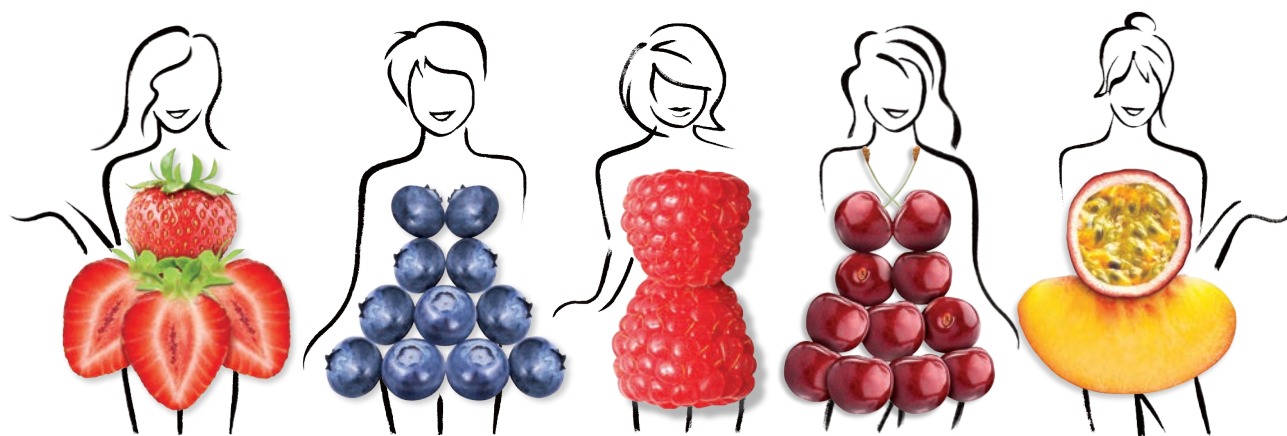


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RAY MONELLE
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Shaping the future
of independent retail
since 1889



Editor

Chris Gamm

@ChrisGammRN

020 7689 3378



Associate editor

Chris Rolfe

@ChrisRolfeRN

020 7689 3362



News editor

Gurpreet Samrai

@GurpreetS_RN

020 7689 3386



Features editor

Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski

@TomGK_RN

020 7689 3361



Reporter

Charlie Faulkner

@CharlieFaulkRN

020 7689 3357



Reporter

Dave Songer

@DaveSongerRN

020 7689 3358

Head of production
Darren Rackham
020 7689 3373

Senior designer
Anne-Claire Pickard
020 7689 3391

Designer
Emma Langschied
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
Nathan Gray
020 7689 3363

Marketing manager
Tom Mulready
020 7689 3352

Marketing executive
Tom Thorn
020 7689 3384

Marketing executive
Keelan Farley
020 7689 3356

Financial controller
Parin Gohil
020 7689 3375

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

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

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We're giving members ideas, advice and services to help them grow profitably
Ray Monelle,
NFRN national president

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"Business taxation helps bigger businesses not smaller ones and needs to be reformed"

Bill Esterson, shadow minister
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We doubled fruit and veg sales with our gondola on wheels



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WELCOME

While managing
waste needs careful
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be something
to be fearedSHOPPERS
WANT SUPER
FRESH LOCAL
GOODS

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Editor

Chris Gamm

@ChrisGammRN

020 7689 3378

Over Christmas, my brother-in-law told me about an exciting new restaurant he's opening with a friend in Margate. The menu will be unfussy seafood, with as much as possible sourced from the local area and the majority of food waste going to the town's homeless.

In last week's issue, we highlighted industry figures showing chilled has overtaken tobacco as the top-earning category in convenience. But retailers we spoke to pointed to food waste as one of the biggest challenges with managing the category and a reason why headline figures shouldn't be taken at face value.

This challenge has long been faced by the restaurant trade, where lots can be learned about both creative ways of overcoming it and turning it into a point of difference at the same time.

A business doing this well is Mexican street food chain Wahaca. It encourages customers to take away leftovers and includes recipes in doggy bags for creating new meals from them.

Three retailers RN spoke to last month show it's not just restaurants dealing with food waste creatively. Shane Woolston, of Budgens of Aylesham, works with a local supplier to turn surplus strawberries and raspberries into jam, which he then sells.

Joe Williams, of The Village Shop in Hook Norton, either gives waste fruit and veg to a local charity's pigs or composts it for his neighbours' gardens. Sandra Taylor-Meeds, of Budgens of Holt, meanwhile, saved £16,000 through managing the category closely and being stringent with stock.

Fresh is undoubtedly a big opportunity in 2017, and while managing waste needs careful attention, it needn't be something to be feared. Don't miss next week's RN for an expert guide on how to set an effective strategy for your store.

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BREAKING NEWS

C-stores' vital post office role

The Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) has highlighted the essential role convenience stores play in offering Post Office services as it calls for more financial support from the government.

In its submission to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy it raised concerns about the long-term commercial viability of including a post office in a convenience store, especially in the context of increases in the National Living Wage and property costs.

ACS chief executive James Lowman said: "Our members are telling us they already subsidise a number of the post offices in their stores and they expect more of these branches to become loss-making unless the government increases support for the network and raises remuneration for retailers."



Gillian Wilson with store manager Stephen Mallon

Puzzle mag win for Gill

Northern Ireland NFRN member Gillian Wilson has won the first of four £500 cash prizes as part of a promotion celebrating the launch of an exclusive range of new mini puzzle books from the PuzzleLife brand in association with the federation.

Mystery shoppers will be visiting stores throughout 2017 to find the next three prize winners, who could also win an HD TV. NFRN members should have all four titles prominently displayed on the clip-on shelf units supplied to be in with a chance of winning.

Lucky Kim's £180 basket sweep win

Kenilworth retailer Sid Sidhu raised his store's profile across social media with a Basket Sweep. In partnership with BigDL, shopper Kim Gardiner was the lucky winner of the competition at Sukhi's Simply Fresh store – winning nearly £180-worth of items. "We built it up over our Facebook page and we had a really good turnout on the day," said Mr Sidhu.



MP hits out at big stores getting special treatment

by Charlie Faulkner

charlie.faulkner@newtrade.co.uk

A leading MP has slammed the government for "favouring a handful of the largest retailers at the expense of the rest of the sector" as he calls for more support for independent businesses.

Bill Esterson, Labour's shadow minister for business, has called for a "fairer" tax system and highlighted a string of concerns he believes are preventing independent retailers from succeeding.

"Business taxation helps

bigger businesses not smaller ones and needs to be reformed," he said.

"The government should do far more to give smaller businesses advice, access to finance and access to a fair market. For example, the Grocery Code Adjudicator could have a constructive role working with small retailers as well as scrutinising the behaviour of the larger ones."

Speaking to RN, he also raised concerns about the detrimental impact independent businesses face if the UK is denied access to

the single market as a result of Brexit.

"We all want the economy to succeed. That is why the government needs to bring its plans to parliament to be debated so that as we negotiate with the EU, we do so to agree the best possible terms for leaving," said Mr Esterson.

He said the Labour party believes small businesses are where Britain's future success lies.

"Retailing cannot just be about out-of-town shopping centres and national chains. It is time to have a

much more balanced approach to business and that must include recognising and supporting small firms and independent retailers," said Mr Esterson.

Meanwhile, a spokeswoman for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy said it is delivering the biggest ever cut to business rates as well as tackling late payment with the appointment of a Small Business Commissioner. She added the Business Support helpline can provide retailers with information and guidance.

Retailer tells how he fought Co-op threat

A Welsh retailer has told how he increased sales by 14% despite a Co-op opening yards away, as the company announced plans to open 100 stores across the country in 2017.

Vince Malone, of Tenby Village Stores, saw a Co-op open a quarter of a mile from his store last year.

He said although he

could not compete with the store's "slick" marketing and "excellent" fresh produce, he found other ways, with his convenience food sales increasing by 14% by the end of last year.

"Before it opened, we emphasised our value for money, flagging up our range of £1 products," he said. "Customers would

check out the new Co-op, then come back to us, commenting how expensive the Co-op was.

"We also brought in more local products, including milk from a nearby farm and handmade pasties. We've also got closer ties with our regular customers."

Meanwhile, Paul Mat-

thews, of Bradley's Supermarket in Quorn, Leicestershire, said he has also put greater emphasis on the store's local suppliers and customer service to fight competition from a nearby Co-op and Waitrose.

The Co-op has said it will invest £70m in the shops to open in the south east, Yorkshire and Scotland.

Climate never better for savvy c-stores Raising standards and availability is key

How to succeed in 2017 – industry leaders share all

by Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski

tom.gk@newtrade.co.uk

The climate has “never been better for savvy independent retailers”, but raising standards, availability and price competitiveness will be key to success in 2017.

That is the view of Kevin Threlfall, founder of the One Stop group, and other senior industry figures speaking exclusively to RN.

“For too long, the big boys in retail have squeezed out the small local shopkeeper. Today convenience retailing is king, with money-rich but time-poor shoppers

flocking to them in droves. Modern convenience stores sell everything people need and are open from early morning until late into the evening,” he said.

However, he added the days of “the family cat sitting on the counter top of the local newsagent” were gone and successful stores were those where “standards, availability, quality and price competitiveness” had continued to rise.

Speaking to RN, industry bosses were united in pointing to the categories which will drive further growth in the year ahead. New head

of Londis Martin Swadling said: “Convenience stores need to stay ahead and have credible fresh ranges as well as desirable food to go offers. Local services are also critical in generating footfall and getting shoppers through the door.”

Rob Butler, the man in charge of one of Booker’s other symbol brands, Family Shopper, told RN the company’s priorities would influence the support it gives retailers. “Family Shopper will remain focused on helping our customers make more through things like coffee, food to

go and slush machines,” he said.

Spar’s managing director Debbie Robinson predicted a “tougher” 2017 due to external pressures such as Brexit, but identified similar areas of focus and said these were tied in many cases to “understanding the needs of millennials and generation X”.

“The convenience market is changing more rapidly than it has done at any point in the past and we must be prepared to work smarter and move quicker if we are to continue to succeed,” she said.

Fresh and free-from are fastest growers

Fresh fruit and free-from were the fastest-growing categories at supermarkets in 2016, new data has shown.

According to Nielsen figures, fresh fruit saw the highest growth of £175.6m, while free-from grew £122.9m. Bottled water was the fourth-fastest grower with a rise of £81.9m, taking it past the £1bn mark.

Mo Razzaq, of Premier Mo’s Convenience Store in Blantyre, Glasgow, has seen his sales double after trialling 20p pieces of fruit at the checkout and free water or pieces of fruit for school children in his store.

“The aim was to try to get people into fresh fruit and healthy eating,” he said.

Analysts warn of 8% price increases

The industry is set to see prices rise by up to 8% over the course of 2017, according to a leading analyst.

UK head of retail at KPMG Paul Martin has said a rise in inflation – potentially up to 3% by the end of the year – in conjunction with continued foreign exchange fluctuations, will mean a rise in prices of between 5% and 8%, albeit varying across retail categories.

The forecast coincides with RN’s research last month, which revealed big brands will be putting up prices by between 5% and 12% due to cost pressures and the weak pound following the Brexit vote.



Two awards in a row for Daljit

A Dedworth shopkeeper said he is “overjoyed” after being crowned winner of the Good Neighbour Business Award for a second year in a row. Daljit Toor, who is undergoing dialysis following a recent kidney transplant, said customer service remains his biggest priority. “It is thanks to our customers that we have received the award for a second year running,” he said. “I’ve been at the shop for nine years now and my customers are like my family.”

Give staff a voice says shop staff union rep

The general secretary of a shopworkers’ union has called for store owners to give their staff a bigger role in the National Living Wage era.

John Hannett, from the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW), told RN “there are

huge benefits to be gained by giving staff a voice at work”.

“Involvement can help businesses solve problems and manage change. It gives retailers a genuine picture of their workers’ views and concerns. The people working at the front

line of a business are ideally placed to come up with ideas for improving working practices,” he said.

Mr Hannett added while the economic climate is challenging for retailers, maintaining a “motivated workforce” is vital if stores are to succeed. “In

uncertain times, it’s more important than ever to make the retail experience a positive one for customers – and a motivated workforce is vital to achieving this,” he said. “Low pay and short hours are extremely demotivating and do not promote productivity.”

STORE LOOKBOOK



Craig makes a 30% margin on tray bakes while still beating a local garden centre for price and quality



Old school success

With little competition and a steady stream of customers guaranteed, retailer Craig Horner could, perhaps, have taken life easy. Instead he turned Wentworth Village Shop into a mecca for local produce and food to go. **Matt Hutchings** reports

With passing trade from both local workers and tourists, Wentworth Village Shop, located between Barnsley and Rotherham, is a testament to the power of local produce and word-of-mouth promotion.

"We get a lot of passing trade from builders working in the area, as well as tourists visiting Wentworth," says owner, Craig Horner, who has been running the store with his wife, Zoë, for 11 years. The engineer-cum-newsagent gave up his former trade when his brother's girlfriend decided to sell her shop: "My brother told us she was selling, and straight away we said, 'we'll have it'."

Surrounded by a wealth of independent producers and suppliers (but few other retail competitors), it made perfect business sense for Craig to establish the store as a provider of local goods. "We work with a local bakery that makes amazing breadcakes – or baps, depending on where you're from – and a bee-keeper in the village supplies us with local honey, too. We also get some of the best pork pies and sausages you can find from a village butcher near us."

It's this focus on provenance that gives Wentworth Village Shop a central place in the community – both as a supplier of goods to customers, and as a supporter of local producers. "It's so crucial to buy from local suppliers," Craig says. "Our produce is delivered fresh from our suppliers and often

made that day. You see lorries going up and down the motorway to the multiples, and the reality is that these products could easily have been in transit for a week, whereas ours is from down the road. Buying local means everything is super fresh, and that's what's important to customers."

Unlike a lot of retailers, Craig admits there is little threat of present or future competition in the area: "We're very lucky in that we're in a village setting, and most of the surrounding area is owned by an estate," he says. "Because it's owned by a trust there won't ever be a multiple opening up, so we're protected from serious competition."

Rather than take advantage of their isolation, though, Craig is committed to keeping prices low.

"There's a garden centre down the road that sells more expensive tray bakes and coffees than we do, and they're not up to the same standard," he says. Craig's tray bakes sell for £1 and coffee is £1.30 for a cappuccino and £1.50 for a latte. "The difference is the market – older folks visit the garden centre and don't mind spending a bit more on their leisure time on a day out, whereas the majority of our customers are builders. They're looking for value. If they don't like what they find, they have no problem telling us," says Craig. "We still make an excellent margin of 70% on coffees and 30% on tray bakes."

Like elsewhere in the UK, Craig says food

I get a lot of benefit from RN's Brand Snapshot section. I first heard about the new flavour Exotic Boost energy drink here and it flew out." **CRAIG HORNER**



Craig sources local honey from the village beekeeper



"Buying local means everything is super fresh, and that's what's important to customers"

INFORMATION

Location

38 Main Street,
Wentworth, S62 7TN

Size

560sq ft

Key categories

Local produce, food to go

Weekly turnover

£5,000



STORE LOOKBOOK



Craig's produce gets delivered fresh from suppliers every day



to go has played an increasingly important role in his business. "Hot food sells well and the sandwiches keep the builders coming back to grab lunch. Everything is made fresh to order." The store's old two metre foodservice counter was replaced with a smaller 1.25 metre version – more efficient on electricity and also making room for a new serving area for diversifying their range into different breads, which has proved popular, Craig says.

Despite its village surroundings and chocolate box appeal, Wentworth Village Shop isn't immune from the demands of the digital era. In fact, as Craig explains, it's perhaps more important for rural businesses to engage local residents. "We've just started on Facebook and we'd like to start our own Twitter account soon, too. Everyone is using social media these days and it's just a great way to engage with the local community and promote what we're doing," he says. A loyalty reward scheme, offering shoppers a free coffee after every sixth purchase, is also planned for 2017.

"We'd love to do more digital marketing in the future. We're stocking good-quality local produce – we just need to tell more people about it." ●



11
years

Craig and Zoë have been running the store together



Want to see more of Craig's store? Go to betterretailing.com/wentworth-village-shop-kent

SYMBOL NEWS

Christmas surprise for One Stop shoppers

One Stop customers got a festive surprise after the symbol group arranged for stores to give away hampers to regular shoppers.

Each store chose which of their customers received the hampers, which contained up to £40 worth of goods.

Shelley Goel, owner of One Stop Gospel Lane, chose an elderly lady with mobility issues.

"She lives by herself, and Christmas can be quite lonely," he said. "We put the hamper and her shopping in the back of our car and drove her home. She was very happy and thanked us so many times."



The giveaway succeeded because independent stores can get to know their customers, he added. "Supermarkets have such a high staff turnover they're not as close to their customers, but

we know them well," said Mr Goel. "It's a big reason they come back to us."

Julian Collins, store manager at One Stop Northfield, gave away five hampers.

"We chose people who

had had a tough year, who were down on their luck," he said. "One Stop is very much about looking after its customers and is constantly coming up with things to do."

Glowing report from stores after Booker acquisition Increased margins and higher profits

Budgens retailers 100% positive after first year

by Toby Hill

RNreporter@newtrade.co.uk

Budgens retailers have described their first full year of trading under Booker's ownership as "100% positive", but have called on the wholesaler to focus on improving its fresh range in 2017.

Store owners told RN margin increases of up to 5%, higher cash profits and greater independence were the main benefits they had seen since Booker acquired the Budgens chain from Musgrave in September 2015.

"Musgrave was like a franchise model, with an emphasis on compliance and policing. Booker treats us like customers," said Charles Mills, of Budgens Mortimer. "They've given us back our independence and we can now use small suppliers like Cotsworld Fayre, Cook Food and Laithwaite's Wines.

"We've also pushed up our cash profits by about 20% and our margins up to



"Booker has given us back our independence," says Charles Mills of Budgens of Mortimer

20% to 25%. That's because we can use the best of the Booker-Budgens supply chain, Booker's cash and carry facilities and smaller suppliers to adapt our range to suit our store."

Adam Hogwood, from Budgens Broadstairs in Kent, also welcomed the increased independence brought by the move. Booker's own brand ranges have provided "a big boost" to his sales in comparison to Musgrave's prioritisa-

tion of premium lines when discounters like Lidl and Aldi were emerging as formidable competitors, he said, adding he had also seen margins increase significantly.

"In the bad old days, some promotions would actually cost us money to put through the till - we'd be selling Heinz on a negative margin, for example. Now we're typically getting 20% to 25% margins, even on

our offers. It just goes to show the buying power of Booker."

Both Mr Mills and Mr Hogwood said they hoped to see further development of Booker's chilled category offering in 2017.

"The main challenge for Booker in 2017 will be differentiating between Budgens, Londis and Premier. I'd expect our range of fresh produce to really set us apart," said Mr Hogwood.

Mega Deals prove a hit for Londis shoppers

The introduction of Booker's Mega Deals into Londis stores last year has helped drive footfall and maintain strong margins, Londis retailers have said.

Dave Hiscutt, owner of Londis Westham Road in Weymouth, said the deals available to him since Booker's acquisition of the Londis chain are an improvement on those previously available from Musgrave.

"Musgrave was getting us to promote the wrong products for our industry, such as huge 36-wash Persils - it offered great deals but it wasn't what customers wanted from a convenience store," he said. "Booker's Mega Deals are much better tailored to our business. They're focused on high-volume impulse lines, they hit the right price point and the margin is completely fair."

Martin Swadling, Londis brand director, said: "Mega Deals deliver market-leading deals for customers and retail margins of 15%."

Bestway depots set for revamp

Bestway has announced a revamp of its depots in 2017.

All branches will receive category makeovers and relays and changes will be implemented in several categories, including pet care, Paul Adams, head of business development, told RN.

The changes will be filtered into the wholesaler's retail planograms and core range advice, which will reflect consumer trends and bestsellers.

The initiative will be made available via guides from Bestway's field force, and on a new online resource on its website.

PRODUCT TRENDS

No KitKat downsize for Brexit

Nestlé has pledged to protect customers from price increases in the post-Brexit fallout and to maintain the shape and size of its best-selling KitKat brand.

In an interview on BBC Radio 4's Today programme last Friday, Nestlé chief executive Dame Fiona Kendrick said her biggest concern was uncertainty in the market following the EU referendum, as key ingredients such as coffee and cocoa "have risen significantly in price, but not due to currency fluctuation".

Ms Kendrick said she wanted to ensure "Nestlé does everything it can to save costs and absorb as much as possible ourselves".

Presenter Katie Prescott asked whether Nestlé would be "doing a Toblerone" anytime soon, referring to Mondelez's decision in November to change the shape of the chocolate bar to cut costs. "We're not going to do anything short-term," Ms Kendrick replied.

In answer to the question, "Will we see a three-fingered KitKat anytime soon?", Ms Kendrick replied: "Not while I'm sitting here as chairman and CEO."

Media's £5bn contribution to economy

The national and local news media industry contributes £5.3bn to the UK economy, according to a report by consultancy firm Deloitte, commissioned by the News Media Association.

The report – entitled UK News Media: Engine of Original News Content and Democracy – also found the sector boosts small businesses, improves literacy, enhances community cohesion, and underpins democracy by holding powerful figures and institutions to account.

Choice over habit for 95% of cigarette smokers

Retailers can expect to see little change in smokers' buying habits as a new study has claimed the majority smoke through choice.

The survey by the Centre for Substance Use Research

in Glasgow of more than 600 smokers showed 95% of respondents cited pleasure as their primary reason for smoking, and just 5% to nicotine addiction.

Around 77% said they would continue to smoke

for many years, with only 5% saying they could foresee a time when they might stop.

Retailers contacted by RN said there had been little recent change in smokers' buying habits.

"People are buying fewer premium brands to save money now 10-packs are going," said Shandip Patel of Krystals Express. "80% of my customers still smoke regular tobacco. About 10% have switched to vapes."

Display leads to fruit and veg sales by the double

by Toby Hill

RNreporter@newtrade.co.uk

A store in Wiltshire has doubled its fruit and vegetable sales by installing a display gondola at its entrance and introducing seasonal ranges.

Paul and Gail Mather from Sherston Post Office bought the gondola after being inspired by displays in French stores while on holiday.

"We added the gondola and took the opportunity to expand our range at the same time," said Mr Mather. "We used it to highlight the most appealing and aesthetically-pleasing fruit and veg, with a sign telling people there is more stock inside."

The couple have also begun adapting their range to the changing seasons.

"In winter we have red cabbage and winter veg like parsnips, then in the summer we focus on fruit. Before Christmas we were selling brussels sprouts on

the stalk, which I picked myself from a local farm," said Mr Mather. "We have about 40 products sourced from local and national suppliers, from sweet potatoes to herb packets at 99p each."

Over the past year, the store's average basket spend has increased from £5.81 to £6.65. While fruit and veg sales are not the only reason for this, "they have made a significant contribution", Mr Mather said.

He added investing in staff hours had also been key to this success.

"We have a dedicated member of staff who monitors our fruit and veg twice a day.

"The last thing we did on Christmas Eve was check the quality of the fruit and veg we had left, and the first thing we did on returning to the store was make sure nothing had gone off in the intervening three days," he said.

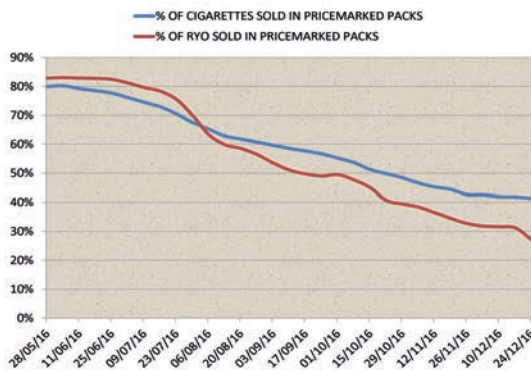


Paul Mather's fruit and vegetable display gondola has helped double sales

"People judge your store on the basis of the quality of the fruit and veg.

"If it's good, it gives them

confidence in the rest of the store, but if it's a bit grotty, it reflects on everything else."



Pricemarked cig and RYO sales are in sharp decline

Sales of pricemarked cigarettes and rolling tobacco packs declined steeply through the second half of 2016, following the introduction of new legislation.

According to data from EPOS analysts EDFM, pricemarked packs fell from 80% of total sales in May to 40%

of cigarette sales and less than 30% of tobacco sales by the end of December. Meanwhile, the percentage of cigarettes sold in 20-packs and larger rolling tobacco in 30g or more rose from around 15% to 22% and nearly 30% respectively in the same period.

YOUR NEWS

'Criminals won't benefit from plain packs' claim rejected Faking 'easier than ever' retailer says

Plain packs will be easier to replicate, say retailers

by Matt Hutchings

RNreporter@newtrade.co.uk

Retailers have criticised Trading Standards claims that plain packaging will make non-duty-paid tobacco easier to identify while providing no advantage to counterfeiters.

Doug Love, who presides over the Islington area of London for Trading Standards, told RN "counterfeiters are so expert at copying branded packaging that we will still need to rely on expert analysis

to identify counterfeits but any branded packaging on non-duty paid products will stick out like a sore thumb". This would help the public identify and report dishonest traders, he said.

But Narinder Randhawa of Randhawa News in Birmingham said: "It'll be easier than ever to photocopy plain packaging because it will all look the same."

Jason Birks of Moscis in County Durham added: "I agree it will make it easier to spot smuggled goods if they're using branded pack-

aging, but the simplified design is going to make it much easier to replicate."

Meanwhile, Mr Love said he had noticed "more and more open displays" in stores that were failing to comply with legislation banning open displays of cigarettes.

Mr Randhawa said retailers who did not adhere to the tobacco display ban were "sticking two fingers up" at the red tape around advertising.

"I know plenty of retailers who have their doors half

open, although I keep my cigarettes under the counter," he said.

Anwar Haq, of Nisa Local in London, added that how much gantry doors were open was directly proportional to how many cigarettes were being sold: "If you've got a queue of 10 people and eight want cigarettes, of course the doors are going to be open more often than not."

Mr Love urged all retailers to ensure they are compliant with legislation for 2017.

HND hike of 212% helps cut losses

A retailer in Newport has grown his HND takings by 212.5% in one year. Jon Powell, of The Newsagent in Newport, said this time last year HND was worth £800 per week; he now takes £2,500 over the same period – worth 50% of his overall business.

"In the last two months we've taken over HND rounds from three other shops. We make over 500 deliveries a week including 30 business customers, compared to just five or six to begin with," he said.

The rapid growth has come as The Newsagent store itself faces unprecedented challenges. Until recently 54 buses an hour stopped outside, but all were rerouted to serve a new shopping centre, cutting turnover from £10,000 a week to just £2,500.

18 months for boy robber

A 12-year-old boy has been given an 18-month juvenile sentence for robbing two convenience stores in Dagenham. In one store, the boy leapt on the counter to grab cigarettes, then punched the shop owner as he tried to pull him down. Several accomplices rushed in and attacked the retailer with a bottle and shop sign. In a separate incident, the boy wielded a knife to rob a man. He was handed a six-month detention order for each of the three charges, and his mother was fined £215.



Waste app is a 'step too far'

Sainsbury's new anti-waste app is a "step too far" in the fight against food waste, an independent retailer has said.

The Winnow app identifies how much and what kind of food is being thrown away by families and suggests ways to make food go further. In trials households have saved up to £268 by using it.

But Justin Taylor-Green of Spar Winford, near Bristol, said the move was "counter-intuitive" as marketing and displays in stores are designed to make customers spend more.

"Our priority is cutting the amount of waste we create as a business," he added.

Preparation for alcohol scheme urged

Retailers have been urged to prepare for the mandatory Alcohol Wholesale Registration Scheme (AWRS), after a retailer in north west London had his licence revoked for selling illicit alcohol.

Amrik Singh Arora, owner of Good Morning Superstore, was found to be in possession of 1,000 litres of illicit alcohol alongside

illicit tobacco after two seizures in the store since April 2015.

From 1 April 2017, all alcohol retailers will be obliged to check their wholesaler has registered with HMRC and has a AWRS Unique Reference Number. The changes are designed to stamp out illicit alcohol trade.

A trading standards spokesman told RN: "The intention is to eradicate the less honest cash and carry businesses – including those which sell illegal alcohol to innocent retailers and leave them to deal with the consequences."

But organisations such as the Federation of Wholesale Distributors say a registra-

tion scheme that involves retailers will give businessman like Mr Singh Arora fewer excuses for breaking the law.

London retailer Ralph Patel said those who import or produce illicit stock should be the focus for law enforcement. "They're the ones who really need to be punished," he said.

WHAT'S NEW



Beet It

Beet It is a UK-produced, organic beetroot juice and is a blend of 90% beetroot and 10% organic apple juice, free from artificial fertilisers and pesticides.

RRP £2.99 (75cl), £3.75 (1litre)

Contact 01473 890111 / info@beet-it.com



Baru Sea Salt Caramel Marshmallows

Baru has launched Sea Salt Caramel Marshmallows and Dark Chocolate Coated Sea Salt Caramel, available in a 28g bar or 60g box. Each hand made product is individually wrapped.

RRP £1.75 (bar), £3.25 (box).

Contact www.cotswold-fayre.co.uk



Mr Filbert's Rosemary Sea Salt Peanuts

Somerset-based Filberts Fine Foods offers Mr Filbert's hot air roasted Rosemary Sea Salt Peanuts, using only natural ingredients. The snack is part of the company's free-from range.

RRP £1.99

Contact 01458 833744



Kentish Pip cider

Skylark produces Kentish Pip cider which uses slow fermentation of Kentish dessert apples and cider apples to create a medium sparkling cider in a 330ml bottle.

RRP £2.75-£3.25

Contact 01227 250151



Easy Bean crispbread

Easy Bean crispbread is made using chickpea flour, locally-sourced butter and it is topped with toasted seeds. The vegetarian-friendly crispbread is gluten-free, wheat-free and high in fibre.

RRP £2.95

Contact 01963 441 493



Difatti Gluten Free Gnocchi

Difatti Gluten Free Gnocchi is made from potatoes, rice and corn flour - giving traditional taste and texture but without wheat. It has no GM ingredients and is suitable for vegetarians.

RRP £1.60

Contact www.cotswold-fayre.co.uk

➡ **Charlie Faulkner**

✉ charlie.faulkner@newtrade.co.uk

☎ 020 7689 3357



Beerd Alter Ego

From Bath Ales' craft brewery Beerd comes Alter Ego - an imperial stout brewed at 10.5% vol with a blend of ingredients including chocolate, roasted barley, and oats.

RRP £4.59

Contact 0117 947 4797



Chardwar Estate loose leaf tea

The Tea House offers the organic Assam 2nd Flush from Chardwar Estate loose leaf tea which provides a malty flavoured alternative to Breakfast Tea.

RRP £4.95

Contact 020 7240 7539

Focus

Valentine's Day

Festivities have wound down and the next opportunity to drive sales lies around Valentine's Day, which is just a few weeks away. Retailers told RN creating in-store theatre around the day from early January is key to making the most of the revenue opportunity.



Cocoa Loco organic chocolate buttons

Cocoa Loco has launched organic and Fairtrade-certified chocolate buttons made using single origin beans in the Dominican Republic. The 100g pouches are available in milk, dark and white chocolate.

RRP £1.99

Contact 01403 865687



Pink Marc de Champagne Truffle

Prestat's Pink Marc de Champagne Truffle has a rich whipped-cream dark chocolate ganache piped inside a pink chocolate truffle shell that is dusted with fine icing sugar.

RRP £13

Contact 020 8961 8555



Crémant de Loire

The Times reported Crémant de Loire has become a popular alternative to prosecco. RN has found both Crémant de Loire Brut and Crémant de Loire Rosé from Langlois-Chateau.

RRP £15

Contact 020 7840 3600

Ramesh Shingadia

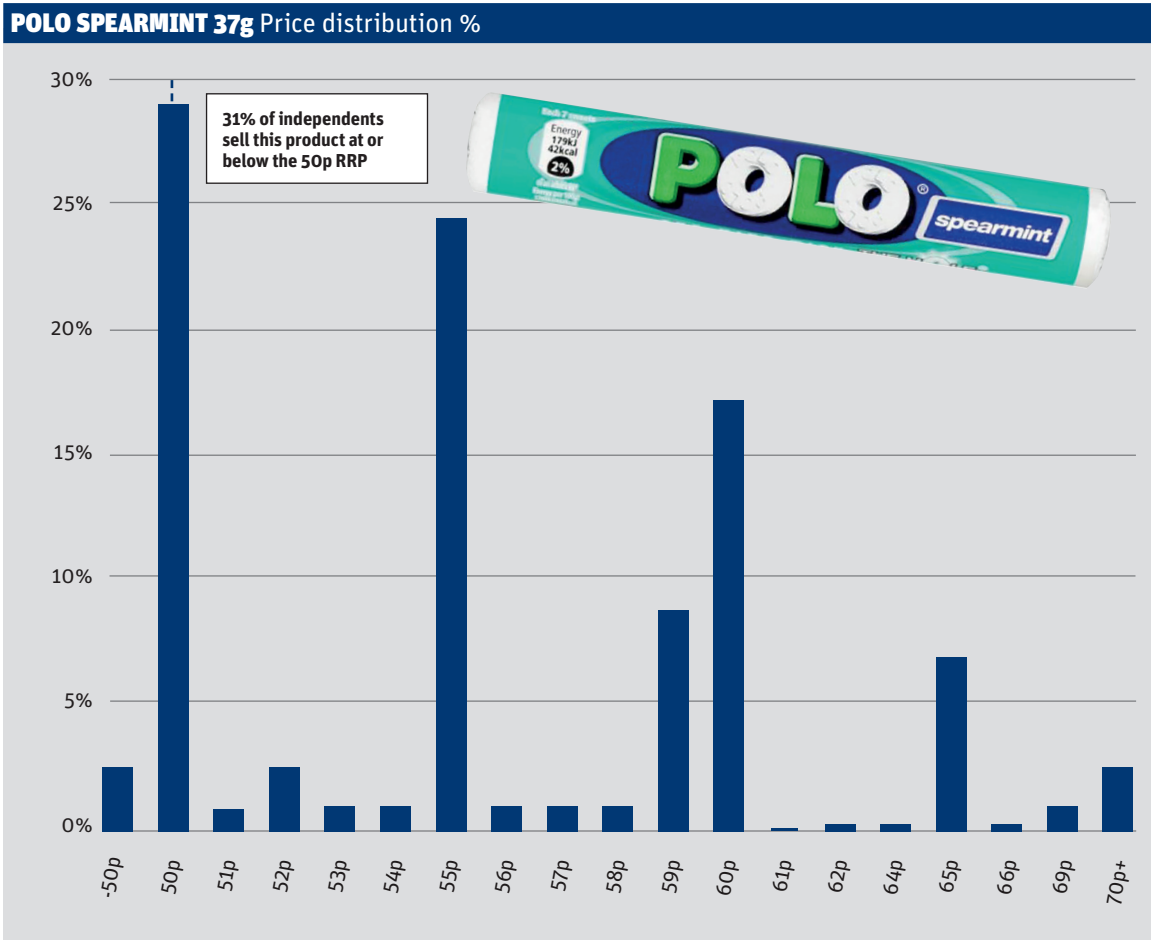
Shingadia's Londis & Post Office, Southwater, Worthing

Flowers, chocolates and champagne are the three main items we sell around Valentine's Day. We create some in-store theatre around the date to ensure we make an impact. Within those specific product categories we see a 50% sales uplift.



PRICEWATCH

Profit checker Mints



Price checker

PRODUCT
Polo Mints 37g
Trebor Extra Strong Peppermints
Trebor Soft Spearmint 45g
Trebor Soft Mint 44g
Trebor Extra Strong Mints 45g
Polo Spearmint 37g
Trebor Softmints Spearmint 37g
Trebor Softmints Peppermint 45g
Polo Sugar Free 37g
Tic Tac Mint 18g
Mentos Chewy Mints 38g
Fox's XXX Mints 75cl

Analysis

Mints remains a vital category for convenience retailers, in part because they have some leeway in terms of setting the price.

“I’ll usually go a little above RRP,” says Carl Pickering, owner of Top

Shop News. “Ours are located at the counter and people just pick them up and don’t glance at the price.”

Our data suggests that Mr Pickering’s approach is common among retailers. Polo Spearmint has an RRP

of 50p and 28% of retailers sell at this price. But more than 50% price above, with 17% choosing to price a full 10p higher at 60p. This leaves just in one in five retailers scrapping it out with prices below RRP.

How we drive our profit

Marc Jones

STORE Hoffnatt Stores
LOCATION Llandysul, Ceredigion
SIZE 3,000sq ft
TYPE forecourt

TOP TIP
Broaden your range and push mint sales during holiday periods, when people want to freshen up for parties



Mints aren’t our biggest sellers in the confectionery category – Polo Original are our 22nd best-selling line, and Trebor Strong Mints are at 25 – though sales tend to increase at certain times in the year, such as Christmas. We tend to stick to RRP depending on the margin we get, as we’re strict on maintaining our margins in store. Mints is an important category, positioned at the front of the counter, though they’re not just an impulse buy – you also get people trying to give up smoking buying them, for example.

Paul Keys

STORE Key’s Stores
SIZE 500sq ft
LOCATION Sheffield
TYPE neighbourhood

TOP TIP
Make sure big brand bestsellers are always in stock, and don’t waste time on lines that don’t sell themselves



Trebor Extra Strong Mints and Polos are the clear bestsellers in the mints category. If they’re not pricemarked, we’ll tend to go slightly above RRP – people aren’t too sensitive on mints: they’re either habitual buyers or it’s an impulse sale, and they’re not usually paying close attention to the price. The category is less important for us than it used to be, though we still replenish our stock regularly. Wrigley tried to launch into the market recently, but they’re not selling too well. I think the problem is the name, people associate it with gum.

YOUR VIEWS

■ Level the playing field for forecourts

2017 is going to be a hugely expensive year for us. The impact of plain packaging is yet to be seen, but we've already had the pension rises and the increase in the living wage, and the situation with business rates is crazy now.

Because of these changes, in one year my rates are jumping from £52,000 to £67,000 – a massive £15,000 increase. This extra cost will come straight off our bottom line – an absolute joke.

What a lot of people don't realise is that petrol stations are evaluated differently to convenience stores, whose rates are calculated on square footage.

Ours are calculated on sales, so the Tesco Express nearby could be making double the profit we do but have half the business rates, as we're judged by our sales.

ADAPT AND CHANGE YOUR RANGE

A recent trip to Milan, which is a city with a thriving street trading culture, brought home to me the advantages of being able to adapt your product range at short notice.

It was raining the day we arrived and every man on the street was hawking umbrellas. The next day was clear and cold, and there wasn't an umbrella to be seen – everyone was selling gloves and scarves.

If you come into our store on a frosty morning, on our counter you'll find screen wash, ice scrapers and de-icers – following the same principle as the street vendors in Milan.

It's a big advantage for independent retailers – they can switch their products and change around the set-up of their store in response to daily and weekly trends.

Vip Measuria
One Stop, Derby



All we want is a level playing field. We are hoping we can absorb the additional cost, but not all businesses will be able to withstand the hit.

Rocky Leach
Chellow Heights Service
Station & Spar, Bradford

■ Post office delivers joy

We had incredible results



My rates are jumping from £52,000 to £67,000

Rocky Leach
Retailer, Bradford

over the Christmas period with the post office we opened in our store.

A local branch closed a year ago, and so when we decided to open our post office we based our stock on their model.

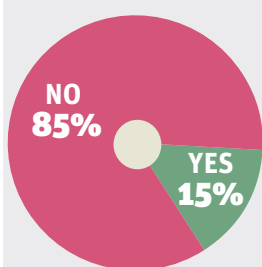
The post office suggested we have four weeks' stock in advance, but we opted for eight to be safe. Second class stamps sold out in two days. We sold

thousands of pounds worth of stamps over the Christmas period.

I'd say to retailers looking to grow their post office that the customer service element should be their number one priority.

Also make sure your times are right; our post office is open 8am-8pm weekdays, so people can use it at the same time as they do their grocery

RN READER POLL



Has chilled overtaken tobacco sales in your store?

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION

Has a great idea from a member of staff helped grow your business in the past six months?



Have your vote now

Go to betterretailing.com

YOUR SAY What's your new year's resolution for your store?

Vic Grewal

Simply Fresh, Thames Ditton, Surrey

We'll be looking to expand the business in the new year. We're particularly interested in opening an ice cream and dessert lounge as we think it's an area that's really up and coming. The margins are also really good and it's much less competitive than convenience, which is really tight on margins now. The reduced product range will also help us control risk more effectively. In convenience, if people slip up it can cost thousands, whereas with ice cream the risk of loss is much lower.

Dean Holborn

Holborn's, Earlswood, Surrey
We'll be refurbishing one



of our stores in the new year based on the huge success of similar work at one of our other stores. We want to grow our whole offering – particularly food to go and our hot counter – to keep pace with the trend in this area, as well as give everything a bit of a facelift. We'll be investing in new refrigeration and

will also increase the number of products we sell so we can offer our customers a more diverse range.

Jon Powell

The Newsagent, Newport, Wales

This is probably not in line with most other stores,

but we're making so much more of a return on our HND than we are on the shop that it makes sense for us to expand that part of the business. We used to be in the centre of the city and so had a lot of footfall, but the centre has shifted around us slightly, so that's what has driven the change.



shopping. We're the nearest branch in a five-mile radius that's open at night on a Sunday, so that really helps drive footfall.

Joe Williams
The Village Shop,
Hook Norton,
Oxfordshire

**100
YEARS AGO**

6 January 1917

Rotherham laments the loss of four newsagents to the war effort, with Private Lidster also reported as having suffered a gunshot wound. It is hoped he will make a speedy recovery. He is supported by two other comrades, unharmed in the fray.

AROUND WITH THE ROUNDSMAN

Blanche Fairbrother



I had some surprise mail delivered with a couple of Christmas cards on 26 December. It was a letter from The Office of Lieutenancy. Apparently one of my customers had contacted them to nominate me to be considered for a place as guest at one of the Queen's Garden Parties at Buckingham Palace.

There are three dates to choose from – two in May and one in June. I feel very humble to think they have chosen to do this, but I won't be going. My job and my customers come first and anyway, I don't think I am someone who would be comfortable dressed to death and killed with fashion standing about all day at Buckingham Palace.

Like my colleague Mike Brown, I can remember the days when the Mail and the Telegraph gave us Christmas cards to give out to our customers. In those days, newsagents were appreciated rather than taken for granted, but I make sure every one of my customers gets a card. After all, it's thanks to them I have a job. The publishers would do well to remember that.

Don't you wonder why during Christmas fortnight the papers can arrive by 4.30am every day? It's as if a miracle takes place, and it's a pity it can't last all year round.

I have had so many presents from customers – chocolates, biscuits, wine, two bottles of gin plus the tonic to go with it, flowers, candles, smelly stuff, socks and mittens. It seems personal service is still appreciated and maybe, just maybe, Smiths News could take this on board and realise people do matter.

Happy New Year folks.

Your social comments this week

contact us @ThisisRN and facebook.com/ThisisRN



Nisa Family of Independent Grocers – @wesaynisa

We say Nisa won #2016in4words
(Symbol Group of the Year)



Greg Deacon – @gregdeacon

Supplier #brandshakes will be the trend for 2017 – well done @steveoneill77, @CollectPlus & teams



Meryl Pike Williams

– @meryl_pike

50 children had treats from Pikes today for Calennig – a Welsh tradition since 1752.



RN – @ThisIsRN

New Collect+ deal could be worth an extra £1.2k per store from other carriers



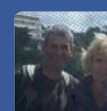
Dan Cocks – Dan@WhitstoneStores

@PayPoint @CollectPlus exciting times we are all about being a destination store this will help :) #moderntimes #modernthinking



Christine from Hopes – @HopesofLongtown

Well if the first hour of trading is anything to go by, 2017 is going to rock #ShopLocal30 #MakeADifference #FabCustomers #FabCommunity



John Parkinson

Well, my first customer came in and told me they were cancelling their print order for the Mail because of the digital offer (at least he was honest). I asked him not to support any digital advertising. Although I will redeliver my leaflet advocating support of the i, the only loser is me and ultimately The Mail



RN INTERVIEW

With plain packaging, rising wages and continuing newstrade issues, Ray Monelle has been president of the NFRN during a challenging time for many retailers. With the NFRN there to help, however, he's upbeat about the future of his business and stores like it

Ray Monelle

At Ray Monelle's first NFRN meeting 33 years ago, he covered the cost of his annual membership through picking up ideas to take back to his own shop from the other retailers present.

"I saved my federation fees by talking to traders there about the price of milk," says the organisation's national president, six months into his year in office.

Fast-forward 33 years and his experience is no different. Last year, rather than milk, it was rubbish bins that paid for his membership, through working with NFRN Commercial partner First Waste.

Giving members ideas, advice and services to help them grow profitably, and drawing on the things he has learned are very much behind Mr Monelle's vision for where he sees the 98-year-old organisation's future.

"We want to train our retail development managers to be more focused on retail development," he says. "Some of the better traders would like our RDMs to go in and show them what they're missing, what they can do a little bit better."

One area Mr Monelle has identified as an opportunity for the RDMs to help members improve their profitability is through offering hands-on training.

"Even simple things like reading a news bill properly," he says. "You could be losing three or four percent on missing credits, claims and various things. We've got a new events manager Nigel Smith whose role will be to go out to wholesale depots and to curry nights to engage and train and give some direction to people."

As it approaches its centenary, the NFRN is preparing for the future with a review of its district and branch structure, new modernised branding and a focus on 'inde-

pendent retailers' instead of solely newsagents.

"It's been encouraging how all of the districts have embraced the need for change," says Mr Monelle. "My role this year is to design the federation to how members want it. It's to get rid of some of the formality. Some of the Independent Achievers Academy top 100 retailers would like to be involved, but aren't interested in minutes and meetings. It's open forums, and I see it going more in that direction."

"The changes we're making to the districts is still a learning curve. My district is a bit of a guinea pig. We've amalgamated two districts, Devon and Cornwall and western, and done away with branches. Our intention is to get more member involvement than we've had for years through social functions, emails and open days at wholesalers. Because it's member involvement we want."

"Our legal advice, our systems, and a lot of things we offer are for any retailer. The offer is second to none compared to other trade partners. It's tremendous."

As well as helping improve members' businesses, Mr Monelle has continued to invest in his own store, a traditional CTN in Weston-super-Mare, throughout his year as national president.

"I talk to my customers a lot and am always trying new products. I've increased my cakes and breakfast bars and it is turning over. It's something new, customers see a new product and they buy it. I'm increasing my range of craft beers, I try and buy local where I can and local food to go is something I'm looking at."

"One thing as an independent we've got over the supermarkets is we can carry those slightly different lines outside the top 20. People come in and say I can't believe your range



Interview by **Chris Gamm**
 email chris.gamm@newtrade.co.uk
 tel 020 7689 3378



Customers from 20 to 30 miles away travel to Ray's store to buy tobacco



My role this year is to design the federation to how members want it

of confectionery. I'm also a destination for tobacco and people drive 20 to 30 miles to buy specific lines," he says.

He is also considering taking on the federation's new Everyday fascia when he refits his store later this year, and feels it can offer a benefit to other members too.

"We're trying to make low-cost shop fittings more freely available. A lot of members are reasonable turnover shops, but aren't big symbol group turnovers. To be able to offer an option for them, a name or image that the public can relate to, does help."

Having entered the trade as a newsagent, Mr Monelle is passionate about the news and magazines categories' future and is evidence that investing time in it gets results, but is facing a crossroads.

"I still spend quite a lot of time on it. I'm constantly reviewing my range, trying new titles, making sure I get the supply I want. My news has not gone down. In fact, I had a slight increase last year.

"But I'm at a dilemma at the moment about whether I reduce the footage on news and put food to go in. Margins have gone down and the industry isn't promoting and supporting it. The decline is being assisted by the lack of commitment from the trade," Mr Monelle says.

Fighting to ensure members get a fair deal will be another key area of focus this year, starting with the newtrade.

"As far as news goes, we are always challenging, but it is trying to change the emphasis. We fought for the same things for 100 years. We're

trying to be more positive and proactive in taking the industry into the next hopefully hundred years.

"We've had news summits with publishers and wholesalers and are sowing the seed that long-term, carriage charges have got to be changed in some way. The direction cannot continue with them just going up and up and news becoming less and less viable. For a huge amount of our members, news is now a loss leader."

"We will continue to challenge PayPoint and Camelot, because the margins we achieve are an embarrassment. With PayPoint, it's the banking services more than anything. I know a lot of members won't be without it, even though it's not cost effective. We must emphasise the need to make it cost effective. It's through negotiation. There's no other way really."

Crime is another key focus in 2017 for both the federation and Mr Monelle personally, after being the victim of an armed robbery last October.

"I feel it's bad if you can't work in your own workplace without the fear of crime," he says. "I want to get that message across. We've done a lot of work to get response times, information through freedom of information requests, because it appears as though we are getting a second-rate response to supermarkets."

"So we are challenging. We are getting some results and our recognition from parliament has gone up leaps and bounds."

The federation is using this momentum to help inform policy on a number of other areas.

"We've been approached by MPs on red tape. We've been asked what red tape we have issues with, the items we're concerned with and they've said they'll take them up."

"The biggest one this year, which I think is a bomb waiting to happen, is auto enrolment. A lot of retailers who are very small, I still think, don't believe it will affect them. But it will affect every retailer in the trade."

He says his proudest moment from his six months in office is visiting the districts and seeing the difference the federation is making to its members.

"When I go out to the districts, they can feel my passion and desire to take the federation forward. That's encouraging. It makes you feel that you are achieving a purpose."

His goal is that members leave every meeting with the value, ideas and passion that he has for the past 33 years. ●

SPRING CLEANING

Washing up liquid



An essential item all year round, Vip Measuria ensures he always has market leader Fairy in stock at both his Borrowash and Draycott One Stop stores in Derbyshire – meeting or beating the price of his competitors. “We don’t have pricemarked products in our store but we keep them competitive; 500ml bottles are £1.69 or two for £2 and we’ve recently introduced two 368ml bottles for £1.”

Okay, so January is hardly spring but, as a new year begins, **Dave Songer** asks four store owners about the must-stock cleaning products for any retailer who wants a tidy profit

Tidying up in the new year

Sink and plug hole un-blocker



Harry Goraya has sold sink and plug un-blockers in his 3,000sq ft Nisa store in Kent for a number of years, and has since narrowed his selection down to just one brand. “Mr Muscle seems to be the only one that sells well for us. We have both the bathroom and kitchen varieties, which sell for £4.35 and £4.39 respectively. Having sold sink and plug unblockers for so long, anybody living locally knows that if the large DIY stores are closed then they can come and get it from me.”

Stubborn stain cleaners



Despite stocking more than three types of stubborn dirt cleaners, Cillit Bang is Harry Goraya’s biggest seller. He says that price is the main motivator for his customers. “I stock Cif, Mr Muscle and Demestos but Cillit Bang is the most popular. The reason is it’s pricemarked at £2.25, which makes a big difference. They did really well on the advertising side of things and that no doubt made a big impact, too.”

Sponges and scourers

Used to scrub and wipe pans, sinks and surfaces, sponges and scourers are must-stock items for Vip Measuria, who stocks Spontex’s range on promotional bays in both his stores. “I stock its soap pads (10-pack) for £1.20 and scourers (4-pack) for £1. We won’t stray over £1.20 for those sorts of products, which gives us a 20% return.” Marigold, meanwhile, offers a range of 11 multipurpose cloths and scourers that are suitable for use around the home.



Brooms and brushes

Harry Goraya has a comprehensive range of Heritage-branded items that includes dustpan and brushes and brooms. "We sell dustpan and brushes (£1.99) and brooms in the store. Other than one product, those kinds of items are nearly all from the Heritage range – it comprises around half of all our entire spring cleaning products," he says. "We're in the sort of environment where the price is pretty important, so we offer a lot of value options."

Surface cleaners

Linda Sood has Flash Multi-surface cleaner spray in her store and came to stocking the variety after seeking advice from her wholesaler. "After my shop was remerchandised I asked my wholesaler, Booker, to come in and give me some guidance. They recommended Flash sprays as they are its bestseller in that category. We sell that for £1 a bottle, which is a price that I think many people expect to pay these days."

Window cleaner

Linda Sood can't stock a large range of owing to the size of her Portsmouth store, but despite the restriction believes spring cleaning products are important to have. For window cleaning she keeps Happy Shopper's 750ml bottles, which are on sale for £1.25. "We still think it's worth stocking the core range of products because people will always have a need for it. We have one variety of each and sales will stay very steady. Everything we have is pricemarked, which gives us a 20% margin – it allows us to compete with supermarkets," she says.

Furniture spray

Mr Sheen is a well-represented brand at Harry Goraya's store, taking advantage of a shopper trend he's picked up on. "I've noticed many people like to clean room by room, so I make sure we've got the largest range possible, with three types of Mr Sheen all priced at £1," he says. It's for that reason that he keeps a big selection of more competitively-priced own brand products in his store. "We have a wide range of Heritage's products in our store so that there's something there for all budgets."



The multiples get prominent displays up in the New Year and it's really important to do the same

Bleach

A good seller for Vip Measuria in his bleach range is Harpic. "We sell two at the moment," he says. "Harpic White & Shine (750ml) is £1 and Harpic Power Plus (750ml), which is £2.10. He feels it's important to echo what much larger stores do, to take advantage of the demand that's there. "The multiples get prominent displays up in the New Year and it's really important to do the same," he says. We'll get people coming in specifically to buy cleaning products, but there's always those who only decide when they're in the store."

Carpet

To help customers breathe new life into their carpets, Sandra Taylor Meads of Budgens of Holt rents out Rug Doctor. The wet extraction cleaning machine costs £22.99 for 24 hours. "We've had them for several years and now have three machines; two isn't enough," says Sandra. To offer the best-possible service, she allows all members of staff to use the machines free of charge from Monday to Thursday. "It means they can explain how to use them and then be in a position to offer advice." Carpet detergent – essential when using the machine – is also available from the store.

Stain removal

Unilever says that 94% of households buy detergent and stain removers. Sandra Taylor Meads certainly thinks it's a worthwhile stocking Vanish Oxi Action Crystal White and Oxi Action, with each stain remover offering margins of 50% and 54% respectively. "Vanish is always a popular buy in our store and we'll have both its trigger and in-wash stain removal varieties," says Sandra. "It's worthwhile having both of them; they're quite different products and our customers like us to have both."



HEALTHIER SNACKS

Crisp sales have declined by 25% over the last 10 years, and healthier snacking options are high on shoppers' lists. With a wealth of options available, **Dave Songer** looks at some of the most popular products

Better for you treats

BREAKFAST 9Bar

With a bar designed for the breakfast-on-the-go market, 9Bar has released a 268-calorie, chia berry-enriched bar to complement its Super Seeds range. Chai is said to contain up to eight times more omega 3 than salmon and the bar, containing sunflower, pumpkin and sesame seeds and raspberries, has been developed to keep consumers 'fuller for longer'. "Seeds are themselves a growing consumer trend, with Kantar showing it as a £46m category that's growing 11% year on year," says Gary Coggin, channel controller at 9Bar. The company also recommends its Breakfast Boost Almond & Raspberry and Breakfast Boost Peanut & Raisin bars.



Seeds are a growing consumer trend



Nutrition-packed bars are a fast-growing part of the breakfast market



Hipchips – a gourmet crisp restaurant in Soho, is one of a number of innovative companies reshaping the snacks market

Belvita

With its Belvita brand, Mondelez's predecessor Kraft was one of the early producers of on-the-go breakfast snacks. Belvita was launched in 2009 and has since become the market leader. Its Soft Bakes range is made with five wholegrains and added vitamins and minerals, with the biscuits the only one of their kind to have

proven slow-release carbohydrates. "Belvita Breakfast is available in single 50g portion packs, in a range of variants: Belvita Strawberry Duo Crunch, Belvita Honey & Nut and Belvita Hazelnut Crunch," says Susan Nash, trade communications manager at Mondelez International.



Belvita was one of the first big name in the breakfast biscuit category

BARS Nature Valley Protein

Bestway announced last month that it was focusing on healthier snacks for 2017, extending its range helping retailers grow sales. One product at the heart of this strategy is Nature Valley Protein, a snack bar that provides a high protein hit and the wholesaler's director of trading for retail grocery Ed Smeaton, says



formats that can be eaten anywhere are likely to be successful this year. "Due to the nature of many products being 'on the go' convenience stores are well placed to capitalise on these trends," he says. Whitworth's Orange and Chocolate Seed Shot is another product that's been added to the Bestway range.



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Retailers are free to set their own prices. Non-PMP packs available. *Kantar data 2016. **The Nielsen Company, 06.08.16.

HEALTHIER SNACKS

Fish 'n' Chips returned with a healthier baked recipe



BAKED Burton's Chicken n Chips/Fish n Chips

'Baked not fried' has become a shorthand description for many healthier snacks and when Burton's relaunched its Fish 'n' Chips range of snacks in 2013 – a decade after they were last produced – this was a key part of the products' updated identity. Also in the range is its Chicken 'n' Chips variety. A 25g bag has 121 calories. "In less than three years, Burton's Fish 'n' Chips has reached nearly £20m brand value," says David Costello, head of category and shopper management at Burton's which says this makes it one of the category's best-performing launches.

POPCORN Metcalfe's skinny popcorn

The popcorn segment grew by 170% in the five years to 2015, according to Metcalfe's owner PepsiCo. The brand has undergone a refresh to make it stand out more on shelf. Ranging from 93 to 121 calories for flavours including Cinema Sweet, Cinnamon Sweet, Maple Bacon, Sea Salt and Sweet 'n Salt, each product is suitable for vegetarians, is gluten-free and contains no artificial flavours. "We feel the new designs aptly bring out Metcalfe's Skinny popcorn's lighthearted humour which will resonate with the whole family and help drive continued growth for the brand," says marketing director for Metcalfe's Skinny, Andrew Slamin.

Propercorn

Made from non-GM corn, Propercorn was launched in 2011 and has since gone on to launch a range of clothing and art-work, with the latter taken from the individual illustrations that are used on each flavour. The company has adopted the strapline: Done Properly. "It is our approach to everything we do," says creator Cassandra Stavrou. "Whether we're designing new packaging, curating our own events or collaborating with artists, our team is always looking to create."

Propercorn's Lightly Sea Salted variety is sprinkled with sea salt and contains 88 calories per 20g bag, while other flavours Fiery Worcester Sauce and Sun-Dried Tomato and Sweet Coconut and Vanilla contain 93 and 121 calories respectively.



Popcorn has become a healthier alternative to traditional crisps

Savoury snacks are growing at 20%



A slew of new brands are breathing new life into the market

Ritz Bakefuls

With 30% less fat than regular potato crisps, Mondelez launched its Ritz Bakefuls range in autumn 2016 with two flavours: Cream Cheese & Onion and Sea Salt & Vinegar. According to Ms Nash, Mondelez created these baked varieties – with just over 100 calories in each pack – to provide 'tasty products that are better for you'. Available as individual 23g bags or as part of a multipack, the baked product proved successful in taste tests. "In testing, the purchase intent was in the top 20% of all new product development, which is among the highest that Nielsen has ever tested, and scored outstanding on taste by 78% of shoppers," says Sandra Ferreira, senior brand manager for Ritz at Mondelez.



PepsiCo's Melty Crackers offer a healthier Walkers experience

THINS Ritz Crisp & Thin

Available in a 30g pack that manufacturer Mondelez says is ideal for the on-the-go snacking, Ritz's Crisp & Thin come in Cream Cheese & Onion, Sea Salt & Vinegar and Sweet Red Chilli, the last of which was launched in 2016. Suitable for vegetarians and low in saturated fat, Ritz Crisp & Thin come in 100g share bags that range from 134-135 calories for each 30g serving.

Since its 2015 launch, the brand has grown to be worth £18m in retail sales, contributing well to the growth of the crisps and snacks category. The figure also suggests a demand among shoppers for snacks that come in a range of flavour combinations, but which are healthier than regular crisps.

"Savoury snacks are growing at 20%, and this has created an opportunity for brands such as Ritz to tap into the growing consumer demand for 'better for you' snacks and unlock new occasions," says Susan Nash.



CHILLED Light & Free

Retailers' chiller cabinets can be a source for many healthier



products and Danone is looking to extend the options available to calorie counting customers with Light & Free.

The range of Greek-style yogurts with zero fat and zero added sugar, launched last year. There are five flavours available – strawberry, raspberry, peach, cherry and blueberry – and Danone states that its packaging has been designed to appeal to "a carefree, fun-loving, fashion-conscious audience". Light & Free is aimed at millennials and has been supported by a £9m media launch campaign. So far, it has achieved "unprecedented growth" within its sector a spokesperson told RN. ●

THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



Pre-school fun

READ FOR THE NIGHT GARDEN'S BIRTHDAY

CBBC's In the Night Garden is relaunching after 10 years, after partnering with a campaign to encourage reading

IT IS now 10 years since BBC's pre-school brand In the Night Garden launched to not inconsiderable success, and the brand is marking its anniversary with ramped up activity and a wealth of new products that should help catapult Igglepiggle and co back into the spotlight.

This new publication sees the programme coming under Redan's Fun To Learn banner, which gives an added impetus to the launch, as it marries the two brands together.

The new activity will provide the perfect launch pad for the new magazine.



IN THE NIGHT GARDEN
On sale 19 January
Frequency monthly
Price £3.50
Distributor Comag
Display with Paw
Patrol, CBeebies,
Showcase

Round up



Tim Murray

Magazines reporter
RNreporter@newtrade.co.uk

WHY IT PAYS TO STAY 'ON TREND'

I'll be honest, I didn't realise what bullet journaling was until a week or so ago, when I was sent some information about an offshoot from Breathe magazine – one of this year's more successful launches.

I spent a while looking into it, so I could understand what it was all about for some articles I was putting together.

Bullet journaling is like writing a glorified, and increasingly complex, to-do list, to which all kinds of embellishments are added. My point, however, is more to do with how quickly and smartly the people at Breathe picked up on the craze and got a publication out that managed to ride on the initial enthusiasm.

It's been one of the hallmarks of the publishing sector in the past year or so. Quick-thinking publishers who can spot a trend and bring something that ties in with it to the market fairly quickly.

Witness the adult colouring craze of the past 18 months, and, this year alone, the New European newspaper and titles such as Anthem's Long Live Vinyl.

With any new trend amplified, heightened and quickened by the internet, a new thing is more likely to burn brighter and faster before dying off. Publishers now need to act more quickly than ever to spot something fresh and bring a publication to shelves before the internet has decided it's all over.

Retailers too, need to be ready to capitalise on these sudden crazes; ready to give them the shelf space they deserve and also be aware of what's going on. Talk to your customers, read the newspapers, chat to younger customers in particular, or your own kids to get an idea of what's really going on.

And if someone mentions something you haven't heard of before, such as bullet journaling, get on it as quick as you can.



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BELLA

Bella is this week offering readers free membership to Slimming World – incentive enough for many with the arrival of the new year and many resolutions to be made (and swiftly broken). H Bauer is confident of an uplift in sales of around 35%, and with the popularity of dieting and the 'New Year, New You' mantra of many up and down the country, it is expected to be the biggest selling issue of the year.



On sale 3 January
Frequency weekly
Price 97p
Distributor Frontline
Display with Best, Woman, Woman's Own

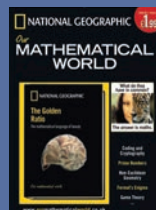


ANIMAL CUTIES

Showcase magazine is kicking off the new year with its 'Animal Cuties' feature. This issue includes animal posters, puzzles, crafts, animal facts and pictures, as well as featuring Boo the Dog on the cover. Kids can make bookmarks and draw their own puppy pals in a special pull-out craft section. Animal Cuties comes with an impressive selection of gifts, including a pug-themed diary and pen, Clare Balding 'The Racehorse Who Wouldn't Gallop' book sampler, animal erasers and puffy stickers.



On sale 11 January
Frequency monthly
Price £3.99
Distributor Seymour
Display with Party Princess, Peppa Pig Bag O Fun



OUR MATHEMATICAL WORLD

National Geographic is launching a collection of hardback books exploring the world of mathematics – or rather, how every aspect of our world is governed by maths. The collection is beautifully illustrated and explores the historical background of particular topics, developing ideas and exploring everyday uses for them. The title will feature biographies of important mathematicians from history.



On sale 23 December
Frequency fortnightly
Price £1.99
Distributor Comag
Display with National Geographic, Ancient History, History Revealed



WHAT CAR?

With the dawn of the new year, What Car? is once again celebrating with its Car of the Year – Bumper Awards edition. The magazine is expected to reach sales of 15% higher than the September to November issues, with an expected RSV of 35% higher than titles across the same period. With an RSV of £2.6m generated from December 2015 to November 2016, this celebratory edition is expected to perform well.



On sale 12 January
Frequency monthly
Price £5.99
Distributor Frontline
Display with Modern Classics, BBC Top Gear



THE GOURMAND

Now on its eighth issue, The Gourmand is already an award-winning food and culture publication. Featuring 120 pages of specially-commissioned words and pictures, the publication has plenty of coffee table book-appeal. This issue explores olive oil through the medium of colour, a photographic reimagining of the Princess and the Pea, and for cooks, a selection of recipes relating to the magazine features.



On sale 14 September 16
Frequency bi-annual
Price £12
Distributor MMS
Display with Lucky Peach, At The Table

Retailer viewpoint Mark Ansell

Liskeard News,
Cornwall



'TERRIFIC' TRADE BODES WELL

Our December trade was terrific, both in terms of customer numbers and the money we took. We're on the high street in a small town, and when people say high street sales are up, it's true.

Now, we're hoping for a successful January, because if the next two or three weeks are too quiet we won't benefit overall from Christmas and New Year.

The TV market was strange this Christmas, because of the way the days fell. The Christmas double issues didn't include New Year TV and customers noticed that. Radio Times should have thought outside the box and extended the period it covered, because it suffered a bit because of this. Newspaper publishers, on the other hand, got their act together with their TV guides and saw the benefit. But the issues running up to the Christmas specials and the ones alongside them did really well.

The double issues of the women's magazines have done really well for us too. It's helped because we've changed our staffing, so the staff on the tills are more aware of which magazines are new out and have been able to tell customers what's just in.

Last year, customers might have walked out empty-handed, but staff being up to speed means they can tell people about titles that have only just come in which they won't yet have.

Christmas food magazines also went well, as did general Christmas ones, but there were too many seasonal magazines.

Top tip

Make sure staff know which magazines are new each day so they can chat to customers about the latest titles they might want to buy



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Title	No	Pts	£	Title	No	Pts	£
Amercom UK				Hachette			
Ships of War	8	40	11.99	Art of Crochet	71	120	2.99
DeAgostini				Art of Knitting	102	90	2.99
Build the Ford Mustang	53	100	8.99	Art of Quilting	53	90	3.99
Jazz at 33 and third RPM	26	70	14.99	Art Therapy	94	120	2.99
Simply Stylish Knitting	54	90	3.99	Art Therapy 50 Mindful Patterns	7	80	4.99
Star Wars Helmet Coll'n	27	60	9.99	Build the Mallard	123	130	7.99
Zippo Collection	35	60	19.99	Build the U96	123	150	5.99
Eagle Moss				Dr Who Complete History	35	80	9.99
3D Create & Print	104	110	6.99	Draw The Marvel Way	27	100	4.99
Build A Solar System	73	104	7.99	Judge Dredd Mega Collection	52	80	9.99
DC Comics Graphic Novel	37	60	9.99	Marvel's Mightiest Heroes	79	100	9.99
Doctor Who Figurines	88	120	8.99	Warhammer	8	80	9.99
Marvel Fact Files	199	200	3.99	RBA Collectables			
Military Watches	76	80	9.99	Real Life Bugs & Insects	19	60	0.99
Star Trek Ships	89	95	10.99	Panini			
Kelsey Partworks				F1 Collection	20	60	9.99
Rulers of Britain	25	50	5.99	Panini			
				Disney Princess			
				Sticker Collection	2.99	0.50	
				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	4.99	1.00	
				FIFA 365 Trading Cards	4.99	1.00	
				Finding Dory	2.99	0.50	
				Frozen Northern Lights Sticker			
				Collection	2.99	0.50	
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				Topps			
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				Collection	2.99	0.50	
				UEFA Champions League Official			
				Sticker Collection 2016/17	2.99	0.50	
				Star Wars Rogue One	4.99	1.00	
				Trolls Trading Card Game	4.99	1.00	
				Trolls Sticker Collection	2.99	0.50	
				WWE Slam Attax Takeover	4.99	1.00	
				Match Attax 2016/17	3.99	1.00	
				DeAgostini			
				Magiki Mermaids		2.50	
				Frogs & Co		1.99	
				Magic Box			
				Zomlings Series 4		0.50	
				Star Monsters		1.00	

Newspapers				
Daily newspapers price/margin pence/margin %				
Sun	50p	11.15p	<div></div>	22.3%
Mirror	65p	14.5p	<div></div>	22.3%
Mirror (Scotland)	70p	15.61p	<div></div>	22.3%
Daily Record	65p	14.3p	<div></div>	22%
Daily Star	30p	7.26p	<div></div>	24.2%
Daily Mail	65p	14.5p	<div></div>	22.308%
Express	55p	13.31p	<div></div>	24.2%
Express (Scotland)	50p	12.10p	<div></div>	24.2%
Telegraph	£1.60	34.4p	<div></div>	21.5%
Times	£1.40	30.1p	<div></div>	21.5%
FT	£2.70	54p	<div></div>	20%
Guardian	£2	44p	<div></div>	22%
i	50p	12p	<div></div>	24%
i (N. Ireland)	50p	12.5p	<div></div>	25%
Racing Post	£2.30	54.0p	<div></div>	23.48%
Herald (Scotland)	£1.30	29.90p	<div></div>	23%
Scotsman	£1.50	33.75p	<div></div>	22.5%
Saturday newspapers				
Sun	70p	14.98p	<div></div>	21.4%
Mirror	£1	21p	<div></div>	21%
Mirror (Scotland)	£1	21p	<div></div>	21%
Daily Record	90p	19.8p	<div></div>	22%
Daily Star	50p	12.085p	<div></div>	24.17%
Daily Mail	£1	21p	<div></div>	21%
Express	80p	17.152p	<div></div>	21.44%
Express (Scotland)	80p	18p	<div></div>	22.5%
Telegraph	£2	48p	<div></div>	24%
Times	£1.50	35.25p	<div></div>	23.5%
FT	£3.50	79.1p	<div></div>	22.6%
Guardian	£2.90	63.8p	<div></div>	22%
i Saturday	60p	14.4p	<div></div>	24%
i (N. Ireland)	60p	15p	<div></div>	25%
Racing Post	£2.60	61p	<div></div>	23.46%
Herald (Scotland)	£1.70	39.1p	<div></div>	23%
Scotsman	£1.95	43.88p	<div></div>	22.5%
Sunday newspapers				
Sun	£1	21p	<div></div>	21%
Sunday Mirror	£1.40	29.40p	<div></div>	21%
People	£1.40	29.40p	<div></div>	21%
Star Sunday	90p	19.89p	<div></div>	22.10%
Sunday Sport	£1	24.3p	<div></div>	24.3%
Mail on Sunday	£1.70	35.70p	<div></div>	21%
Sunday Mail	£1.70	35.70p	<div></div>	21%
Sunday Telegraph	£2	45.50p	<div></div>	22.75%
Sunday Times	£2.50	52.50p	<div></div>	21%
Observer	£3	73.50p	<div></div>	22%
Scotland on Sunday	£1.70	39.95p	<div></div>	23%
Racing Post	£2.60	61p	<div></div>	23.46%
Sunday Herald (Scotland)	£1.70	35.7p	<div></div>	21%
Sunday Express	£1.40	29.65p	<div></div>	21.18%
Sunday Post	£1.60	33.6p	<div></div>	21%

Scale of third-party advertising insert payments							
Insert weight	Original scheme	Mail	Mirror	News UK	Express	Guardian	Telegraph
Cumulative?	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no
0-69g	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
70-100g	1.5p	2.5p	2.57p	2.7p	2.93p	2.75p	2.93p
101-200g	2p	3p	3.36p	3.3p	3.65p	3.35p	3.65p
201-300g	4p	5p	6.09p	5.5p	6.26p	5.75p	6.26p
301-400g	5p	7p	7.43p	6.7p	7.06p	7p	7.06p
401-500g	*	7.5p	*	*	*	*	*
Over 500g	*	8p	*	*	*	*	*
* By negotiation							

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Dairy Milk.
Free the Joy.

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Source: Nielsen Total Coverage 52 weeks MAT Value and Unit Sales. Data to w/e 29.10.16

