deli offer

THE DELI EXPERTS

The voice of experience

Siva Thievanayagan



Store: Nisa Local Fletton, Peterborough
Average basket spend: £8.50
Size: 3,000sq ft
Key products: Fruit salads, coleslaw, sun-dried tomatoes

Siva was far ahead of the curve, establishing a deli counter in his Peterborough store 15 years ago. “We’ve expanded it several times since, and every time sales have increased, both on the deli counter and on the shop floor,” he says. “So when we expanded it recently I decided to make it as big as possible, doubling the size from three to six metres. Fresh is what people are looking for – I’d say 50% of any store should be fresh these days.”

The new starter

Baz Jethwa



Store: Rocket Stores, Bolton
Average basket spend: £6.50
Size: 3,000sq ft
Key products: Sliced meats, cheese, sandwich fillings

When Baz decided to open his third store in Bolton, he chose to partner with Spar so he could place its ‘Daily Deli’ concept at its heart. “I want fresh and food to go to be the USP of our store,” he explains. “It’s going to be worth £3bn as a sector and you have to evolve with the times. We were even approached by Subway, but we wanted to have our own deli counter with the flexibility to offer cold meats, cheeses and so on. It’s been a great success so far.”

The village deli

David Heritage



Store: Barns Green Village Store, Horsham
Average basket spend: £6.50
Size: 1,000sq ft
Key products: Somerset brie, stilton, salami, stuffed olives

David’s store sits in the heart of a small Sussex village, near a large campsite that fills with holidaymakers every summer. He stocks an impressive range of fresh produce from the local area and beyond. “Deli is our most profitable department by far,” he says. “For the first 16 days of March, 7% of our takings came solely from the deli counter. In the summer, when campers stock up for picnic lunches, sales go through the roof. And it’s great for Christmas, of course.”



THREE STEPS TO DEVELOPING A SUCCESSFUL DELI SECTION

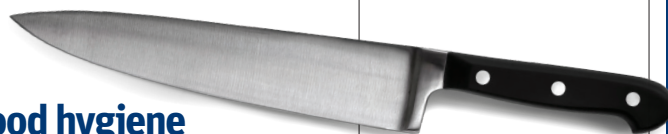
01 Design and ranging

David Heritage: When we opened nine years ago, we had a natural space at the back where we could have put shelves and baked beans and so on. But I thought it would be more interesting – for me and for my customers – to have a deli. So we tracked down a counter from a Smiths newspaper rep, which cost about £1,200. Most of our stock comes from a company called Anthony Rowcliff & Son, a massive wholesaler for deli counter products based in Seven-oaks. They're excellent.

Baz Jethwa: I worked closely with Spar and their rep James Hall, who was a great help. We sat down and talked through what we wanted to create: we wanted it to look modern, and to create a fresh ambience that's felt throughout the whole store. So we've put the menus on TV screens, and then kept everything as open as possible – the slicing and sandwich-making all goes on behind the deli counter.



If you're careful with hygiene, there are lots of creative opportunities to reduce waste



02 Staff training and food hygiene

David Heritage: A deli counter is very labour-intensive: you've got to wash your hands every time you use it, take care of food hygiene, and it takes time to slice meats and cheeses and make sandwiches. So you'll need an additional member of staff to make it work. But if you're careful with hygiene, there are lots of creative opportunities to reduce waste: we'll turn stale bread into bread-and-butter pudding, for example, and customers will comment on the smell and snap it up.

Siva Thievanayagan: It's essential to get one proper trained chef to oversee the counter, who can manage the section, delegating tasks to other staff members. You'll have to pay a bit of money for them, but it will pay for itself in the end. They can look after food hygiene and weigh up which products are and aren't working.



03 Marketing

Siva Thievanayagan: We highlight our deli counter on Facebook and in our leaflets. But a lot of our best business comes through word-of-mouth. For example, we have lots of offices and banks and other businesses nearby. Often, when they have meetings, they'll order sandwiches or snacks from us, because workers have been in and recommended our deli range to everyone else.

Baz Jethwa: We hit our local area in every way we could – we did a large leaflet drop, paid for adverts on a local radio show, and put coupons for a free deli-made sandwich in the local press. It's been a great success and brought loads of people in. We'll do a similar promotion again soon.



BUTCHERY COUNTERS

Though rarer than deli counters, a growing number of store owners are opting to build an in-store butchery in their businesses. David Charman is one such innovative retailer.



Store: Spar Parkfoot, Kent
Average basket spend: £7.60
Size: 2,950sq ft
Key products: Local sausage, roasting joints, Christmas turkeys

David has had a butchers in his store, a petrol forecourt and shop, for four years. "It took some time to win customers' trust," he says. "At first we relied on sales of locally-made sausages. Then people bought chicken, and then their Sunday lunch joints of lamb and beef. Finally, we've started supplying turkeys for Christmas – this year, we sold 350."

STAFF TRAINING: You need a fully-trained butcher; we advertised and hired one that way. He then trains up a few other staff to varying levels. Beyond specific butchery skills, it's not too different to selling a Mars bar: our EPoS system can sell products by weight, so everything is barcoded at the butchery, then paid for at the counter with everything else.

FOOD HYGIENE: A butchery is actually relatively low-risk in terms of food hygiene because it is all going to be cooked, as opposed to the bakery section where we store hot food and perishable items. The butcher oversees it and, with our member of staff who has overall responsibility for food hygiene, ensures other staff understand Environmental Health guidelines.

MARKETING: We didn't do an awful lot of marketing: we have signage outside, distribute brochures, and post weekly specials on Facebook. But word-of-mouth is much more important than all this – that's what turns people into regular customers. ●





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“The IAA is crucial for me because it tells me where I can improve. You can only gain good things from it.”

Bay Bashir
Lifestyle Express Belle Vue Convenience,
Middlesbrough



pladis



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A Subsidiary of Mars, Incorporated

BOOKER
WHOLESALE

News UK



HI! STREET
digital media



Coca-Cola
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THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



Vinyl launch sounds like a money-spinner

NEW TITLE FOR LP FANS FOLLOWS RECORD SALES

With vinyl LP sales at their highest level for more than 20 years, this monthly title from Anthem Publishing has a promising future

AFTER A SUCCESSFUL 12-inch one shot last year – to match its subject matter – Anthem Publishing has launched a monthly version of Long Live Vinyl in a modified size to fit more comfortably on the newsstand. Size aside, Anthem is producing the title in a “luxury” high quality format including foils, sparkles and varnishes, with 100gsm text and 300gsm covers. With vinyl LP sales at their highest level since the early-90s, the magazine aims to provide readers across the rock, metal, pop and prog spectrum with the perfect showcase for the best new releases.



LONG LIVE VINYL
On sale 6 April
Frequency monthly
Price £9.99 then £6.99
Distributor
Marketforce
Display with Record
Collector, Rock Sound

Round up



Jennifer Hardwick

Magazines reporter
jennifer.hardwick@newtrade.co.uk

NICE TO SEE NICHE ON THE NEWSSTAND

Before starting this job I had no idea about the sheer number of new magazines that launch every week. In fact, I am constantly amazed by the new concepts publishers are trying all the time – nearly 1,000 last year – and the number of people who are taking their passion and trying their hand at publishing.

What's particularly exciting about the current climate is the success of titles focusing on increasingly niche topics, which manage to turn something that has perhaps never been seen as worthy of much attention before into a specialist subject to be pored over and delighted in. Provided the content is approached in the right way and produced in a high-quality and aesthetically pleasing fashion, it has been proven there is an audience in the UK who appreciate discovering new ideas.

This week, I had the pleasure of meeting the founder of another exciting, recently-launched, magazine called Vanguards. The title was created while its founders, Hugo Ross and James Roberts, were still at the University of Edinburgh, and celebrates Scottish design and manufacturing.

Issue two is now in full swing and the pair's work is being enjoyed far beyond the borders of Scotland, with a London retailer excitedly showing it to me recently, telling me how much he loves the detail of the content and design of the pages.

Meanwhile, this week sees another launch off the back of the success of one of last year's one shots. Anthem Publishing is turning its celebration of all things vinyl into a bimonthly title to explore a hobby which would certainly have been regarded as in serious decline, if not quite niche, a few years ago. Given positive reports of sales of Deagostini's The Beatles Vinyl Collection partwork, it looks like another trend is gathering momentum for 2017.





BRAND NEW!

STICKER COLLECTION

STARTER PACK £2.99

STICKER PACKET 50P

ON SALE NOW!

PANINI
www.paninigroup.com

THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



Bestsellers Science

Title	On sale date	In stock
1 New Scientist	01/04	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Nature	06/04	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 BBC Focus	18/04	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Astronomy Now	18/04	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Scientific American	11/04	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Wonderpedia	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 BBC Sky at Night	20/04	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 How It Works	20/04	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Scientific American Special	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 BBC Sky at Night Collect Edit	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 New Scientist The Collection	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Curious Mind Series	13/04	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 BBC Focus Big Book Collection	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 BBC Focus Collection	04/04	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Sky & Telescope	11/04	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 British Archelogy	07/04	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 Astronomy	12/04	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 Current Archaelogy	06/04	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 American Scientist	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 Discover	05/04	<input type="checkbox"/>

Data from independent stores supplied by

SmithsNews



ULTIMATE WWE STICKER COLLECTION

The WWE Ultimate sticker collection features fan favourites from across the WWE Universe including Kevin Owens, AJ Styles, Charlotte and Seth Rollins. There are a total of 244 stickers to collect, including 32 special shiny stickers. Packets of five stickers cost 50p. The collection features detailed profiles on all the Raw, SmackDown Live and NXT Superstars.



On sale out now
Frequency one shot
Price £2.99
Distributor direct
Display with WWE Slam
Attax Takeover



SABAT

New magazine Sabat fuses modern-day witchcraft and feminism accompanied by atmospheric black and white photography. This third issue explores one of the most feared, ignored and ridiculed of female archetypes. Features in the Crone Issue include astrologist David Zunker exploring the astrological connection between Saturn and fate, while Sophie Holmes and the #witchesofinstagram let readers know when it's time to #letitgo.



On sale out now
Frequency biannual
Price £14
Distributor Direct/OML
Display with The
Gentlewoman, Delayed
Gratification



TAKE A BREAK SERIES

Take a Break Series has one of the highest prize funds in the market and this issue has more than £21,000 worth of prizes up for grabs, including city breaks and sunshine holidays. It also features a selection of easy family recipes for readers to try, just in time for the Easter holidays. Content includes the usual mix of true life stories and puzzles.



On sale out now
Frequency irregular
Price £1.80
Distributor Frontline
Display with Take a Break,
Yours, Love It!



KNITTING MAGAZINE

Knitting Magazine is going back in time with this vintage special edition offering 25 elegant designs inspired by the 1940s. It also comes with a free knitting journal inside the magazine, described as an indispensable tool for knitters. The issue includes designs for readers to try from fashion to homeware as well as interviews, notably with "craft queen" presenter Kirstie Allsopp, and the usual advice on techniques.



On sale 6 April
Frequency monthly
Price £5.99
Distributor Seymour
Display with Let's Knit,
Simply Knitting, Knit
Today



BREATHE LIST JOURNAL

The team behind Breathe magazine are launching the Breathe List Journal, an illustrated tool involving reflection and self-exploration for users to create their autobiography in lists. Publisher GMC Group says paper notebooks are making a comeback in the digital era.



On sale 6 April
Frequency one shot
Price £7.99
Distributor Seymour
Display with Breathe,
Simple Things, Flow



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ISSUE 4s ON SALE 6 APRIL





ELENA OF AVALOR

Disney has a brand new heroine and now she's got her very own magazine. Having saved her kingdom from an enchanted sorceress, teenage princess Elena of Avalor has the throne. Aimed at four-to-seven-year-olds, the titles offers a new action adventure every issue along with a variety of activities for readers to do, colour and make. The launch issue also gives readers the chance to win some Elena of Avalor puzzles.



On sale out now
Frequency monthly
Price £3.99
Distributor Marketforce
Display with Disney Frozen, Disney Princess Magazine



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC: INSIDE THE MEDIEVAL WORLD

This one shot from National Geographic charts a thousand years of history through vivid illustrations. Readers can explore world history across the globe between A.D. 400 and 1500, from the fall of Rome to the age of discovery. Every page is filled with period artwork, detailed maps, and close-ups of intriguing artefacts.



On sale out now
Frequency one shot
Price £7.99
Distributor Seymour
Display with National Geographic, National Geographic History



VANGUARDS

Vanguards celebrates Scottish design and manufacturing by exploring brands which its writers admire, from Mackintosh raincoats to bag and backpack manufacturer Trakke. Launched by its co-founders while they were still at university, the magazine examines the history and accomplishments of these brands with articles and interviews alongside high-quality photograph collages.



On sale out now
Frequency triannual
Price £5
Distributor direct
Display with Cereal, Courier



COMPLETE KIT CAR

Held in Stoneleigh, the world's largest Kit Car Show will take place at the end of April. The special Stoneleigh issue includes a Stoneleigh Show Guide as a 32-page insert. Publisher Imagine Sales & Marketing says the added value of the Stoneleigh issue creates significant RSV potential – the 2016 issue drove RSV up 21% compared to the previous three issues.



On sale out now
Price £4.75
Frequency monthly
Distributor Marketforce
Display with Kit Car, Auto Express, Practical Classics



220 TRIATHLON

Immediate Media has revealed a new look for the 28-year-old magazine 220 Triathlon. Responding to consumer demand, the title is taking a more direct approach to training advice and gear reviews. The first new-look issue includes a special feature on open-water swimming, as well as a guide to avoiding injury and bigger bike test and race coverage.



On sale out now
Price £4.99
Frequency monthly
Distributor Frontline
Display with TriRadar, Runner's World

Retailer viewpoint

John Vine
 John Vine, Newsworld,
 Church Stretton, Shropshire



News and magazines are still our best-selling products. People come in for them and we're able to sell them other products while they're here – they are a massive footfall driver.

The fact is, if you keep the right selection of magazines, people will buy them. But you've got to keep them tidy and the display looking nice so people can see what you've got. You've also got to know your range well enough to be able to upsell a bit.

Now that you can get apps on your phone, such as SNapp or i-Menzies, if a customer asks for something you don't have, you're able to look it up straight away and let them know you'll have it in for them tomorrow. I don't know if enough retailers know about the apps but everyone should be using them.

The traditional magazines do best for us, like women's weeklies – such as Woman & Home and Yours.

Our biggest seller by far is Radio Times and the other TV titles also do well. Other than that it's anything countryside-related, like Landscape.

Because we have a lot of tourists, the colouring-in titles do well if it's raining, but if it's sunny they'll mainly be outside walking. The childrens' titles do much better during the holidays so we get more in – especially if their grandparents are looking after them.

Not doing returns can really stop businesses doing well, in my opinion. If there's something missing or wrong, you have got to be on the phone by 7am, otherwise you'll forget and you won't do it. Last week, I was nearly wrongly charged for five BBC Music Magazines and they're £5.99 each.

Top tip

Never say no to a customer. As well as shop saves we offer magazines on our HND rounds.

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IN MAGAZINES

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Partworks				Collectables			
Title	No	Pts	£	Title	No	Pts	£
Amercom UK				Hachette			
Ships of War	14	40	11.99	Art of Crochet	84	120	2.99
DeAgostini				Art of Cross Stitch	14	90	2.99
Build the Ford Mustang	65	100	8.99	Art of Knitting	115	90	2.99
Build your own R2-D2	13	100	8.99	Art of Quilting	66	90	3.99
Enhancing your mind, body, spirit	13	120	3.99	Art Therapy	107	120	2.99
My Animal Farm	8	60	5.99	Art Therapy 50 Mindful Patterns	13	80	4.99
Jazz at 33 and third RPM	32	70	14.99	Assassins Creed: the official collection	4	80	9.99
Simply Stylish Knitting	66	90	3.99	Build the U96	136	150	5.99
Star Wars Helmet Coll'n	33	60	9.99	Dr Who Complete History	42	80	9.99
The Beatles Vinyl Collection	3	23	9.99	Draw The Marvel Way	33	100	4.99
Zippo Collection	41	60	19.99	Judge Dredd Mega Collection	58	80	9.99
Eaglemoss				Marvel's Mightiest Heroes	86	100	9.99
Build A Solar System	85	104	7.99	Transformers GN Collection	8	80	9.99
DC Comics Graphic Novel	43	60	9.99	Warhammer	16	80	9.99
Doctor Who Figurines	94	120	8.99	RBA Collectables			
Marvel Fact Files	211	200	3.99	Real Life Bugs & Insects	32	60	0.99
Military Watches	82	80	9.99	Panini			
Star Trek Ships	95	95	10.99	F1 Collection	26	60	9.99
				Panini			
				Doctor Strange			
				Trading Card Collection	4.99	1.00	
				Fantastic Beasts and Where to			
				Find Them Sticker Collection	2.99	0.50	
				FIFA 365 Sticker Collection	2.99	0.50	
				FIFA 365 Trading Cards	4.99	1.00	
				Football 2017 collection	2.99	0.50	
				Frozen Northern Lights Sticker			
				Collection	2.99	0.50	
				Moana sticker collection	3.99	0.50	
				Paw Patrol 'A Year of			
				Adventures' Stickers	2.99	0.50	
				My Little Pony	2.99	0.50	
				Beauty & the Beast			
				Sticker Collection	2.99	0.50	
				Magic Box			
				Zomlings Series 5		0.50	
				Star Monsters		1.00	

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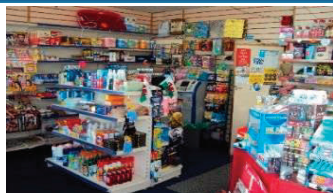


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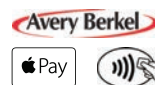
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