

# RN

RETAIL NEWS THAT MATTERS ● £2.30 ● 16.12.2016

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FOR TRADE USE ONLY



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Shaping the future  
of independent retail  
since 1889



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extensive galleries and news



**ADAPTING MY FRESH OFFER FOR A NEW MARKET**

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# WELCOME

**Find one new idea and it could be the best hour you've invested in your business this week**



**Editor**

Chris Gamm  
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A colleague shared a great story with me last week following a late night conversation with two retailers who picked up awards at the IAA gala dinner.

Harj Dhasee from Nisa Mickleton and Vip Measuria from One Stop The Prior Way both told her they love RN and set time aside to read it each week because it's worth it.

Harj says he turns to the Store Lookbook first to learn from other innovative retailers, while Vip has been looking for coffee and food to go ideas.

I'm a passionate believer that the best stores see the value of investing time in improving their businesses. There are three examples in this issue.

One way is by attending events to learn from other retailers and suppliers. Seven retailers recently joined RN and Scandinavian Tobacco Group to discuss how to make the most of the cigar category.

A second way is visiting other stores to see what they do well. Premier retailer Jimmy Patel says this was the first thing he did when scoping the opportunity to introduce new European food lines in this week's Advice Centre.

The third way is looking at what your customers aren't buying from you. Simply Fresh retailer Mehmet Guzel quickly realised he couldn't simply replicate his Bethnal Green store format in his new Old Oak Common location. Customers were more interested in convenience than organic produce. So he watched what they were buying elsewhere and adapted his range accordingly.

You can read about all these things in this week's issue. Find one new idea and it could be the best hour you've invested in your business this week.

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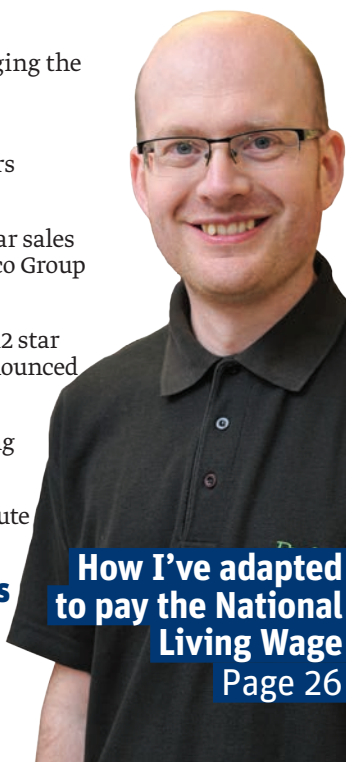
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# BREAKING NEWS



Susan Connolly is investing £1.2m to extend one of her Wiltshire Spar stores from 1,100sq ft to 2,500sq ft

**Store owners bullish despite economic uncertainty** 'The business needs to keep growing'

## Retailers invest a record £838m in their stores

by **Charlie Faulkner**

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Retailers are continuing to invest in their stores to improve their range, efficiency and expertise despite rising costs, with new figures highlighting record investment in the last three months.

Convenience retailers have invested almost £300m in the last three months on measures to improve their business – a total of £838m in 2016 – despite a challenging climate, according to research by the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS).

Susan Connolly, who has

four Spar stores in Wiltshire, is investing £1.2m in one shop which will extend it from 1,100sq ft to 2,500sq ft and adding a separate 900sq ft unit which could house a Greggs food to go area.

The decision is a result of a further 5,000 homes being built in Tidworth. "Our store simply won't be able to cope so we decided to extend and get the right range in," she said.

Mrs Connolly is also considering installing electronic pricing shelf tags. "They make the pricing process much less labour-intensive and it means we can change prices instantly."

Last year, she spent £60,000 developing a butchery service in another store and her two other stores are set to get new refrigeration next year.

"Our aim is to make sure the business keeps growing and thriving," she said.

The ACS survey shows that 72% of independent retailers are funding investments from their own reserves, with just 6% borrowing from the bank to make improvements. Refrigeration, in-store lighting and internal building maintenance were the top three areas of investment last quarter.

Jimmy Patel has invested £15,000 in one of his two Premier stores in Northampton, installing a Post Office counter which added extra value to his business.

"It's brought in a member of staff with a broader skill set and also improved our offering."

He has also removed newspapers and magazines from that store to create space for a stationery section.

ACS chief executive James Lowman said: "We expect retailers to look to invest in measures that will make their businesses more efficient and productive."

## PayPoint launches business account

PayPoint has announced a business account deal for retailers in conjunction with digital banking services provider APS.

The Cashplus account offers what it claims are "better than high street banking" terms, with 0.25% for paying in cash and the first £1,000 free per month. The account, which has an annual fee of £69, will be free for the first year.

Mo Razaq, of Family Shopper in Blantyre, has opened two Cashplus accounts which he says took just five days.

"It's definitely good news for retailers. It only costs 99p to carry out a transfer rather than £1.50 which is what I paid before."

It comes after a deal between PayPoint and Barclays offering preferred banking terms to independent stores came to an end earlier this year, leaving retailers facing higher costs.

## £20.6bn on Christmas groceries

The UK grocery market is set to experience 1.2% growth over Christmas, with shoppers spending £20.6bn, according to figures from IGD.

Joanne Denney-Finch chief executive of IGD, said: "More than 50% of shoppers say they buy food and grocery on impulse at Christmas, 40% are open to trying new products and 26% say browsing in supermarkets helps inspire them."

Research conducted by Him! Research and Consulting indicates 8% of shoppers leave their shopping until Christmas day itself, and convenience stores capture 7% of Christmas food spend and 8% of drinks spend.

## Johnston looking at i on Sunday launch

The i newspaper has confirmed it plans to explore whether there is an opportunity to launch into the Sunday market next year.

Richard Thomson, publishing director at Johnston Press, which took over the i earlier this year, said: "Many of us struggle to find

time at the weekend to read lengthy Sunday papers, especially if we have a young family.

"During 2017 we are going to properly research the opportunity to enter the Sunday market and understand if there's an opening to position our-

selves there.

"If demand is there then we will launch into the Sunday market and if there isn't we will consider our Saturday market proposition."

In an interview with a digital marketing and news website, Johnston Press

chief executive Ashley Highfield said: "Six months ago I didn't think the DNA of i would play into a Sunday paper.

"I am increasingly wondering if people have the time on a Sunday. I wonder if the weekend market is changing."

Opportunity as consumers buy little and often 'Food is more expensive to make'

# Weak pound and Brexit set to push prices up

by Gurpreet Samrai

gurpreet.samrai@newtrade.co.uk

Shoppers will see higher prices across the convenience sector from January as suppliers pass on cost increases, RN wholesale research shows.

After two years of food deflation, some retailers will welcome the transition, but many fear it will restart the discounters' flagging growth.

Wholesalers contacted by RN said they have received notifications from around 20 suppliers in the past few weeks, including big brands

such as Coca-Cola, Mondelez, Wrigley and AG Barr, warning of price increases of between 5% and 12% due to cost pressures and the weak pound following the Brexit vote. They said they have "no other option" than to pass the price increases onto retailers.

"We have seen price increases in the last few months, increases that are yet to be applied, and I believe we will see more as the year progresses," said Philip Jenkins, managing director of buying group Sugo UK. "They are extensive and reflect increased costs

in ingredient supply due to exchange rates – it will be interesting to see how consumers react."

Wholesale expert David Gilroy told RN while the discounters are a threat he believed it could be an opportunity for convenience retailers. "Consumers will buy less in volume and they will trade down in value. The volume of sales will decline, but I think the multiples will suffer a lot more as consumers will buy little and often," he said. "This could be an opportunity for convenience stores."

A spokesman for Wrigley

UK said it is the first time the company has raised the price of the products affected for five years, following cost pressures "building for some time". This includes a 7.5% cost price increase for its Extra single packs and 10.1% for Extra Peppermint and Spearmint 46-pack bottles.

A Mondelez spokesman said increasing input costs "coupled with recent foreign exchange pressures, are making food products more expensive to make".

These latest price increases follow rises by PepsiCo and Unilever in October.

## Publisher's warning over rising paper cost

It is too early to say whether the rising cost of paper will affect cover prices, a publisher has said.

The cost of paper has soared since the EU referendum, equating to around £30 extra per tonne.

Some analysts are predicting further rises in 2017, but publishers have said it is too early to assess the full impact.

Neil Jagger, general manager MGN and group newspaper sales director, said: "We're still in the process of negotiating so we don't yet know what our new prices will be."

However, NFRN head of news Brian Murphy said: "Publishers shouldn't just pass on price rises to retailers."

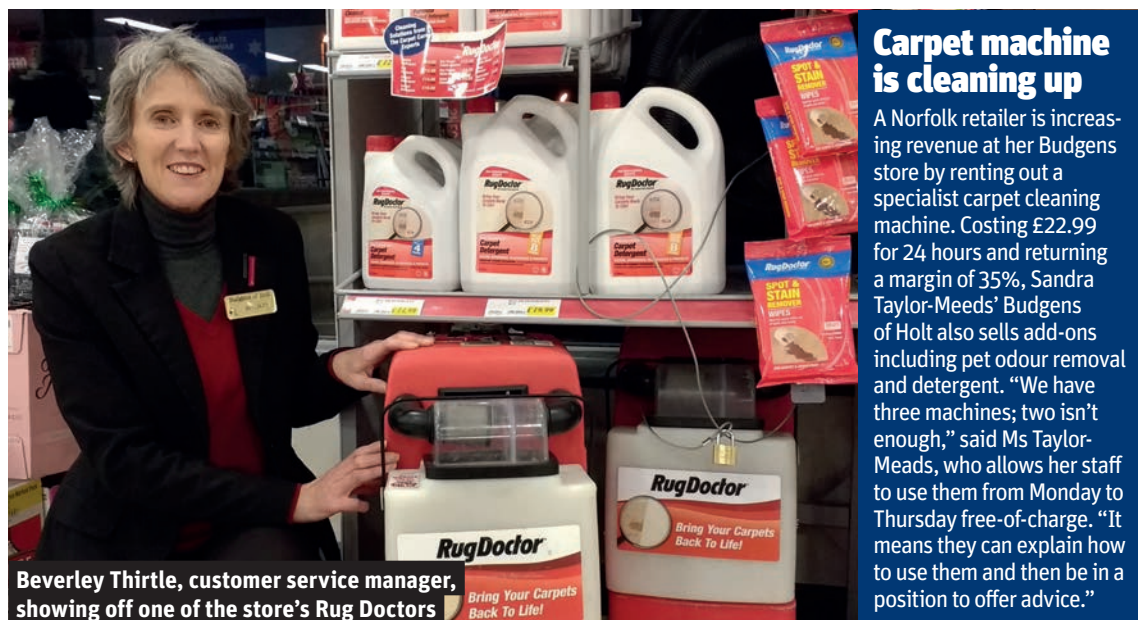
## Post Offices' record haul

Post Offices are expected to handle "a record number of online purchases and returns" this year as retailers predict a sales boost of up to 10%.

The organisation has said its customers will benefit from one million extra opening hours this Christmas.

Through its Network Transformation programme, branches are open for an extra 220,000 hours per week, with Post Office services available earlier and later in the day, as well as Sundays.

The news comes as staff at 300 of the largest Post Office branches prepare to undertake a five-day strike which will last until Christmas Eve, however independent postmasters took to Twitter to reassure customers it will be business as usual at smaller Local branches.



**Carpet machine is cleaning up**

A Norfolk retailer is increasing revenue at her Budgens store by renting out a specialist carpet cleaning machine. Costing £22.99 for 24 hours and returning a margin of 35%, Sandra Taylor-Meeds' Budgens of Holt also sells add-ons including pet odour removal and detergent. "We have three machines; two isn't enough," said Ms Taylor-Meeds, who allows her staff to use them from Monday to Thursday free-of-charge. "It means they can explain how to use them and then be in a position to offer advice."

**Beverley Thirtle, customer service manager, showing off one of the store's Rug Doctors**

## Figures reveal how own label is growing

Retailers could be missing out on Christmas sales by not stocking own label products, as figures reveal shoppers are spending 13% more on premium own label compared to this time last year.

The research, conducted by Kantar Worldpanel for the 12 weeks ending 4

December, was focused on supermarkets' own labels but also highlighted a 2% growth in the market for value and standard own label combined – higher than big brands.

"It's in retailers' interest to have more own label lines on the shelves as they have higher margins," said

Fraser McKeivitt, head of retail and consumer insight at Kantar Worldpanel.

Mike Baker, brand director for Budgens, said Booker Retail Partners premium own brand 'Discover The Taste' delivers an average profit of 37%. He added, it has "delivered very strong sales".

Spar said it has continued to develop its own label range this year, which now boasts more than 1,000 products.

Cath McIlwham, Spar UK head of brand, said: "The Spar brand range is going from strength to strength with a turnover of £300m in retail sales this year."

# STORE LOOKBOOK



Mehmet is hoping to use fewer than the 60-70 suppliers he uses at his Bethnal Green store, so he can focus on expanding his business

## Back to basics

Opening a second store on the other side of London was always going to provide a new kind of challenge for Simply Fresh retailer Mehmet Guzel. But by applying lessons learned in his Bethnal Green store he is on the road to success. **Charlie Faulkner reports**

**M**ehmet Guzel's new 1,600sq ft store sits within a purpose-built community in Old Oakham Common, west London. The Collective is the world's largest co-living building and is home to around 600 young professionals.

Lying between Kensal Green and Park Royal - one of the capital's few remaining truly industrial areas, the store provides Mehmet with a new type of customer base with different demands than in trendy east London where his first store is located.

"At first it didn't seem like it would be the kind of location I was after," says Mehmet. "I went and viewed the area and thought 'oh my God', but after consideration and an agreement on favourable terms I decided to go ahead."

Having opened his first store four years ago he had originally planned to grow his business sooner.

"Before I bought my own shop I was working with my brother for 10 years so I had the basics under my belt," says Mehmet. "It's always the dream to own your own store and when you finally do you feel like you can conquer the world. I'd originally thought I could start looking at more stores within the first six months but, as the business grew, I realised it needed more of my attention."

But this new store has presented a different kind of challenge, with his new customers not as accustomed to such a large range of fresh and chilled products.

"We're the only store like this in the area. There's a 300sq ft cornershop up the road and a Tesco Express about 10 minutes away, but that's it. The response has been good but it's a little different to Bethnal Green. They're not people who are cooking from scratch and my vegetable offering is not being taken up as much as I'd like," he says.

But Mehmet has spotted a number of home deliveries to the block from supermarkets and healthy meal boxes such as Hello Fresh, which can be easily cooked at home.

"After trialling the boxes they may realise it's not the best value for money and by then they've got a few recipes under their belts, at which point they're likely to start making the most of what we offer," he says.

Mehmet admits he plans to cut back some of his fresh range and offer just three variants of mushrooms, reduce his range of fresh flowers and instead focus on packaged produce such as ready-made salads.

However, one big difference which is working in his favour is the demand for value from his new customers, something he believes helped drive the store's £15,000

“Trade press has shown me there are good independent shop owners striving to offer standout shops. Reading about them has made me realise it’s possible to reach my goal.” **MEHMET GUZEL**



“I’ve got things selling that haven’t done well in the Bethnal Green store. I’m learning to give everything a chance and not to dismiss anything”

**INFORMATION**

- Location**  
Old Oakham, West London
- Size**  
1,600
- Key category**  
Food to go
- Average basket**  
£6.79



# STORE LOOKBOOK



Mehmet's customers will soon have access to the Simply Fresh loyalty app, coffee offers and money-off vouchers

turnover in its first week.

"I've gone back to the basics. Organic and artisan lines are still there but they're not a main focus," says Mehmet. "I've got things selling that haven't done well in the Bethnal Green store. I'm learning to give everything a chance and not to dismiss anything - such as items I may have dismissed in my other store.

So far he has seen a big demand for food to go and although he anticipated lunch trade would be big it has exceeded expectations. "We're already increasing orders and bringing in new products," says Mehmet.

He has focused on snacks to cater to younger customers and has also noticed the popularity of own label. Although he does not currently offer promotions, his shoppers will have access to the Simply Fresh loyalty app, coffee offers and money-off vouchers.

"I'm looking forward to seeing the whole business grow as well as the food to go offering. I'm also aiming to minimise suppliers. Currently I have about 60 to 70 at the other store, but I want to streamline things and make it more manageable so that I can focus on expanding the entire business." ●



 **Want to see more of Mehmet's store? Go to [betterretailing.com/simply-fresh-nash-house](http://betterretailing.com/simply-fresh-nash-house)**



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# Smoking kills

# SYMBOL NEWS

## P&H adds baked deliveries

Palmer & Harvey has expanded its direct-to-store service with the launch of P&H Bakedirect.

Forming part of its Direct Van Sales operation, Bakedirect will see P&H work with brands including Warbutons, McVitie's, Premier Foods and Carrs Foods, alongside its current Sweetdirect and Snacksdirect offerings.

Noel Robinson, managing director of Direct Van Sales at Palmer & Harvey, said: "Retailers not only have unrivalled service, but also guaranteed profit when it comes to their impulse and baked ranges."

Bakedirect has launched within the M25 area with a fleet of 25 vans.

Retailers who use the service can access a regular delivery service with no minimum drop charge.

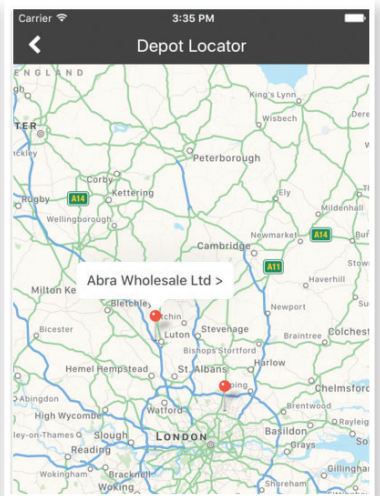
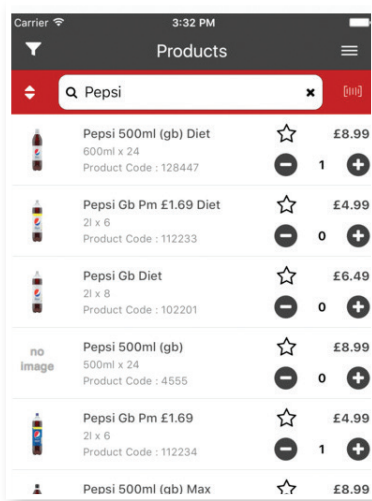
They can also benefit from category expertise and in-store merchandising with every Bakedirect delivery.

## Conviviality acquisitions

Conviviality Retail has acquired 15 convenience stores in the South East, following a deal with Nisa member KMD Enterprises Ltd.

The company announced it had acquired the entire share capital of KMD on Monday, which will see the majority of the stores converted to the Bargain Booze Select Convenience fascia and added to Conviviality Retail's existing estate of more than 700 stores.

David Robinson, managing director of Conviviality Retail, said: "We will continue to grow our store estate, partnering with both new and existing franchisees to help them grow their store portfolios with quality, well located retail outlets."



**Retailers won't need to leave their stores** Wholesaler launches smartphone add-on

## Abra-cadabra! App will make ordering simpler

by **Charlie Faulkner**

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A wholesaler has launched an app enabling retailers to place and receive orders without having to leave their stores.

Retailers who download the Abra Wholesale app can then scan items via their phones, adding them to a virtual shopping list as they walk around their stores. The app went live this week and is now available across Android and Apple smartphones.

Dee Thaya, owner of Abra Wholesale, said:

"It's about looking at how we can make retailers' lives easier, especially in the current climate, and helping to cut down their workload.

"The idea behind the app is to enable orders to be placed in the convenience of retailers' stores, rather than going into the back office or home to use the computer."

Mr Thaya said shop owners he has spoken to say they are struggling to find staff, which limits the time they can leave their stores to visit cash and carries, and costs them money

if they lose out on business while they are out.

"We have started providing nation-wide deliveries," he said.

"When used with this app as well, it enables retailers to concentrate on their stores rather than being forced to leave their shop floor."

The app, which will see a marketing campaign launched behind it from January, provides push notifications about deals and promotions, as well as information on aspects such as legislation and regulation.

Abra also announced it now has gluten-free and organic lines available – making it one of the first wholesalers to offer these products. It has the backing of manufacturers including Suma Foods, Nairn's and Windmill Organics.

"All the big buying groups have phenomenal sales around this type of products which is why we made the decision to start offering them," said Mr Thaya. "We aim to work with retailers and we want to help them grow their businesses."

## Bestway targets increased forecourt sales

Bestway Wholesale is looking to grow its share of the growing forecourt convenience market with its latest partnership with fuel supplier Certas Energy.

The deal will see current and new sites being introduced to Bestway's Best-one symbol, Xtra local Retail Club and depot network as a group retail partner of choice.

James Hall, symbol development director for Bestway Wholesale, said:



"We see forecourts as an opportunity, particularly in fresh and food to go. They play a major part because of location and the way today's customers are

travelling more."

Certas delivers more than six billion litres of fuel each year in the UK and supplies 1,200 dealer-operated forecourts, along

with its company-owned sites across the UK.

"This deal provides forecourts with retail insight and know-how and it will help support their members," said Mr Hall.

Certas Energy retail director Ramsay MacDonald said: "Together we possess a compelling offer for dealers to achieve incremental and sustainable growth."

Changes will start during the first three months of next year.

# NEWS & MAGS



## MagCulture cheers for its first year

Specialist London store MagCulture celebrated its first anniversary in style. It had a big 'We Are One' sign in its window and offered a glass of prosecco to its customers, as well as hosting a Christmas card-making session with The Mushpit magazine. It has also been offering customers who buy a magazine a free lucky dip from under its Christmas tree, and selling gift tokens. Owner Jeremy Leslie said: "It's been a great first year, exceeding expectations in all respects."

## Sunday People to print on Saturday

The Sunday People is set to publish on a Saturday over the Christmas period.

As an entirely stand-alone newspaper, publisher Trinity Mirror said publishing on Christmas Eve would help keep its 275,000 readers over the Christmas period.

General manager MGN and group newspaper sales director Neil Jagger said: "It's not quite tomorrow's news today, but it is unusual.

"We may have done it more than 20 years ago, but not in living memory.

"We don't know what it's going to do, but it's a calculated risk. All the retailers we've spoken to are pleased with the news."

Retailer threatens to write to customers to recommend rival deal 'It will kill their idea'

## Newsagent fights back to 'defend' Daily Mail sales

by Tim Murray

RNreporter@newtrade.co.uk

A retailer has acted to defend his newspaper sales after the Daily Mail advertised its digital subscription package in its printed titles.

John Parkinson has written a letter to his customers outlining the shortcomings of the online offer and urging them to instead consider a corresponding offer from the i.

Johnston Press's i deal offers a 40% discount off its print edition, accessed via vouchers, with free access



to its digital app, while the Mail's recent digital-only deal cuts out retailers from the equation.

John Parkinson, of Broadway News in Penrhyn Bay, Llandudno, is threatening to circulate his letter to customers if the Mail runs a similar offer in its pages again.

He said: "There's nothing to stop me putting it through my customers' letterboxes at the same time as delivering papers, nor to hand out the letter to customers buying the Mail at the counter."

The letter states: "Before you rush to take up [the Daily Mail's offer], can we suggest you peruse the offer from the i newspaper."

Mr Parkinson added: "I think a lot of other newsagents may think along those lines.

"Hopefully, if more people do something like this, it will kill their idea dead in the water."

James Wilkinson, of

Pybus, Boroughbridge, Yorkshire, has described retailers selling a newspaper directing readers to a digital version as akin to "assisted suicide". He said: "With the Mail causing such big problems in York, this just rubs salt in the wounds.

"We can't even get our papers on time. The cheek is putting the deal in a spread in the middle of a paper we're selling. It's fine if they want to do an offer, but why should I sell the paper it's in?"

The Daily Mail did not respond to a request for a comment before RN went to press.

## Breathe of fresh air in mag sector

The publisher of new magazine Breathe has revealed sales have been "far above expectations" as it launches a one shot.

GMC Publications launched Breathe Journal last week, which taps into another trend, bullet journaling, a form of making lists.

It follows the success of the bi-monthly, which is only on its third issue.

Anne Guillot, marketing and circulation executive at GMC Publications, said: "Breathe has grown into more than a magazine, it is now a recognised brand – thanks to its delicate style and open-minded, mindful approach. Its success was instantaneous from the first issue at the end of the summer, with sales far above expectation and very positive feedback from readers. That's why the Breathe Journal was the natural next step in developing the brand."

## Partwork publishers' backing for indies

Partwork publishers have reiterated their commitment to independent retailers and ironing out issues as the sector gears up for its busiest time of the year.

The guarantees come as research from the Professional Publishers Association (PPA) revealed independents generated more than half of the £31.4m

sales in the sector in 2015, while in the first part of 2016 indies increased market share in volume terms by 1%, with sales increasing 5.7% year on year.

It also comes in advance of a selection of titles to be launched after Christmas.

Anne Hogarth, retail and circulation marketing executive at the PPA, said: "All

parties in the supply chain have been meeting in recent months to take steps to address any issues, especially those involving back orders. Retailers can be assured that publishers are committed to working with them to make sure sales are not lost."

She added the independent retail trade remains important following criti-

cism many publishers are pushing consumers into direct subscriptions. "Partwork sales at retail are very valuable and publishers are absolutely committed to supporting them," she said.

The PPA highlighted its schemes to support retailers, including PROFIT Partwork Club, which guarantees allocation.

# PRODUCT TRENDS

## Campaign for Corn Flakes

Kellogg's has launched a 12-month campaign for Corn Flakes – the first in six years for the brand.

It will feature fans recruited through social media talking about their favourite ways of eating the cereal. It will run on TV and digital channels for 26 weeks throughout 2017.

It comes as Kellogg's also announced its latest theme park promotion with Merlin Entertainments, due to launch in March. It will appear on packs across its entire range and offers savings of up to £50.

It is also launching in-box gifts of slurpable spoons, with built-in straws, across Coco Pops, Rice Krispies and Frosties.



## Look again at spirits

Mast-Jaegermeister is calling on retailers to take another look at their spirits sections and follow trends in the on-trade.

The company believes retailers are missing out on an opportunity that could be worth as much as £300m. It is urging them to sign up to its Give It A Shot initiative which will give them the opportunity to introduce a new planogram, and newer sections. Jonathan Dennys, customer marketing and insights controller, said: "Drinking trends start in the on-trade and migrate to the off-trade."



## Foreign rivals challenge cheddar in cheese charts

by Charlie Faulkner

charlie.faulkner@newtrade.co.uk

Cheddar cheese remains the biggest category seller despite sales growth of up to 8% for other variants, according to Kantar Worldpanel.

The research found cheddar still accounts for 53% of all cheese sold, but continental and blue cheese are growing in popularity, with the latter seeing an 8% sales uplift.

Simon Lunn, of Simply Fresh in Weare, has been advertising his selection on social media as perfect for a

cheese board this Christmas.

"We're only four miles from Cheddar and we have two local suppliers so we have lots of variants of cheddar – garlic, cider, smoked," said Mr Lunn. "Cheddar is our big seller but we also stock camembert, goat's cheese, blue, Edam, even Dairylea triangles – you've got to appeal to lots of different markets."

Dan Cock, of Whitstone Village Stores and Post Office in Devon, stocks a range of cheeses including continental and blue cheese, but his biggest seller is still cheddar.

He sees an uplift of up to 30% in his cheese sales around this time of year as people prepare for Christmas.

"Cheese on promotion does particularly well because it's quite an expensive product," said Mr Cock. "We also do well with own label and Happy Shopper brands."

Sam Durham, a shop assistant at Londis Shipway Post Office in Torquay, said the store sells a lot of vintage cheddar. It has just started expanding its range with local Aged Leicestershire red and, as a result of shoppers' requests, will be bringing in

fruit cheeses for the festive period.

Peter Lamb, of Lamb's Larder in East Sussex, said he stocks blue cheese, camembert, brie and Edam, but also offers a whole range of cheddars including a local Sussex cheddar.

Overall, the cheese market has increased in value by 0.6%, this is an improvement on last year's decline of -1.1%.

Shoppers are buying more per trip and more often, but there has been a consistent decrease in the average price per kilo, according to research.

## JTI adds new open tank e-cig to range

JTI has added to its range of e-cigarettes with the launch of a new open tank device and e-liquids.

Logic LQD has a new refilling system along with a variable voltage control and dual coil which, JTI said, offers an "enhanced and customisable vaping experience".

The e-liquids, which are child-proof and designed

to avoid spillage, come in six flavours – tobacco, menthol, cherry, vanilla, berry mint and strawberry. The liquids retail at £5 per 10ml bottle, alongside the device at £20 and atomisers at £9 for a pack of three.

Logic LQD will join JTI's existing brands, Logic PRO and E-Lites, which will be renamed under the Logic brand in the new year.

Charis Chrysochoidis, emerging products lead at JTI, said: "We now offer a range of e-cigarettes, rechargeables, closed tanks and open tanks united under one Logic brand. With almost two million vapers in the UK and e-cigarette sales predicted to continue growing into 2017, retailers should stock up on the full range."



# BRAND SNAPSHOT



### A Thinner kind of Oreo

Supported by a £3m marketing campaign, Oreo is introducing Oreo Thins to the range next month, available in 48g packs of Original Vanilla and Chocolate Crème flavours.



### Bigger Extra bottles

Wrigley's is expanding its sugarfree gum bottle range with the launch of Extra Cool Breeze 60 pellet bottles, including Peppermint, Spearmint and Extra White Bubblemint.



### Four from Allinson's

Allied Bakeries has launched four loaves as part its Allinson's range, all available in a 12-slice, 650g package, alongside new, refreshed branding for all its products.



### Get Up & Go for new look

Australian oat-based breakfast drink Up&Go, has revealed a new-look pack design, supported by a major marketing push, as part of its aim to drive sales in the UK.



### Mentos' special offers

Mentos has launched a Me & You on-pack loyalty programme, giving Mentos fans access to a unique code to unlock a series of special offers on experiences.



### Hellmann's ad remake

Hellmann's has launched a remake of its Christmas television advert, as part of a £1m investment across TV and social media throughout December.



### All bite on the night

Country Choice has launched bite-size sausage, and cheese & onion rolls. The puff pastry bites contain seasoned pork sausage meat, or a cheese and onion filling.



### More McVitie's nibbles

McVitie's has added to its Nibbles range with the launch of Hobnobs Nibbles. It will be available in a 120g pouch retailing at £1.89 and an 80g bag pricemarked at £1.



### Baxters can revamp

Baxters' 'hearty' range of canned soup has had a packaging revamp. The 10-strong, protein-rich range now boasts its nutritional properties on the front of the can.

# WHAT'S NEW



## Naturally Coconuts ice cream

Dairy-free and vegan-friendly, this is made from coconuts and sweetened with unrefined coconut sugar. Flavours include raw chocolate, mint choc chip and coconut caramel.

**RRP** £2.40 (110ml), £6.50 (500ml)

**Contact** 07341 252873 / hello@naturallycoconuts.com



## Get in the Mood coffee

Get in the Mood is blended from Arabica and Robusta beans and roasted in Kent. Each variety has a different pack design and its contents are 100% natural and additive-free.

**RRP** £5.95 (227g)

**Contact** 01304 332096 / hello@getinthemoodstore.com



## The Wasabi Company

Billed as the only mustard in the world made with English wasabi, The Wasabi Company has teamed up with Fox Gourmet to create a condiment with extra kick.

**RRP** £4.50

**Contact** 01929 463824 / contact@thewasabicompany.co.uk



## The Cold Pressed Oil Company

Produced from seeds grown on the company's farm, The Cold Pressed Oil Company uses a traditional method of cold pressing to extract the nutty oil from the seed.

**RRP** £5.00 (500ml)

**Contact** 07919 563987 / william@coldpressedoil.co.uk



## Foraging Fox

There are now three variants in the range; Original Beetroot Ketchup, Hot Beetroot Ketchup and Smoked Beetroot Ketchup. They are 100% natural and gluten-free.

**RRP** £3.49

**Contact** 01728 726553



## The Tomato Stall

The Tomato Stall's Spiced Tomato Juice blends pure Isle of Wight tomato juice with a secret mix of spices and a dash of chilli that's ideal for brunch or cocktails.

**RRP** £1.80 (200ml), £2.00 (250ml) and £3.50 (500ml)

**Contact** 01983 866907 / hello@thetomatostall.co.uk

**Dvave Songer**  
 dave.songer@newtrade.co.uk  
 020 7689 3358



## Black Cow

Triple-filtered and treated to a secret blending process, Black Cow is the world's first vodka made purely from the milk of grass-grazed cows, giving it a creamy character.

**RRP** £31.75 (700ml)

**Contact** 01308 868844



## Serious Pig

Serious Pig is a charcuterie-inspired salami snack made with British pork and infused with a blend of herbs and spices. Flavours include chilli & paprika and chilli & ginger.

**RRP** £1.49

**Contact** 0207 732 79 79

**FOCUS**

## Protein drinks

The trend of enriching drinks with protein is a relatively new phenomenon, but one that's really caught on with shoppers. Here are three options ideal for the increasing number of people drinking them for breakfast



### Fuel10k

Designed for the breakfast market, Fuel10k's Quark with Fruit is a yoghurt-style, high-protein meal that comes in a squeezable, resealable pack. It is low fat, with no added refined sugar.

**RRP** £1.99 (150g)

**Contact** 01349 865505

### Upbeat

Upbeat Active is the only protein drink made with whey protein from British milk and real fruit and is designed to fuel healthy, active lifestyles.

**RRP** £1.99 (330ml)

**Contact** 0845 6021217 /

customercare@feelingupbeat.com



### For Goodness Shakes

In original and banana & golden syrup flavours, For Goodness Shakes' protein and oats drinks contain 20g of oats and no added refined sugars.

**RRP** £2.49 (475ml)

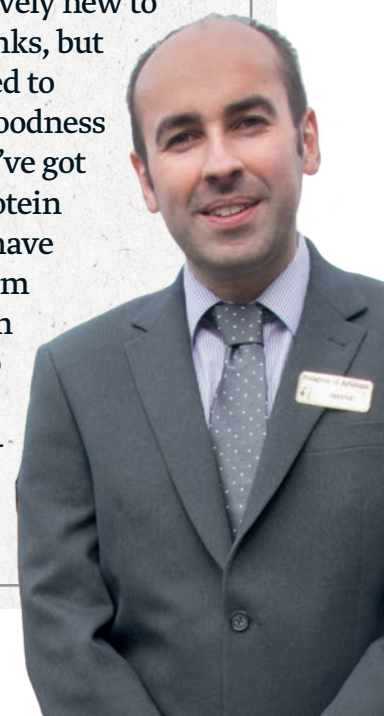
**Contact** 0208 8712936 /

convenience@forgoodnessshakes.com

### Shane Woolston

CT Baker Budgens of Aylsham

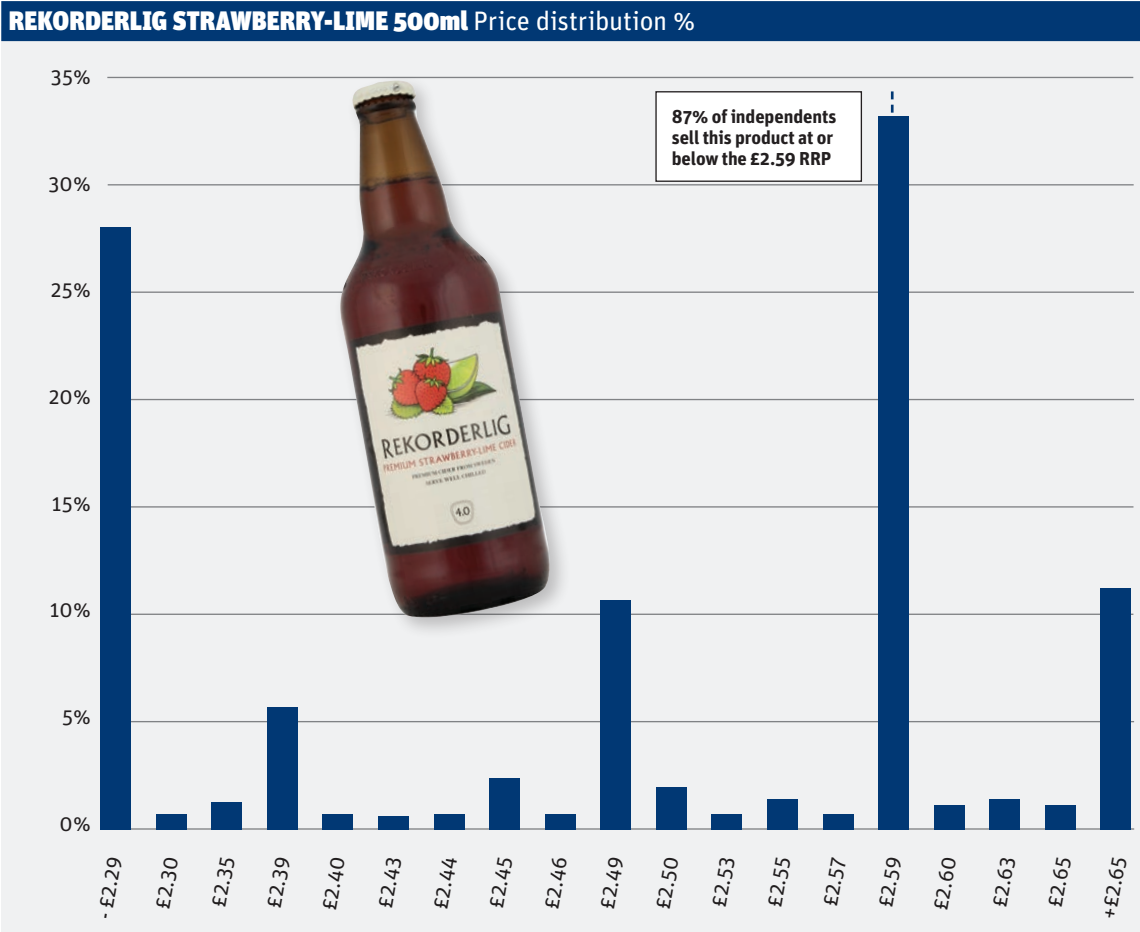
We're relatively new to protein drinks, but have decided to stock For Goodness Shakes. We've got its High Protein range and have stocked them in our lunch box pick-up area, close to the milk-shakes and juices.



# PRICEWATCH

## Profit checker Cider

## Price checker



PRODUCT
Kopparberg Strawberry 500ml
Kopparberg Mixed Fruit 500ml
Bulmers No.17 500ml
Rekorderlig Strawberry-Lime 500ml
Rekorderlig Wild Berries 500ml
Bulmers Original 500ml
Thatchers Gold 500ml
Aspall Suffolk Cyder 500ml
Thatchers 2014 Vintage Oak-aged 500ml
Stella Artois Cidré 500ml
Thatchers Katy 500ml
Rekorderlig Mango-Raspberry 500ml

## Analysis

Despite being highlighted as a bestseller by three of this week's four retailers, all three of Rekorderlig's flavours were sold for less than RRP - just 13% of this week's featured flavour, Strawberry-Lime,

were sold above.

In fact, only two of the 12 featured products' average prices were above RRP, a trend explained by the competitive nature of the category.

Three of the retailers RN spoke to

advocated promotions as a way to sell more bottles, with Narinder Randhawa making it clear that without promotions sales of cider in his store were less than impressive.

## How we drive our profit

### Harry Goraya

**STORE** Nisa Local  
**LOCATION** Northfleet, Kent  
**SIZE** 3,000sq ft  
**TYPE** on parade of shops

**TOP TIP**  
Speak to your customers and give products a go. Tastes are different everywhere



**We sell** a lot of premium ciders and have a wide range including Bulmers, Rekorderlig and Kopparberg. They are really catching on and that's down to the range of varied and appealing flavours. A lot of sales comes down to how customers are feeling at the time rather than because these brands appeal to a certain type of shopper. Despite cider being a lot more popular in the summer there is still demand when it's colder; we get flavours in more suitable for the winter such as Rekorderlig's spice plum flavour. I've heard of customers drinking it warm.

### John Parkinson

**STORE** Broadway Premier  
**LOCATION** Llandudno  
**SIZE** 800sq ft  
**TYPE** residential

**TOP TIP**  
Adapt your range for the colder months. We'll get in Old Mout Passionfruit & Apple, which is ideal for Christmas



**Premium-wise**, we sell Aspall and Rekorderlig all year round. As a category, cider is really important because it's become really popular in recent years. We get our stock from Booker and we'll often sell it on promotion at three for £5. We have to be very, very price-conscious in our area because there are a lot of pensioners nearby and they have to watch the pennies more than most of our other customers. The shop is very small with no parking and it's close to a Co-op, so everything we do has to be right.



➔ **Dave Songer**  
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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

AVERAGE	BOOKER RRP	RETAILER 1 C-STORE IN MANCHESTER STUDENT AREA	RETAILER 2 LONDON SUBURBAN HIGH STREET STORE	RETAILER 3 HIGH STREET C-STORE IN SOUTH COAST SEASIDE TOWN	RETAILER 4 GLOUCESTER-SHIRE VILLAGE STORE	RETAILER 5 OFF-LICENCE IN SUBURB OF LARGE HAMPSHIRE TOWN	RETAILER 6 C-STORE IN SOUTH LONDON RESIDENTIAL AREA
£2.52	£2.59	£2.49	£2.65	-	-	£2.49	£2.55
£2.50	£2.59	£2.49	£2.65	£2.95	-	£2.49	£2.55
£2.25	£2.49	£2.39	-	-	-	£2.49	-
£2.43	£2.59	£2.39	£2.65	£2.69	£2.29	£2.49	-
£2.40	£2.59	£2.39	£2.65	£2.69	£2.29	-	-
£1.96	£2.29	-	-	-	-	£2.49	-
£2.39	£2.49	£1.99	-	£2.49	-	£2.49	-
£2.49	£2.59	-	£2.55	-	-	-	-
£2.49	£2.55	-	-	-	£2.29	-	-
£2.05	£1.99	-	-	-	-	£2.45	-
£2.40	£2.25	-	-	-	£2.29	-	-
£2.47	£2.59	£2.39	£2.65	£2.69	£2.29	-	-

## MY LOCAL HERO

Retailers reveal the most profitable produce on their doorsteps

### Dave Benson

Spar Pewsey,  
Wiltshire



Beechwood  
Farm eggs  
(£1.20)



#### Where did you discover them?

We've been selling them for two years and were made aware of them by the butcher who set up in our store last year. They used to sell Beechwood's eggs and we were keen to get them in our store – the free range aspect was of huge interest to us. The butcher also has quail and duck eggs, so we've got a good range.

#### Who buys them?

The demographic is varied, but we've found we're now selling free range eggs to people who previously weren't too concerned where they came from. Everyone says they taste better and they really appreciated us having better-quality products available. We sell around 280 half-dozen boxes a week and get a 29% margin.

#### Why are they so successful?

We've recently updated our baking range to compete with the Co-op down the road and we've got a lot more people coming in to buy the eggs as a result. We used PoS to promote the eggs in the store, as well as on Twitter, which has resulted in us having to increase our order to keep up with demand.

## Martin Ward

**STORE** Cowpen Lane News  
**LOCATION** Cleveland  
**SIZE** less than 1,000sq ft  
**TYPE** residential

#### TOP TIP

Get your range right by talking to customers; they'll tell you what they want and it's unwise not to listen to them



**We stock** Bulmers in bottles and they sell well, especially when they're on offer. When they're not on promotion we sell them for £2.49 a bottle, which gives us a 29% margin. Bulmers is one of my better-selling premium lines, so I make sure I stock three flavours: original, Zingy Blood Orange and Crushed Red Berries & Lime. Unless sales drop off drastically I keep those varieties in all year. We've only been selling alcohol for a year or so, and we began by taking advice from the cash and carry. Since then we have developed the range ourselves.

## Narinder Randhawa

**STORE** Randhawa News  
**LOCATION** Stechford, Birmingham  
**SIZE** 850sq ft  
**TYPE** main road

#### TOP TIP

Free gift offers work brilliantly. When we gave free branded Rekorderlig glasses with three bottles and they flew out



**We are relatively** new to cider.

I began with Stella Artois Cidre, then moved on to Magners, and I now have Rekorderlig and Kopparberg. The last two in particular get people coming to our store and we'll normally have offers that give customers a better rate if they buy two. We didn't sell many bottles before the offer, so it's vital. The big challenge for retailers who start selling a new range is getting the word out – too many people come in and say: "I didn't know you sold this." Promotions make the bottles jump out and encourage people to give them a try. ●

# YOUR NEWS

## Magazines makeover brings 5% sales boost

A Welsh retailer has seen a 5% sales uplift since increasing her magazine range and making the shop's display easier to navigate.

Meryl Williams, of Pikes Newsagents in Porthmadog, set out to expand her speciality magazine range after her competitor stopped selling newspapers and magazines in March.

"I decided to try to see if I could get as many of those customers as possible and advertised the magazines on Facebook," said Mrs Williams.

She was given a list of all the titles previously sold at the other store and from that she managed to inherit 42% of her competitor's former customers.

● See *Store Lookbook* in next week's RN.

## Business Saturday hits £717m

Sales on Small Business Saturday grew by 15% to more than £717m.

The figures come from a survey by sponsor American Express, which showed spending was up 15% year on year.

A number of newsagents and convenience stores took part in the event on 3 December with around 80% of local authorities now supporting it.

Michelle Owens MBE, campaign director of Small Business Saturday, said: "To see the spend on Small Business Saturday reach £249m more this year than on the first Saturday in 2013, an increase of 53%, is fantastic.

"It confirms the positive stories we are hearing from small businesses in communities across the UK."



## Customers box clever for charity

Generous customers at Abid Hamid's Newsrack shop in Paisley, Scotland, have outdone themselves this year for the store's annual charity Christmas appeal. Mr Hamid has been collecting shoeboxes filled with gifts to send around the world to needy children affected by poverty and war via charity Samaritan's Purse for four years. But this year's haul of 118 boxes was the biggest yet. "It's been great and really brings the community together," he said.

**Regular customers collect points for deals and offers** 'It's a way to incentivise launches'

## Retailer's online growth will include loyalty card

by Toby Hill

RNreporter@newtrade.co.uk

A Sussex retailer is developing a Tesco-style loyalty card as he looks to grow his online portfolio.

David Knight is working with an IT company to develop the card which will be launched in his two Knights of Budgens stores in Henfield and Hassocks next year, and link to a new website.

"Our stores are 5,000sq ft and 6,000sq ft, which means customers have

high expectations - they want us to be like Tesco," he said. "I thought, we can't do a Tesco Clubcard, but we can introduce a loyalty card of our own."

In the scheme, customers collect points on their cards to gain access to exclusive offers. Mr Knight initially planned to work only with local suppliers, including a butchery, to offer deals, but he has subsequently held talks with large international suppliers, including Heineken and Red Bull.

"They're very interested in what we're trying to do," he said. "It's a new way for them to incentivise product launches."

Mr Knight also plans to send cardholders timed vouchers by SMS. He is considering a double points or free coffee deal for Wednesdays, his quietest day.

Customers will be able to pick up an application form in-store or register online. He is also looking at using smartphones as well as physical cards.

"It's part of a move we're

making to do more online," he said. "We'll have a consumer-facing website with information about the business and our suppliers, then we'll have a loyalty section with a log-in where people can see their balance and get exclusive offers.

"I also want to move more into e-commerce - to do big hampers and veg boxes. We'll start off small, at a local level, then target a larger area around the store - business parks with lots of offices, for example."

## Stores and customers welcome festive orders

Retailers are maximising sales through the Christmas period by giving customers the option to place orders in advance.

Christine Hope, of Hopes of Longtown in south Wales, put together a 10-page list of products from local producers, a couple of pages for non-local products as well as suggestions of things that can be bought from the shop for others that can be ordered.

"We try to get them out in the second week of November, they have to be back by the first week in December, and then they pay and pick up on Christmas Eve," she said.

"It's worth a whole extra day of Christmas trading for us. Without pre-ordering, we'd never get the right volume of products, so it means we can sell much more."

Meanwhile, Kent

retailer Kate Mills works with a local butcher to put together a Christmas shopping menu.

Customers order and pick up items from her shop, Heath Stores, as well as cooking a Christmas dinner using the products for customers to sample.

"It means we never run out of anything, and keeps people coming back," she said.





Store owners come up with inventive ideas 'We've saved £16,000 by analysing data'

# Creative retailers cut waste and save money

by Toby Hill

RNreporter@newtrade.co.uk

Retailers have found a range of creative ways to deal with waste and out-of-date stock in their stores, in some cases saving thousands of pounds.

Sandra Taylor-Meeds, of Budgens of Holt, Norfolk, has tackled the issue by reviewing stock, delisting slow lines, and keeping orders as tight as possible. Working with her fresh food manager and the heads of different departments, she has made some products available only at certain times, for example during weekends, helping to both drive sales and control waste.

"We've saved £16,000 by being stringent in our stock and orders, and by looking closely at the sales data to see what's creating waste, and when," she said.

Shane Woolston, of Budgens of Aylsham, in Norwich, has teamed up with a local fruit supplier, Sharringtons, to turn his waste fruit into cash.

"Each day, Sharringtons will come to the store and replace and replenish any of our strawberries and raspberries that are looking tired on the shelf," he said. "They then turn the waste into jam. We buy it back from them, and sell it in the store, showcasing it on strategically positioned displays. It sells well – people



like buying local jam – and we get good margins, too."

Meanwhile, Joe Williams, of The Village Shop in Hook Norton, Oxfordshire, has found inventive ways

to deal with his waste fruit and veg, which have also helped boost his community credentials.

"We have composters out the back, which waste fruit and veg goes into, and we let it compost down," he said. "Then it's either used on our garden or on a neighbour's."

He also gives his waste fresh produce to a local community-run charity that looks after pigs.

"They have a smallholding on a neighbour's piece of land in the village and will take anything that's not wanted," he said.

"The village sees that we're not wasting anything, that we're recycling everything we can, and they definitely like that."

## HND stores hit by late delivery 'shambles'

Retailers have hit out at Menzies and Smiths News' "shambolic" service after suffering more delivery problems.

The whole of the Portsmouth area was left without newspapers until late in the morning on Wednesday last week, with some not receiving them until after 9am. Meanwhile, Smiths' depot move from Harlow to Stevenage as part of a reorganisation has been blamed for "destroying" one retailer's business.

Linda Sood, of Falcon News in Portsmouth, said: "There are big HND retailers who are really suffering. Menzies said it was because of motorways being closed, but there should be some kind of contingency plans."

Hitesh Patel, of Gay's Newsagents in Hertford, whose depot used to be Harlow, said: "It's a shambles."

● More, Your Views p24-25.

## Trinity in firing line

Trinity Mirror has come under fire for increasing the price of a number of its regional titles at the same time as cutting retailers' percentage terms.

The price rises will come into effect across the East Midlands, with 5p added to the Nottingham Evening Post, Burton Mail and Derby Evening Telegraph throughout the week, with the same amount added to Leicester Mercury on Saturdays.

Margins on all will be cut between 1% and 1.5%.

A spokesperson for Trinity Mirror said: "In the East Midlands we are making a significant investment in local journalism and ensuring we provide engaging content that delivers value to readers."

## App gives basket spend boost

A new consumer app being trialled by a Hull retailer has given the store's average basket spend a boost.

Samantha Coldbeck, of Wharfedale Premier, launched the app developed by Booker seven weeks ago, offering delivery and click-and-collect services. Since then, the app has been downloaded 250 times and although delivery has

been slower to pick up, the click-and-collect service is proving popular.

"I was never sure about delivery: why take something out to customers when you could have them browsing in-store? But click-and-collect includes that benefit – they buy through the app but still drop in to pick it up," she said.

The award-winning

retailer is promoting the app through leaflet drops, social media, and staff are giving it a push in-store.

"More people are using it, it's really coming into its own," she said.

Deliveries have a minimum spend of £20 while the average basket spend of click-and-collect is £9, compared to the store's average £6.90 basket spend.

Product	Current Price	Original Price
7UP Lemon, Lime & Bubbles 2 Litres	£1.00	£1.00
AERO Peppermint Chocolate Multipack (4 x 27g)	£1.00	£1.00
After Eight Carton 300g	£2.00	£4.00
Ariel Washing Liquid Original 40 Washes	£5.00	£10.00
Aunt Bessie's Bramley Apple Pie 550g	£1.00	£4.75

# YOUR REGION



## SOUTH WEST NFRN DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT 29.11.2016

Nick Constable reports from the NFRN South West district council meeting

### Smiths News hub review in focus

A review of key distribution hubs by Smiths News could affect delivery times, delegates were told.

The wholesaler has begun a consultation – outlined to senior NFRN executives – proposing closures and depot conversions from next spring.

Its plans involve possible changes to Borehamwood and Hemel Hempstead, while magazine distribution would end at Reading and Slough with both converted to newspaper-only plants.

The Berkshire towns' magazine workload would then relocate to Hemel.

Smiths' managers insist no decisions have been made. However, South West district president Derek Cook said if the changes went ahead delivery times could be hit.

"Hemel Hempstead will be supplying magazines to an area from Devizes in the west to Bournemouth and Southampton in the south," he said.

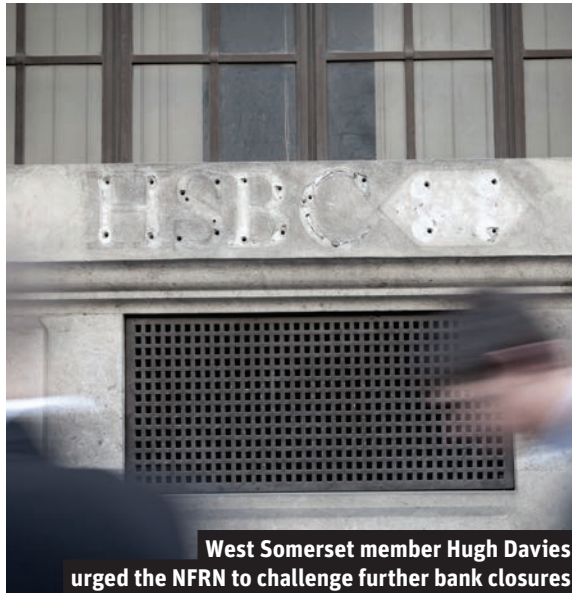
"That's a long, long way and given some of the problems we've had in the past we'll need to monitor this closely."

### Daily Mail move 'undermines' HND

Attempts by the Daily Mail to promote direct subscriptions undermines home delivery, a national councillor warned.

North Devon member Roy Crawford said the move was a "kick in the teeth" for both the federation and individual businesses.

"After all the support we've given the Mail over the years, for them to treat us like this is so,



West Somerset member Hugh Davies urged the NFRN to challenge further bank closures

wrong," he said. "They've really jeopardised HND."

Devizes member Russell Haynes also criticised the Mail over giveaways such as the recent Lego promotion.

"My regular customers could only get the free Lego through Smiths," he said.

"Over three weekends our returns were horrendous because people weren't coming into the shop.



**They've really jeopardised HND**

### Roy Crawford

on a move by the Daily Mail to provide direct subscriptions

"If giveaways happen then many more retailers should be included."

### Concerns raised over 'paying-in'

Retailers in small towns are being hit by poor or non-existent paying-in facilities, delegates heard.

West Somerset member Hugh Davies urged the federation to challenge any further bank closures.

District vice-president Duncan Finlayson said the Post Office's policy of down-sizing from main offices to shared space in high street shops had also backfired.

"There are fewer staff and the queues are ridiculous," he said.

### Retailers 'pushed by PayPoint'

Retailers are being pushed into adopting PayPoint's new PayPoint One terminals, delegates were warned.

Russell Haynes said the "smart new machine" had

some advantages but was not worth extra investment.

"At the moment we don't pay anything," he said. "But neither do we make much out of it."

Roy Crawford said there had been reports of reps trying to persuade retailers to switch from free to paid-for terminals.

"Established PayPoint customers can opt to stay on the current system,"

he said. "But if you're new, or sell your business, your shop has got to move to PayPoint One."

"Despite this some people have been pressured into signing a new contract."

### Back local drive, newsagents urged

Newsagents across the south west are being urged to back the federation's new 'local activity' initiative.

Membership services manager Nigel Smith said wholesalers had long accepted the need for improved engagement with their customers.

"Smiths and Menzies are very keen to do

this because they recognise they don't do any training with retailers," he said.

Plans are underway for open days and workshops – possibly at news distribution centres or cash and carry depots – during 2017, he added.

It is hoped special pre-registration incentives and business deals will boost attendance.

"Ultimately, we need support from the districts," said Mr Smith. "So if you see an open day advertised please come along and find out more."



Derek Cook



Duncan Finlayson



Nigel Smith

### Your say

Are you selling plain packs of cigarettes yet. How are you communicating with shoppers to tell them about upcoming legislation?



We're selling plain packaged cigarettes and customers generally aren't happy about it. Some complain about 10-packs being withdrawn although some people say they've helped them cut down. We're using leaflets from the tobacco industry to explain the new laws.

#### Bridget McNulty

The Paper Shop, Honiton



The transition to plain packaging has become very confused. There are so many brands and brands within brands. It's also hard to get stock of certain hand-rolling tobacco. We tell customers what we know by word of mouth although often it's them keeping us informed.

#### Russell Haynes

Brittox News, Devizes



We're giving up on tobacco because the margin is too small to be worthwhile. We may order in a few packs for regulars who have always bought cigarettes from us. Other than that, we're out. We've explained our reasoning and people understand.

#### Roy Crawford

Crawford News, Torrington

# YOUR REGION



## WEST MIDLANDS NFRN DISTRICT COUNCIL 28.11.2016

Tony Collins reports from the NFRN West Midlands district council meeting

### Delegates say yes to integration

Delegates voted in favour of integrating two other branches into the West Midlands district.

Northwich and North Staffs and Crewe branches will join the district with effect from 1 January next year, subject to approval from the Mersey Dee and North Wales district council.

Membership services manager Chris Appleton said during a presentation, West Midlands would gain South Cheshire and North Staffs and also take on Hereford branch.

The move would increase the West Midlands membership from 1,115 to 1,328.



Steve Archer

Northwich member Steve Archer who attended the West Midlands meeting with fellow Northwich member Hamalata Patel, said: "You are a well-established, proactive, but Hama and I are two of only four Mersey Dee district councillors who still have shops."

### Don't wait to install CCTV

Delegates were urged to install CCTV cameras in their shops if they didn't already have them after visiting national president Ray Monelle spoke about the sixth robbery at his shop.

Mr Monelle said during the armed robbery an intruder held a knife to the arm of one of his staff.

He added: "My CCTV is good. The police praised it and got good images which saved my staff having to give evidence in court.



Retailers raised concerns over lottery terminals

"So CCTV is important and don't ever wait until something happens before you install it or upgrade."

Mr Monelle said fighting crime was his "passion" and he had made it his "mission" to meet every Police and Crime Commissioner in the country.

He said the police classed such incidents as "business crime", but added: "It isn't, it's personal, it's family. A lot of us live above the premises."

Members were also urged to submit any CCTV footage of crimes in their



**Don't ever wait until something happens before you install CCTV**

**Ray Monelle**

NFRN national president

shops to the federation.

Mr Monelle said: "We have played shop video footage of thefts to MPs as it's important to get the message across."

### Call for help over Camelot concerns

Central member Anne Newman called for help for colleagues who are having problems with Camelot lottery machines.

She said: "I raise this issue on behalf of a lot of members. These Camelot lottery terminals have never been PAT-tested so how can they say

the problem is yours if they've never been tested? And, if there's a power cut we end up paying for the call-out.

"We are having problems with their machines, but Camelot say we have to pay."

Ray Monelle replied: "A lot of our members sit on Camelot panels so we are aware of this. It's a serious issue and it's one we take at least weekly to them.

"I think they have accepted this but whether they change it is another story."

### Distribution day planned for 2017

National events manager Nigel Smith said he was planning to hold a distribution open day with Smiths News in Birmingham as part of a new drive to engage members.

He said the NFRN wanted to involve more members in local events such as training days, awards evenings and wholesaler open days in areas where branches were struggling.

"News is still very big business and it's about putting faces to names, meeting up with other retailers, seeing the returns and voucher operations, plus having a mini trade show element," he said.

Wolverhampton and Dudley member Fred Pezhman said: "My belief is that wholesalers realise retailers are pulling out of news and they are panicking. So it's a good opportunity for us to put them under pressure and improve their services."



Anne Newman



Fred Pezhman

### Your say

Have you seen a switch in sales of soft drinks from full sugar to low or no-calorie variants?



I now do a wider variety of sugar-free drinks. At the moment, it is changing. A lot more people are picking them and drinking them. I think people have taken the warnings about too much sugar, and I also have three or four gyms near me.

**Sukhdeep Balaghan**  
Shell Corner Newsagents,  
Halesowen



I don't stock that many sugar-free drinks so I have introduced some Rubicon flavoured water which only contains 12 calories. They are flying off the shelves so I think there is potential to introduce more sugar-free drinks.

**Vicky Onions**  
Vicky's Convenience  
Store



I don't think I have seen a major switch other than where we have introduced a low-sugar alternative to an existing drink. From what I have seen it's all about the label. If it's a blatant sugar-free label customers tend to avoid it.

**Surjit Khunkhun**  
Woodcross Convenience Store,  
Wolverhampton

# YOUR REGION



## KENT NFRN DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT 05.12.2016

Greg Wilcox reports from the NFRN Kent district council meeting

### NFRN gathers crime evidence

Delegates were asked to report all thefts, acts of violence and general violations to the NFRN and send it CCTV footage of those crimes.

The information is for the federation to use when talking to members of parliament and police and crime commissioners about the daily perils facing shopkeepers in its bid to get a better understanding of how parliament and police could help respond to the dangers.

### Reorganisation concerns aired

There was further discussion about the impending reorganisation of districts, with some members raising concerns.

Delegates were worried the changes would weaken the voice of members and result in a loss of years of experience.

Colin Fletcher, who was visiting from Southampton, expressed his desire to make more use of life members to help retailers experiencing problems.

He added if the reorganisation was to be a success it was important to try new things in meetings.

It was suggested that one way meetings could be more effective as if new ideas were shared, such as how to better use technology and social media.

North west Kent member Harry Goraya revealed a recent promotion he'd developed with his children which had already had a notice-



The new prize structure and increased cost are negatively affecting lottery sales

able effect on sales and awareness of his shop in Dartford.

The shop did its own Mannequin Challenge, the latest social media craze where a video is taken of everyone standing still in a number of poses.



Harry Goraya

Mr Goraya said the announcement his shop was going to attempt its own



**I've already lost one paper-girl through late deliveries**

**Jeet Chopra**

North West Kent NFRN member

Mannequin Challenge had resulted in new customers coming in just to be in the video.

Meanwhile, the subsequent posting of the video on the shop's Facebook page had been seen more than 4,000 times and prompted yet more new customers to go into the store.

Mr Fletcher said this was just the sort of idea that would encourage new people to go to meetings.

### Menzies 'passing buck' on delivery

Issues with Menzies were raised again as delegates reported late deliveries of newspapers and magazines.

North west Kent member Jeet Chopra said "the problems are as bad as ever". He said: "I have already lost one papergirl who felt she wasn't able to continue in the role due to the continual late arrival of the papers she had to deliver. I don't blame her."

The discussion moved on to what was causing the problems, with many agreeing cost-cutting meant drivers were covering larger distances, resulting in late arrivals.

Harry Goraya said he felt Menzies was trying to pass the buck onto the publishers, adding the company seemed to blame everyone but themselves.

### Increased price hits lottery sales

Delegates raised ongoing issues with Camelot.

Jeet Chopra was just one member who said he was experiencing dwindling sales. He put this down to the new prize structure and increased cost.

He gave the example of a EuroMillions customer who had matched five numbers but, as one of 33 players who'd managed that, only won £5,683.

In the past, he was aware of a player who, as one of 67 players to match five numbers, won £35,035.

He questioned how this could be right with the cost of playing the game now up to £2.50.



Jeet Chopra

### Your say

Are you planning to expand your e-cigarettes range? What brands do you currently stock? Would you like more support on the category from manufacturers?



I am not looking to expand the range I stock at the moment, but I definitely will in the future. There are so many different companies out there. I have customers come in and ask "do you do this one?" and if I don't they will go elsewhere.

**Raj Patel**  
Raj News, Eltham



I tried e-cigarettes but didn't sell many. People just weren't interested and they went back to cigarettes. When I did stock them I stocked Nicorette. It's more to do with the lack of take up for e-cigarettes rather than any lack of help from manufacturers.

**Jeet Chopra**  
The Paper Shop, Gravesend



We stock three brands at the moment - One Lite, Blu and Vivid - so we probably won't be looking to expand the range. I'd say manufacturers haven't been that helpful. We'd love more advice on what bit goes with what, they seem to be getting more technical.

**Nick Southern**  
Southern Newsagents, Maidstone

## INDEPENDENT LOCAL SHOPS IN THE CONVENIENCE CHANNEL HAVE A GREAT FUTURE

Convenience retailers face tough trading, with obstacles ranging from compulsory wage increases and food deflation, to competition for shoppers from internet start-ups flogging anything and everything. Newtrade managing director Nick Shanagher says, "The evidence from Newtrade's State of the Nation benchmarking research shows that when the going gets tough the local shopkeeper gets going. Every independent retailer needs to pay attention to four key trends in 2017." To help take advantage of these trends by benchmarking your business, please email [iaa@newtrade.co.uk](mailto:iaa@newtrade.co.uk).



INDEPENDENT  
Achievers Academy

The #IAA16 Gala Dinner recognised and celebrated the retailers who are setting the benchmark for the independent channel, and was where Nick Shanagher, Newtrade managing director, shared four trends to develop the businesses of independent retailers in his State of the Nation address.



### YOUR PERSONALISED SERVICE DRIVES SHOPPER LOYALTY

Changes in customer shopping preferences and the desire for personalised service has benefited the independent sector. Newtrade's research discovered that **52%** of convenience stores drive loyalty by welcoming product suggestions and requests from their shoppers.

### LOCAL KNOWLEDGE + YOUR AGILITY = GREATER SHOPPER SATISFACTION

Capitalising on your knowledge of your area and local shoppers, and being agile enough to take risks by adjusting your product range is unique to your business. Using the IAA benchmarks to identify future opportunities helps you understand how to deliver greater shopper satisfaction and sales.

### BEING THE HEART OF YOUR COMMUNITY BEATS THE COMPETITION

Your business is the beating heart of your community, and can offer services and do things that big supermarkets never could. Newtrade's research shows that **81%** of convenience stores are actively involved in their local community with local shopper knowledge that puts them ahead of their competition.

### A DIGITAL FUTURE FOR THE TAKING

Newtrade's research shows that only **43%** of convenience stores use social media, with many of those admitting they are not as active, or do not understand it, as much as they'd like to. Consumers spend on average three hours every day online, which presents a huge opportunity to share your story with more shoppers.

# Benchmark your business in 2017

Email: [iaa@newtrade.co.uk](mailto:iaa@newtrade.co.uk)



# YOUR VIEWS

## ■ Changes at Smiths have destroyed my business

I'm a traditional newsagent, and have run my shop for 32 years. I have read RN every single week since the day I opened.

I read this morning about Smiths News making changes to its depots (*Retailers express fears at Smiths News changes, RN 9 December*). I am one of the retailers affected and in the last 10 days it has literally destroyed my business.

My depot used to be Harlow, but has now moved to Stevenage and it's a shambles. The drivers don't know where they're going, what they're delivering or the weight they're carrying. The switch to Stevenage happened on 28 November and I'm now getting my papers 90 minutes later, around 6.30am-6.35am, instead of 5.15am at the absolute

## MENZIES GAVE ME THE WEEK FROM HELL

**What a week Menzies has given me. I never thought it could make so many errors in one week, but hey, what do I know?**

Tuesday, it "forget" to put in my paperwork, which, quite frankly, is as bad as a missing parcel, although the call centre seems to think it's a minor inconvenience. Also, it managed to put one parcel and one tote box on the wrong van. How do I know this? When they were delivered, my route number was hand written on the label. Why would that be written unless it

was on the wrong van.

On Wednesday, it managed to deliver two Red woman's magazines instead of Bing, a children's magazine. At this point I left a message for a phone call from a manager. I'm still waiting for a reply.

However, my woes took a severe downturn on Friday when I arrived to find my delivery had been left in the doorway of Card Factory, (pictured) four doors down from my shop Top Cards. Multiply this by however many thousand newsagents and you have a recipe for



disaster. I will be expecting compensation for this inconvenience, as I pay to have my papers, etc. delivered to my door, not 30 yards away.

My week from hell with Menzies was completed

with it managing to not deliver 30 Daily Express supplements.

Is there no end to this company's incompetence?

So, in conclusion, no, I don't believe they are suitable to run a wholesale business.

**Jim Moorhead**  
Top Cards

**A Menzies spokesman said:** "It's disappointing to read Mr Moorhead's letter, and I'd like to apologise to him for the inconvenience he has experienced. A member of our local management team will be in touch shortly to discuss this matter."

latest. My magazines now turn up at midday. I have regular customers coming in to buy their magazines and I'm turning them away because they haven't turned up. I don't see them again.

On Saturday 3 December, I was sent 59 copies of The Times. But they arrived so late I had to

send 40 copies back. A rep from News UK came in on Monday morning and I told him what a waste of sales it is. It's not just me, it's the whole town centre. The local Waitrose had a whole pallet of newspapers come in at midday. I told the manager he might as well just send them back because it was too late to

sell them.

For what Smiths charges us, no other business could get away with such a poor level of service for such an extortionate cost. It's so frustrating, and no one can help me. I've left countless messages but never hear back.

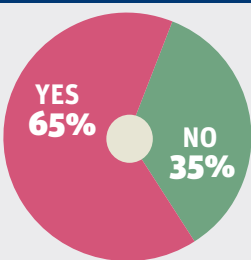
**Hitesh Patel**  
Gay's Newsagents  
Hertford

**A spokesman for Smiths News said:** "We have contacted Mr Patel directly to discuss and resolve the issues he has raised."

## ■ We should get a refund

We've had more problems with our deliveries from Menzies.

### RN READER POLL



**Do you offer a parcel service in your shop?**

### NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION

Have your sales of own label products grown this year?

**Have your vote now**

Go to [betterretailing.com](http://betterretailing.com)

## YOUR SAY Is Amazon Go and its no checkout, app-driven tech, the future of convenience retailing?

### David Lewis

Spar Crescent Stores, Minster Lovell, Witney  
It could work, it seems like a good idea. I think if it works for Amazon then it could spread. We've only just got contactless, it's been a bit slow rolling it out. It seems to be working well, though. These new ideas come along and whole generations grow up with them, people become accepting of them. It'll be interesting to see what happens to Amazon Go. We're a village shop so we're not personally threatened by it.

### Bhavesh Parekh

Kwiksave, Little Lever, Bolton  
I've seen the footage of it, it looks pretty cool. We're looking at things at the minute ourselves; like the



delivery side. I read in RN about using Deliveroo and as a Subway franchisee I'm interested. It's all part of the same thing. It's moving very quickly, the pace of change is so fast. If we don't catch up with what companies such as Amazon are doing now,

we'll be way behind.

### Mital Morar

Superstore, Manchester  
Yes and no. You'll never get away from good old customer service and the general banter and conversation you can have in a convenience store. But

at the same time, in today's world, people are on the go so much this model would work really well with core lines. Given that they're working with independent retailers on marketplace, it'll be interesting to see if they want to work with them more here.



Our Racing Post has been cut this week. We deliver six to local bookies, and sell a further three in the shop as well, but we've been cut down to four. We've had to get them from another bookies.

On Wednesday, we didn't get our supply until 9.30am - our RDT is 6am. It wasn't just us, it seemed to be the whole of Portsmouth. There are big HND retailers who are really suffering.

As I understand, there were 23 re-runs. Menzies said it was because of motorways being closed, but there should be some kind of contingency plans in place.

To be three hours late is ridiculous. Some of the re-runs went out in taxis, they weren't our usual drivers - the issue is not just

the motorway being closed, there's more to it than that.

Problems like this just mess up your whole day, as you have to get the deliveries out yourself.

We should all ask for our carriage charges back.

**Linda Sood**  
Falcon News, Portsmouth

**Menzies did not respond to RN's request for a comment.**

**100 YEARS AGO**

**16 December 1916**  
Francis Marshall, a newsagent in Barrow, was called before the magistrates' court for selling a paper at 8.30pm, contravening the Early Closing Order in operation during the war.

**VIEW FROM THE COUNTER**  
with Mike Brown



Last Wednesday the shop was very busy. I glanced up and noticed an official-looking gentleman standing at the back of the shop waiting patiently. Eventually the shop cleared and the man approached the counter and introduced himself. It was Trading Standards to inform us about the latest tobacco legislation. He checked our refusals register and signage and seemed very impressed with our knowledge and compliance, saying he still visited outlets in North Yorkshire with cigarettes openly on display.

Every weekend throughout November the paperboys and girls have been complaining about heavy-weight newspapers due to Christmas advertising, so at the beginning of December I gave them Christmas cards to write out for their customers. It is just a gentle reminder to customers to reward them for the brilliant job they do throughout the year in all weathers. For many years, the Daily Mail supplied us with cards. Sadly, this no longer happens, but it would be a great idea if a publisher could do this and show their support for HND in such a tangible way.

At the NFRN awards dinner I was chatting to Nigel Swan from Hayling Island about diversification. We are an access point for UPS while Nigel does Collect+. I said a customer had dropped off a tractor tyre which he only just got through the door. Nigel said he could beat that - an 8ft anchor which took three men to get into the shop and the barcode was at the bottom of the parcel. I know we don't have to accept unreasonably large items but it's in our nature to keep the customers happy.

Good news - I am now delivering a copy of The New European and selling one over the counter - happy days.

**Your social comments this week**

contact us @ThisIsRN and facebook.com/ThisIsRN



**@meryl\_pike**  
Smart new bag for our paper "boy" at Pikes!  
**@ThisIsRN**  
**@betterRetailing**  
**@CharlieFaulkRN**



**@ThisIsRN**  
Team @ThisIsRN at #PPAIPN with  
**@ChrisRolfeRN**  
**@GurpreetS\_RN**  
**@DaveSongerRN**  
**@CharlieFaulkRN**  
**@DarrenRackhamRN**  
**@tomgk\_RN**



**@LochLomondNews**  
Is this a new record? We had a 26.438kg magazine bundle this morning. Can anyone beat that!?  
#brokenback  
**@ThisIsRN**



**@AndrewK60031723**  
**@OneStopMountNod** **@OneStopDraycott** some lovely coverage for you both (& the teams) in this weeks  
**@ThisIsRN** #smart



**@ralphpatel54**  
Scamolot- over 1.2 million free tickets saving over 60K in commissions



**James Wilkinson**  
Has the Mail declared war on newsagents? So buy the paper from the shop, then sign up online so you don't have to, but promote it in the paper. I thought assisted suicide was illegal



# COLUMNIST



Guest columnist

**Adam Hogwood**

## Look after the pennies

**Coping with new costs like the minimum wage and National Living Wage has required new ways of working, says Adam Hogwood**

**I**t's been an exceptionally tough year for the convenience sector, with a lot of extra costs coming from the minimum wage increase and introduction of the National Living Wage.

The logical way to combat wage increases and staffing issues is to increase your money coming in or to shrink your money going out, so we've put several things in place to do this.

One of the main things I've done is a full review of the way I organise my staffing.

I created a spreadsheet and for every day of the week, split down when people are in, the hours they work and the costings involved. I looked at when a member of staff has to be in to fulfil a role and what breaks they need, and calculated the monetary value of what that will cost me per day, week and year.

It was quite an eye-opener and I was a little panicked by how many hours were worked and how much money we were spending on staffing.

I could see condensed times of day where the bulk of staff were in. Straight away, I started questioning why we need so many people on site at these times.

Then I looked at our customer count for September, inputting hourly figures and working out where the peaks are every day. Looking at where a lot of customers are going to be at the till at a certain time, I realised I couldn't get away with shrinking staffing at these points because I need them there to operate my customer service. So these levels

have been maintained and I see the rest of the time almost as a luxury to get other jobs such as filling up done.

It's all very well to shrink people's hours, but you also need to make it clear what they're responsible for. So my next task was to jot down the fundamental roles or tasks within each job. I identified what is expected of people as a bare minimum, so there is no get-out clause. In every business there's always a hint of "I didn't know it was my job". So now there is complete clarity in our business. These responsibilities are always on display so there's no hiding behind this excuse.

If a member of staff is absent, core tasks are automatically reallocated and become another person's responsibility, so everyone is clear what is



**Broadstairs retailer Adam Hogwood addresses delegates at the Local Shop Summit in October**



**I identified what is expected of people as a bare minimum, so there is no get-out clause**

expected of them and what they should be doing at all times.

We also looked at a couple of roles and realised they were actually just a collection of tasks, not enough to justify a job in itself.

The bakery is an example - we initially thought we needed someone for five hours a day to run it. But then I listed all the basic tasks and reallocated them. It has been broken down into lots of little tasks given to different people and is very manageable. So we managed to dissolve the bakery job completely.

The upshot is, through these changes, we've saved ourselves loads of money.

*Adam Hogwood is the manager of Budgens of Broadstairs and gave this presentation at the Local Shop Summit*

## \* How to cut costs in your store

### CONSUMABLES

If you have storage space, ask suppliers if you can get a better deal by buying a pallet of consumables you are guaranteed to use, like blue towels, that won't go out of date.

### MAINTENANCE AND RENTAL CONTRACTS

Can you get a yearly all-in-one contract so all maintenance and call-out charges are included and you pay a one-off fee? We've just renewed our jet washes, hoovers and air towers with a contract that ties these all in. They supply all the consumables and chemicals for a one-off-fee which is miniscule compared to what we were paying for repairs.

### REPS

Can you get reps to take care of a section and remer-

chandise it? If you stock local products, can you give suppliers ownership of this section? It's their products on sale, so they'll put their heart and soul into it.

### DELIVERIES

If you can, amalgamate deliveries to tie in on the same days so you have peaks of activity that last for more days, rather than spreading it thinner across the week. As long as availability is maintained, it works.

### MAINTAIN AVAILABILITY AND VISIBILITY AND SAVE STAFF TIME

We have eight facings of 500ml original Coca-Cola, six of Diet Coke, four of Cherry Coke and four of Coke Zero. These are bestsellers, so why would we want our staff toing and froing to fill them up all the time? Why not just get them on the shelf?

# ADVICE CENTRE



## How to cater to your new locals' needs

When new customers arrive in your area from another country it's a great opportunity to cater to their needs and secure their loyalty. Retailer Jimmy Patel explains how

**J**immy Patel has been stocking Eastern European food in his Premier store for over a decade, catering predominantly to Northampton's substantial Polish community.

"Instead of peanuts and crisps, they eat gherkins and salads," Jimmy explains. "So we brought in jars of these, as well as sauerkraut, bread and a variety of meats. Then

we expanded to include ready meals, noodles and soups."

Doing so brought in an influx of new customers, particularly in the early days, when Jimmy faced little competition. "The bread works especially well – people come in for it early in the morning, and are likely to pick up a few other things as well," he says. "Plus, the margins are much better than on standard products." ●

1

### Identify a gap in the market

Jimmy emphasises talking to customers in order to identify unfilled niches in the local market. "I'd noticed one or two convenience retailers in the area stocking this food, but no-one near me," he says. "So I started asking customers what they were looking for, if there were items we didn't have, and found that there was an excellent opportunity to stock food from Eastern Europe."

2

### Figure out what products you should bring in

If you're aiming to cater for people from a culture different to your own, knowing what to stock can be a challenge. "I didn't know what people from Poland eat," Jimmy says. To find out, he asked customers what they'd like to buy. "My best bit of advice is to talk to retailers who dabble in it too and see what they're stocking."

3

### Find a good supplier

Having identified a gap in the market, Jimmy had to find a reliable supplier, eventually settling on Expo Foods. "I'd use Google, and also keep an eye open at trade shows," Jimmy says. "I was at a summit recently where I met an eastern European supplier." The market is always changing, he adds: "I just found out yesterday that an eastern European cash and carry has opened near me, so I need to check that out!"

4

### Merchandise your stock effectively

"At first we kept it on a gondola at the front of the shop, so people saw it as soon as they entered," Jimmy says. "Now we have it all on a bay. But we're thinking of mixing the products in with the rest of the grocery goods – everyone knows we have these products now, and we can use that space for other promotions."

5

### Track the evolution of the market

While Jimmy initially focused on Polish products, he's recently tried stocking Romanian food as well. "We'd noticed more people sending money back to Romania from our Post Office, so decided to give it a go. It's all sold, so we'll keep going with it." At the same time, competition from other stores has led him to reduce his Polish range. "You've got to be alert and adapt to get your range right."

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](mailto:chris.rolfe@newtrade.co.uk)

# ROUNDTABLE



## Making the most of cigars?

Tobacco legislation, the opportunity it creates for the cigar market and the challenges retailers face managing cigars were the hot topics up for discussion when seven retailers met Scandinavian Tobacco Group UK Ltd last month. **Toby Hill** reports



**Retailers agree EUTPD II legislation could boost illicit trading**

**TOM GK** What challenges do you face with tobacco legislation and how are you preparing for it?

**DEE GOBERDHAN** My big challenge is getting staff on board and understanding all that is happening. My staff are concerned because we only stock pricemarked products, which makes us cheaper than anywhere else nearby. Tobacco sales make up about 43% of our turnover, but we're worried about losing income because we'll be on a level playing field with other stores' prices. Some people will blame us for the changed prices as they won't realise it's government policy.

**ALASTAIR WILLIAMS** EUTPD II legislation is going to be a huge shock mentally and financially for consumers. Prices will go through the roof. At

the moment, they can buy 8g and 12.5g RYO packs. To suddenly jump to 30g is an absolutely huge leap - from £3 to over £10 overnight.

**DAVID WORSFOLD** We're introducing customers to the changes. We've got plain packaging to show people, leaflets, and will alert them to upcoming changes about 10-packs and pricemarks. All this stops people blaming us and helps customers get used to rising prices. I've abandoned pricemarked packs now - shoppers who prioritise price are not loyal and may go to the illicit market anyway. You've got to pick your battles and that's one battle I'm not going to try and fight.

**RALPH PATEL** Plain packaging and the illicit trade is the biggest challenge. I saw this first-hand in Australia.

In association with



Retailers discuss the opportunity EUTPD II legislation will bring the cigar category with STG UK

Politicians say the introduction of plain packaging has been successful because 15% of smokers have stopped smoking, but they don't tell you illicit trading has gone up by 15%.

**ALASTAIR WILLIAMS** It's certainly a big problem in Australia.

**RALPH PATEL** Yes, they've been increasing duty every year and smoking levels are going to drop - in terms of legal products - because that's what they sell. But overall smoking levels haven't really dropped at all. When I was in Australia in a 7-Eleven I asked the owner about his cigarettes. He opened his gantry and there were 20-packs for \$24, that's about £12. I said "that's expensive". And he said "Yes, but I don't smoke those, I smoke these", and pulled out a blue packet of Strand from under the counter. \$12 for 20, he told me. That's what will happen here. It's definitely a big challenge for retailers like us. People are selling a lot of illicit stuff now, and that's all money that's not going through our tills.

**JOHN HANNA** And with the loss of price-marked packs tobacco companies increased their prices and customers



**Plain packaging and the illicit trade is the biggest challenge. I saw this first-hand in Australia**

are really noticing. They thought it was us trying to take advantage at first. You try to placate and explain to them. About 45% of our turnover is tobacco so we can't afford to lose customers. Like Dee said, we had cheaper prices than the supermarkets, but that's changing now and it's a battle to keep customer loyalty.

**SHANDIP PATEL** We've never gone down the price-marked route. We have a different scenario: eight of our stores in central London are in very high rental rates area, so we couldn't survive on price-marked margins. It's actually increasing our sales because the difference between our prices and others' is narrowing. Several of our stores are 24/7 and we serve wealthier clientele who don't mind paying more. It can be quite difficult getting staff to communicate changes, though, because we have a high turnover.

**RALPH PATEL** Another issue for us is space, which is at a premium. We've now got an off-licence, so we have alcohol as well as tobacco behind the counter.

**Attendees**

**RETAILERS**

**Shandip Patel**  
Nisa Krystals Express, London



**Ralph Patel**  
The Corner Shop, Surrey



**David Worsfold**  
Farrants Newsagents, Surrey



**Nick Southern**  
Southern News, Maidstone




**John Hanna**  
Smokemart, Brighton



**Navin Patel**  
Southern Cross Stores, East Sussex



**Dee Goberdhan**  
Albany Road Post Office, Cardiff



**STG UK**

**Alastair Williams**  
Head of sales



**Jens Christiansen**  
Head of marketing and public affairs



**RN**

**Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski**  
Features editor



**DAVID WORSFOLD** We've got a big picture of a tobacco plantation behind the counter with "the world's tobacco sold here" on it, and people still ask if we sell tobacco. But I did a major refurbishment last year and now have a room behind that picture dedicated to tobacco. You have to be over 18 to go in there and can only browse, but I can show every type of box. So even if you're a non-smoker it's a good bit of theatre.

**JOHN HANNA** We've got a special gantry for tobacco and for cigars. And we've got a covered cabinet for loose cigars. >>

# ROUNDTABLE

## **TOM GK** Will new tobacco legislation create opportunities for cigar sellers?

**RALPH PATEL** Yes. We need to be clued up on cigars because there could be a big market for them. Pack size legislation doesn't affect cigars and the margins are better on them, so there is a big opportunity for us.

**DAVID WORSFOLD** Getting people who buy 10-packs of cigarettes to migrate to five-packs of cigars is a big jump, price-wise and product-wise. But if I had a gantry I would put cigars at eye-level. Customers don't want to be greeted by lots of horrible images when you open the gantry, and this would stamp you as different from the supermarkets.

**JOHN HANNA** Some cigars are cheaper than a 10-pack of cigarettes. It's very easy - when they find out a packet of 20 is more expensive, they'll consider moving to cigars.

**JENS CHRISTIANSEN** There could be some advantages with cigars. Retailers should want to look into this. Minimum pack sizes are the huge game-changer, and that's where you have an opportunity to move people onto cigars - people who don't want to pay for a 20-pack of cigarettes.

**DAVID WORSFOLD** I see cigars seen as separate to smoking. If you want to sell them, really own it. Give space for them, plan them and go for it. It'll be a risk. They might not sell. But at least give it a try.

**RALPH PATEL** You've got to give it space. Become a specialist. Then people in the area will say "I want cigars, that's the place to go".

**ALASTAIR WILLIAMS** Over time, you guys will be great advocates for that. And you'll breed loyal customers.

Your average basket spend will probably go up as well.

**NICK SOUTHERN** For me, you come to the end of the week, people have run out of money, can't afford £10 for a packet of fags, but they want some, and that's when you guide them to cigars. Have some economy options. They might tell their mates, and they'll gradually change over. That's the best way to get cigars going.

**DAVID WORSFOLD** That's true. But you might find there's more wealth than you think, but people aren't coming in. So, if you bring appropriate stuff in - and get it known - you might bring people in.

**JOHN HANNA** It used to be that cigarettes were about 60% to 70% of sales, then they got very expensive and RYO shot up. Now RYO is shooting up too and they're coming to me looking for cheaper options.

**RALPH PATEL** And that is what, as retailers, we have to be progressive about. We have to be open to new ideas. And if companies say they'll support us, we'll give them a go.

## **TOM GK** How is STG UK supporting retailers to get the cigar category right?

**JENS CHRISTIANSEN** We've been trying to educate people on the differences in legislation. We want to emphasise there is still free choice in some areas and therefore a lot of opportunities. There are three elements to consider when looking at cigars: know your customers; stock what they want; and don't run out of stock. We can see when there are out-of-stocks - there is an instant drop in sales.

**ALASTAIR WILLIAMS** The one thing that really sticks out for me is that you guys are closest to your customers



## Pack size legislation doesn't affect cigars and the margins are better on them, so there is a big opportunity for us

Cardiff retailer Dee Goberdhan says training staff to understand new legislation is a big challenge



and know them better than anyone else. That, I believe, is a huge opportunity and something you have a much greater advantage over than anybody else in retail. We talked before about staff turnover - the large retailers have that in spades, so there's little consistency and little longer-term customer relationships. That's got to represent a great opportunity for you.

**NAVIN PATEL** But that can only come if we have support from tobacco companies. We want to see more cigar reps and more product description so we can feed it to customers. It's time for tobacco companies to act fast.

**JOHN HANNA** We need more promotions to encourage retailers to stock cigars, more budget options and for suppliers to approach every independent. If I don't normally stock cigars I won't look at them when I go to the cash and carry. But if you come into my store and point out they're good value compared to cigarettes, I'll consider it. I get all my cigars from a rep from Scandinavian Tobacco UK now, I never buy them from the cash and carry.

**DAVID WORSFOLD** I'd like help with in-store theatre. Maybe you could talk to customers about cigars. It's about sparking the idea in smokers' heads who maybe have never thought about cigars. You've also got to think more carefully about which brands you recommend. For me, switching



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UNITED KINGDOM



**Brighton retailer John Hanna says retailers need more promotions and rep visits to encourage them to stock cigars**

### for the changes, in terms of staff training and communication?

**JENS CHRISTIANSEN** It boils down to this: know your customers, stock the right products and don't run out of them.

**ALASTAIR WILLIAMS** And do your customers know change is afoot?

**RALPH PATEL** Most people are pretty clued up. We hand customers information cards and some say "Oh yes, I know about this". But we have to make sure we educate them.

**DAVID WORSFOLD** One thing I do, as a specialist tobacconist with a wide range of products that will become unsaleable, is train my staff to point customers to other products.

**RALPH PATEL** There are some retailers who are not so professional. I was at the cash and carry and a girl told me someone was buying up 10-packs like nobody's business. Why would you want to do that? He's clearly stockpiling so, when everyone else can't sell anymore, they'll have 10-packs in stock.

**ALASTAIR WILLIAMS** Around 20% of sales are 10-packs and almost 80% is below 20s. It will be a huge transition.

**RALPH PATEL** We're being advised to sell 23-packs and 24-packs, but we're not ready for that.

### TOM GK How are you making sure your stores are doing all they can?

**NAVIN PATEL** We've talked to customers and we've successfully converted about four people to smoke cigars. But if you want us to act, you have to act first. You have to push stock in the cash and carry, give us good margins, give us a carrot and we'll pass it on to customers.

**SHANDIP PATEL** But 95% of retailers won't pass on that benefit to customers, so it's understandable, from a business point of view, that manufacturers might decide it isn't worth throwing money at us in that way.

**JENS CHRISTIANSEN** I'm very positive about the opportunities you see because it's exactly the same as what we're seeing. And I'm very pleased to have recommendations of what we can do better, because that's what we're struggling with. This has been very helpful and I see a bright future ahead.

**ALASTAIR WILLIAMS** Yes, it's really good to see so many progressive retailers, that clearly see a bright future for independent businesses. ●

from one brand to another doesn't make any difference if the margin is the same. But if I'm the only store around selling that line, that does make sense to me.

**RALPH PATEL** We've become like specialists in terms of getting customers to switch brands. I know if I ask a customer, "have you tried this?", nine times out of 10 they will, because they have confidence in my store and my advice. You can stand in the store and ask customers to look at products, which they might pick up instead.

**DAVID WORSFOLD** It's also a bit of in-store theatre. How do you envisage new product development and getting it to market?

**JENS CHRISTIANSEN** We know we have to go through you and are trying to figure out what to bring to you. I don't want to just come to you with money, because as soon as you get a better offer, you'll go somewhere else. I want to know what I can bring to help you service your customers and become a more agile business.

**ALASTAIR WILLIAMS** It's about longevity, too, and understanding what your customers actually want. We've seen great examples of how you can switch customers from one thing to another. There's a two-way flow: understand what consumers need, then look at what package we can put together for our brand ambassadors – you guys.



**DEE GOBERDHAN** Is the vision for cigars aiming at growth rather than retaining the niche-type market?

**JENS CHRISTIANSEN** Yes and no. Legislation has presented an opportunity to change perceptions that this is a niche market. It used to be a quite substantial market, not just for handmade cigars but for cigarillos and so on. There is something special about cigars or cigarillos so we think sales should pick up with the legislation.

**ALASTAIR WILLIAMS** Most basically, it's about introducing retailers to the opportunity cigars represent. It's about giving impartial advice through data and category management advice. This will become even more important as we go into next April and May. We need to go back to some basic principles. We don't want stale products that aren't selling stuck on shelves. It's a collaborative, communicative approach.

**TOM GK** What can be done over the next few months in preparation



**Legislation has presented an opportunity to change perceptions that this is a niche market**

Would you like to attend a future

**RN Roundtable?**

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or telephone 020 7689 3377

# RN AWARDS



## RN RETAILER CHOICE AWARDS

After a fortnight of voting, the results are in and RN is ready to reveal who has won our annual Retailer Choice Awards. Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski reports

# The winners

### Symbol or franchise of the year

**NISA**



**GAINED 33% OF THE VOTE**

**Clear guidelines to** retailers and a new mystery shopper initiative resulted in a 17% jump in Nisa's customer feedback score, according to chief executive Nick Read. RN documented the results in profiles of brilliant retailers such as Frankie Ago and Vim Odedra this year. Nisa says progressive retailers like this have also been behind its 21% sales uplift in fresh produce. This year, it achieved the "biggest swing in profit in the company's history" with earnings of £7.2m compared to losses of £2.9m the previous year. The company attributed this drastic turnaround to its disciplined approach.

#### READER VERDICT

**Gary Bilbrough**

Nisa Local, Toddington



Working with Nisa is perfect for us. They have the ideal range – our biggest department is chilled and they have a really good range there. We see our business development manager two or three times a year and he's always up to date. It all works really well.

**2,500**

the number of Nisa Local stores operating in the UK

### Digital innovation

**JTI**

**GAINED 43% OF THE VOTE**



**From May 2017**, no pack of rolling tobacco can be smaller than 30g, branding will disappear from cigarettes and cigarette formats such as 10s, 19s and 17s will also disappear. To aid retailers in navigating these changes, the JTI Advance app was unveiled in June – complementing the existing JTI Advance website. It is designed to create shopping lists using a barcode scanner and provide product and pricing information and training tips. It also offers product and industry news, including information on EUTPD II, so, as the deadline for selling non-compliant stock approaches, retailers have the information they need at their fingertips.

#### READER VERDICT

**Neil Ramlagan**

Jay's General Store, Bolton



Using JTI Advance on my laptop and through the app helps me keep up, because there are a lot of changes in the market. I didn't know much about tobacco but the website helps.

### Merchandising initiative

**PLADIS BETTER BISCUITS BEST SELLERS**



**Pladis believes there** is potential to increase biscuit sales by up to £88m in the next five years, and so launched a best-sellers initiative to help independents take their share of it. Better Biscuits Best Sellers provides ranging and merchandising advice by store type and fixture size and isn't afraid to include rival firms in its recommendations. It also provides authoritative data and insight on the best-selling biscuits in the UK market – it's the first such category-specific guide of its kind. This links to the company's wider Better Biscuits Better Business website and contains retailer testimonials.

#### READER VERDICT

**Ralph Patel**

The Look In, Woodmansterne



A big challenge in the biscuit category is a lot of independents don't stock the right range. There's not a lot of information available about biscuits, so this is a very useful resource.

**90%**

of retailers know when EUTPD II and plain packaging legislation will arrive

**£300**

the average amount of McVitie's Chocolate Digestives a c-store sells per year

**GAINED 48% OF THE VOTE**



## Supplier salesforce JTI

GAINED  
**51%**  
OF THE VOTE

Earlier this year, JTI told RN it had trained its reps to be store experts to protect retailers as plain packaging legislation begins to impact their stores. Andy Stevens, JTI's head of sales, said this was to make sure that as "legislation becomes more layered, reps understand the workings of the whole shop". Its reps have also been helping retailers with stock rotation, ensuring "those brands that get stuck in the cupboard find their way onto shelves". Judging by JTI's huge margin of victory here, this work appears to have paid off. The JTI Advance App, meanwhile, provides up-to-the-minute guidance on legislation between rep visits.



### READER VERDICT Bintesh Amin

Blean Village  
Londis, Kent



JTI's reps are great because they pay attention and have built long-term relationships with me and my staff. They will look at the whole category, do what they say they will do and follow up on it too. They make me feel really valued.

**3**

the number of stages in JTI's pre-EUTPD II support plan. For the final part, retailers are urged to "be compliant"

## Product launch of the year LOGIC PRO

GAINED  
**40%**  
OF THE VOTE



In April, JTI grew its presence in the e-cigarette market by launching its first UK tank vaping product, Logic Pro. Now, it represents almost one third of the total closed tank market. Fitted with a 'no spill, no fuss' device enabling it to be marketed as a less messy option, Logic Pro includes an integrated coil system and a 'five click lock' to prevent accidental activation. At launch, it was available in tobacco, cherry, menthol and vanillas flavours, but last week a Strawberry and Berry Mint flavour liquid was added. An open tank Logic system, Logic LQD, is coming to the market too.

### READER VERDICT Bay Bashir

Belle Vue  
Convenience Store,  
Middlesbrough



Logic Pro has sold really well. It took me by surprise how quickly sales developed. I thought I'd give them a go, and people went for them the minute I got them in. It's just a case of maintaining availability as I'm struggling to keep up. They have 50% margins too.

**85%**

of the UK's estimated 2,000,000 vapers use tank products

## Newsstand star performer THE TIMES



Due to celebrate its 231st birthday on 1 January, The Times won retailers' votes for its consistent sales this year. Arguably the most stable quality newspaper, Audit Bureau of Circulations figures show the paper has posted circulation changes for its weekly edition of between -1.6% and 1.9% in the past six months, for example, while other titles have folded or posted much higher losses. Similarly strong, the Saturday edition's performance ranged from -0.5% to 6.1% in the same period. The fact 10% of people who read The Times are aged between 15 and 24 only further underlines its long-term viability.

### READER VERDICT Mark Ansell

Liskeard News,  
Cornwall



We sell more copies of The Times now than we did at the start of the year. That's partly because deliveries have become more reliable, and partly because of the Telegraph price rise. But they also seem to put a lot more effort into the printed paper, rather than putting all their effort into online.

**£6,800**

the amount 10 Times seven-day HND customers are worth per year

GAINED  
**39%**  
OF THE VOTE

# RN AWARDS

GAINED  
**34%**  
OF THE VOTE

## Advertising campaign

**COCA-COLA ZERO SUGAR**



### Coca-Cola European Partners'

'Taste the Feeling' global advertising campaign is the soft drink giant's first in seven years. Using emotional product communication, the message focuses on creating the sense that drinking Coca-Cola turns a simple pleasure into a special moment. This advert takes new branding into consideration with its tinted photographs, but affirms its appeal to contemporary consumers looking for healthier options with its Zero Sugar credentials. In light of the challenges a proposed sugar tax could have on the market, as well as the continued rise of health among UK consumers' priorities, CCEP's activity has enabled it to remain relevant.

### READER VERDICT

**Shane Woolston**

Budgens of Aylsham, Aylsham



We'd taken bottles of Coke Zero off sale as we'd tried to push them as a lunchbox drink but they weren't selling. Since the relaunch, though, we've brought them back into stock and they're ticking along fine, so the advertising campaign has definitely done its job.

**18p**

the charge per litre on sugary soft drinks from April 2018 under the sugar tax

## Innovation of the year

**MCVITIE'S TO GO**



### Pladis managing director Jon Eggleton

had outlined food to go as an area of focus when he spoke to RN in the summer of 2015. This is the year his plans came to fruition. Pladis' core McVitie's products were re-launched in new formats for the on-the-go cake category in July, with six flavour combinations available in 12-pack cases. The slices were introduced to market in '2 for £1' permanently price-marked packs and are available in flavour combinations including Chocolate Hobnobs, Milk Chocolate Digestive and Digestive Caramel Millionaire - all of which now last longer, thanks to their longer shelf lives.

### READER VERDICT

**Dave Hiscutt**

Londis Westham Road, Weymouth



We've seen sales of on-the-go cakes and biscuits increase over the past year. There's a bit more money around, and people are willing to spend more and treat themselves. As well as big brands, we've installed a cakes section in our food-to-go area to pick up on the extra demand.

**£102m**

the size of the opportunity offered by the on-the-go category

GAINED  
**67%**  
OF THE VOTE

## Growth category

### E-CIGARETTES

GAINED  
**45%**  
OF THE VOTE



### For three years,

the growth of e-cigarettes has shown no sign of slowing, with the value of the total market up 48% since 2014. Yet it has been the recent launches of JTI's open tank system for Logic, Vype's Pebble device and Philip Morris's IQOS heat-not-burn technology in the UK which, in the space of a few weeks, which has highlighted how much more growth is to come from this market. Tank e-cigarettes are driving growth with 44% of the market, but with so much evolution during 2016, who knows how the market will look this time next year.

### READER VERDICT

**Sam Coldbeck**

Premier Wharfedale, Hull



Manufacturers have wised up to the fact they can't have bubblegum or cola cube flavours and are launching more grown-up flavours like fruit blend. I wouldn't stock anything that appeals to children, so now I can sell more of these new flavours. We sell different strengths, too, such as 16mg, 15mg, 11mg and even 0mg.

**£44.46**

average weekly sales for stores stocking four brands of e-cigarettes





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# RN AWARDS



## Supplier of the year

JTI



**JTI's success in** this year's Retailer Choice Awards – it has won a total of four – is testament to another solid year. So what made it such a winner? The manufacturer brought top US e-cigarette brand Pro Logic to the UK in April, backed with a new merchandising unit. Its Advance website and app, meanwhile, helped guide retailers through EUTPD II changes and the arrival of plain packs into stores, while its packchanges.co.uk website, a national campaign and PoS material educated customers on the new legislation. Regional press campaigns have highlighted the impact of the illicit trade on communities.

### READER VERDICT

**Vip Panchmatia**

Hexagon Stores & Post Office, Andover



JTI has been very supportive this year, as we prepare for the changes in tobacco legislation. We've used their app and website to educate our staff – this is crucial, because I think we have to inform customers about the changes, which means staff must be well-informed in turn.

**GAINED 49% OF THE VOTE**

# 42.4%

JTI's share of the £15bn tobacco industry as the UK's leading tobacco firm

## Footfall driver

TOBACCO



**GAINED 42% OF THE VOTE**

**It was a** testament to the importance of tobacco to most convenience stores that it even appeared in this list – 2016 has, of course, been another year when regulation has threatened to strangle the category. But a report by anti-smoking lobby group ASH stated the case as well as any tobacco manufacturer: In Counter Arguments: how important is tobacco to small retailers? the organisation said more than one in five customers in convenience stores buy tobacco and, of them, 62% buy other items. Whether its figures are accurate or not – it makes a strong case for the importance of this core category.

### READER VERDICT

**Joe Williams**

The Village Shop, Hook Norton, Oxfordshire



We're five miles from the nearest outlet, so we don't need to stock pricemarked packs. Our cigarettes bring people to our shop and people don't mind paying an extra 5p or 20p for a pack of them. People still want to smoke, and as long as you stock the most popular brands, you'll be fine.

## Wholesaler of the year

BOOKER



**GAINED 49% OF THE VOTE**

**Much of the** attention Booker has attracted this year has been related to last years' acquisition of the Budgens and Londis brands, but in winning this award the group highlights the fact it's still the one to beat in traditional wholesale too. With the Euro Shopper brand now firmly in place across the estate and a greater focus on fresh, the effects of this merger will continue to shape the destiny of this wholesaling giant. Looking to the future, same-day delivery trials in Norwich been a big success with a wider roll out likely next year.

### READER VERDICT

**Sandra Taylor-Meeds**

Budgens of Holt, Norfolk



We've worked with Booker for 12 months and it has gone very well during that time. They are keen that we run our business the way we wish to and they give us good support – their area manager visits the store once a month and understands what matters to our business.

# £118.96

the average weekly sales of the best-selling cigarette in c-stores, Carlton Superkings 19s

# £2.5bn

Booker's first-half sales in 2016, up 13% year on year





“

**RN helps me keep up-to-date with new stock changes across retail and provides great tips for product placement. It also inspires my staff to try new ideas.**

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# E-CIGARETTES

## E-cigs today: what's changed?

Last winter, RN ran a feature providing all the up-to-date information retailers needed to get the most from this fast-growing category. Almost exactly one year on, what's different? **Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski** takes a look



### CHANGED

#### The next 'next generation' is here

This time last year the big product launches included JTI's E-Lites Curv and Vivid E-Liquids capsules. These devices are part of a range that was dubbed "next generation" products, but one year on, they've both been superseded by a number of new products. E-Lites as a brand is in the process of being replaced by Logic, a name the manufacturer has brought to the UK from the USA. Since Logic first arrived a closed-tank model, Logic Pro, has been launched, and last week the range was extended with Logic LQD (RRP £20), its first open tank system. New liquids are available in tobacco, menthol, cherry, vanilla, berry mint and strawberry flavours (RRP £5 per 10ml bottle).

Philip Morris, meanwhile, hit national headlines last month with the UK launch of its IQOS system, which it says contains 90% fewer harmful chemicals than cigarettes. The device comes with an RRP of £45 with 20 tobacco sticks priced at £8 per pack.

### CHANGED

#### Regulations need to be adhered to now

Last year, RN reminded retailers of the need to keep their eyes open for upcoming EUTPD II regulations. This year, the time to act is well and truly here. "As the May 2017 deadline nears it's imperative retailers start preparing their stores for the changes being brought in under EUTPD II," says Jennifer Roberts, VP customer marketing at Blu. In October, Blu launched its updated EUTPD II-friendly portfolio. The company has also produced an e-cigarettes guide which, as with JTI's Your Guide through Change and other manufacturer tools, provides basic category management product information as well as guidance on the new law changes.



**It's imperative retailers start preparing for the changes being brought in under EUTPD II**

### CHANGED

#### Advertising is now banned

RN hailed the investment of suppliers in television, print and online consumer advertising. It marked the first time in more than a decade that tobacco manufacturers had been able to communicate their new product ranges directly. This opportunity was closed in May this year when EUTPD II legislation came into force. While the legislation only covers nicotine-containing products, this cuts out almost the entire market for convenience stores. E-Lites, Blu and Vivid were some of the major brands which benefited from TV advertising ahead of the ban.





## CHANGED

### You can now have your own e-cigarette franchise

Since last winter, it has become possible to specialise in the e-cigarettes market with the help of the NFRN. The organisation's Shoplink arm has reached an agreement with e-cigarette retail and manufacturing group Vaporized to allow retailers to buy into a number of different solutions, from a simple gantry replacement to a full store franchise.

"We see all independent retailers being a destination for this type of product," says Carolyn Kirkland, Shoplink head of trading. "It's not enough to just stock one brand now because of the category's growth."

The full franchise offer costs around £50,000 and the return on investment is less than a year with a net margin of around 35%. The gantry replacement solution costs £5,000, and the store-within-a-store concept will launch next year.

## UNCHANGED

### Keeping your staff up to date is vital

Great staff training is likely to be at the heart of the success of any category, but where a sector is new and controlled by new restrictions, this is even more the case. Last year, JTI's head of communication Jeremy Blackburn said: "this market is becoming increasingly technical and complex as it continues to evolve, and we're seeing retailers demand more guidance and education from suppliers." A year on and the point still stands. JTI's Advance platform continues to provide up-to-date category information while its aforementioned "Your Guide Through Change" tool enables retailers and staff to keep up with regulatory changes.

## UNCHANGED

### Manufacturers are investing heavily in the category

The arrival of Philip Morris' heat-not-burn IQOS concept may have grabbed recent headlines but there have been new arrivals from all major suppliers in recent weeks. British American Tobacco's Vype Pebble device has launched across Europe and offers vapers a "smooth vape with a powerful flavour sensation" according to the company. Like IQOS, it stands out from the crowd, in this case thanks to its rounded, ergonomic design. And with JTI completing its Logic

offer with a new open tank device, the steady stream of investment into this sector has continued as strongly in 2016 as last year.

## UNCHANGED

### Key suppliers have staked their claim

The link between the three companies mentioned above is that they were all big players in the market last year and remain so today. With the rising regulation and additional support success in this category requires, it is perhaps unsurprising that retailers are choosing to work with companies with bigger budgets and proven track records. This year's What to Stock guide backed up this trend, with bestsellers including names such as Nicolites, Vivid, Kik and Liberty. This stability means that, while trends shift, technology develops and regulation beds in, store owners at least have confidence that they can now build partnerships with companies who are in the market for the long haul.

## UNCHANGED

### The margins are still brilliant

Another look at What to Stock shows the number one product in the category is a Blu Tank Vaporiser which was sold at an average £19.97. For an industry where 80% of shoppers spend less than £10 per sale this is a significant purchase to say the least - even the top-selling spirit sells for considerably less. And the best news is that with these high prices come higher margins too - a tonic for a sector where retailers have continually raised concerns over traditional tobacco margins. Last month, NFRN chief executive Paul Baxter discussed the new Vaporized deal and announced that working with them would provide up to 35% margins, a level akin to those available to retailers with higher-risk categories such as fresh and chilled and food to go. As the category's growth continues and rate of sale rises, this should mean increasing profits for retailers throughout the next year. ●

# COUNTDOWN

## Christmas Countdown: Your last minute job list

It may be mid-December but it's not too late to secure those vital extra Christmas sales. **Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski** finds out some great last-minute advice

**A**fter weeks of school plays, Christmas shopping trips and organising family get-togethers, the big day itself is nearly upon us. With just days to go, however, there are still things you can do to bring customers through

the door, get their attention and boost their spend with you. This week we've brought together some of the best minds in the industry to suggest clever ways you can make this Christmas even more profitable in the last few days.

### FIND A USP

**Greg Deacon**  
head of retail trade sales, News UK



Whether through products, experience or service, find a unique selling point and then stock up, display it clearly and encourage your customers to trade up. Doing this could mean more money is spent with you this Christmas.

### CREATE ROOM FOR SMALLER FORMATS

**Claire Kendall**  
Category development manager, Diageo



Fractionals are the life blood of the impulse channel, driving 70% of all spirits growth. They are also key during the Christmas period. Stocking a range of smaller products that have lower price points helps shoppers to buy into the category. With 69% of alcohol sales coming from shoppers spending £10 or less, fractionals are key to driving spirits sales when shoppers are looking to buy something for that evening.

### CREATE A CHRISTMAS SECTION

**Amy Burgess**  
Trade communications manager, Coca-Cola European Partners



A dedicated Christmas section, perhaps near the store entrance or by the tills, could be an ideal way of reminding shoppers of smaller items they may need to top-up on, like 1.75l bottles of Coca-Cola, party food, or last-minute present ideas.



### ADD PRODUCTS CUSTOMERS WILL PAY MORE FOR

**Hena Chandarana**  
Trade communications controller, Pladis



Offer shoppers something new and different which they will be happy to pay a little extra for. Novelty pack formats and products are popular so make sure you add some to your Christmas range. This year, the McVitie's Gold Bullion bar gift box is sure to add some glitz to your shelves.

### PLACE SOFT DRINKS NEAR TO SPIRITS

**Maurice Newton**  
Sales and marketing director at Clearly Drinks



Christmas is one of the most sociable times of the year, and shoppers will be sure to stock up on sharing sizes to cater for visitors. It is important to place soft drinks alongside spirits where possible, as this will encourage incremental and impulse sales, further increasing profits. If space allows, it's also worthwhile second-siting products, particularly in the final days leading up to Christmas Day.





**TAKE A LOOK AT THE YEAR'S BESTSELLING TOYS**

**Natalie Carney**  
Trade marketing manager,  
Varta



Longer and later opening hours, especially with Christmas falling on a weekend this year, will be key to securing final sales. That means taking note of the top toys for 2016 – such as those on the Argos list – which may well be available online. Very rarely will batteries be included and the last thing parents will want on Christmas morning is an unhappy child and a toy that doesn't work.

**FILL UP ON SELECTION BOXES**

**Susan Nash**  
Trade communications  
manager, Mondelez



Stock selection boxes, Christmas-themed gifts, family sharing products and top-up gifts. And remember the basics: stock the very best-selling lines and use our recommended stock list to help drive sales. Utilise manufacturer PoS and build impactful displays in store to showcase your full seasonal range. Also, don't forget to utilise counter space to encourage impulse purchases.

**GET YOUR SHARING RANGE RIGHT**

**Matt Goddard**  
Head of field sales,  
PepsiCo



To maximise sales during the festive period, retailers should stock a range of the best-selling sharing bags. If you only have space for a few sharing lines, we recommend you stock the top five sharing packs. Walkers has eight out of 10 of the best-selling £1 pricemarked sharing packs. These include Sensations, Quavers, Wotsits, Monster Munch, Walkers Core range and Doritos.

**MY PLAN: THE FINAL FEW DAYS BEFORE CHRISTMAS**

**Mital Patel**  
Bargain Booze Select Convenience,  
Brentwood, Essex



Our sales go up by 50% in December so it's really important to get things right – we try to be ready from 1 December to take advantage.

The first thing we do is take a look at our EPOS data from last year – this provides a benchmark for our sales and is a guide for us to get our orders right.

We order more Christmas-related products such as Baileys and Advocaat but gifting becomes very popular so we notice that other areas are effected too.

Premium wine sales become really important, Château-

neuf-du-Pape from France and an Italian wine called Barolo both sell very well before Christmas. We sell wine bags to give as gifts and also offer customers a gift-wrapping service.

The till can be really busy at this time of year so we will sometimes ask customers to pick up their wrapped items in an hour, so a member of staff can do it in a quieter moment.

With whiskeys we go from selling cheaper brands such as Teacher's and Bell's to selling more single malts such as Glenlivet. You don't want to get stuck with this stock in January when people return to the cheaper brands so we have to be careful.

We have two deliveries per week so watch our sales closely as Christmas approaches.

With these products bringing customers into the store, it's important to have impulse products like confectionery dotted around the store and at the till to encourage people to pick them up – if customers don't see them, they won't buy them.

Finally, because Christmas means lots of people have parties we stock a lot of ice. Sales of products like ready meals go down at this time of year so we take them out and ice takes up half of our freezer space throughout December.



**STOCK UP ON TOBACCO**

**Andrew Miller**  
Head of field sales,  
Imperial



Take advantage of our excellent offers in wholesalers beginning in December around 50g outers of Gold Leaf, GV Original and GV Bright to save money on your tobacco purchases.

**BUILD BIG DISPLAYS**

**Paul Hargreaves**  
Managing director,  
Cotswold Fayre



If you look like you are expecting to sell a lot, you will. Customers will pick up the positive vibe. If you major on gift products that aren't covered in santas and snowmen, you can do this and be risk averse, but taking a few risks will be worthwhile during the festive season.



# THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



## Round up



**Tim Murray**

Magazines reporter  
RNreporter@newtrade.co.uk

## GOOD READING AT THE DOUBLE

Aaah, Christmas. The time of double issues and year-end polls. I've already talked about the traditional TV listings bumper issues, but, putting together this week's This Week in Magazines section, I've been looking at some of the sales uplifts expected by the seasonal double issues. And they're suitably impressive, showing that the promise of more of everything you like is a winning one for consumers.

What it also highlights is that consumers often don't mind paying a bit more to get more. Sure, the double issue season and Christmas closing times cause havoc for magazines and editorial staff, but the rewards should be there for publishers as well as retailers (and given most retailers will be working throughout the Christmas period, there's no reason publishers shouldn't do that too).

The end-of-year round-ups now appearing in entertainment magazines provide further opportunities too. As an avid reader, I am – and will be – picking up any issue that promises me a year-end chart of the best films, albums, books and more from 2016.

There's more this year though; the seismic events of the past 12 months or so, across the entertainment world, throughout politics and beyond, make for some fascinating reviews of what's just gone by.

Who's not going to want to read about, say, David Bowie or Prince and their careers now the dust has settled following their tragic deaths, while the full implications of the Brexit and Trump votes are becoming clearer and worthy of closer inspection.

It might not have been anyone's favourite year, especially not for Remain-voting music and film fans, but the opportunity for the magazine sector shows that for retailers, at least, every dark cloud might just have a silver lining.

## Net gains

# SILVER CELEBRATIONS FOR SOCCER'S STARS

Merlin marks the 25th anniversary of arguably the best football league in the world with a very special sticker collection

IT'S THE 25th anniversary of the Premier League, the all-singing, all-dancing football corporation that inspired the launch of millions, if not billions, of stickers and trading cards. The latest collection from Topps, which bears its Merlin branding, recognises that silver jubilee heritage, with cards celebrating stars of the Premier League. Merlin launched its first collection just after the launch of the upper soar-away league, giving it instant recognition among fans. As well as the army of kids picking up the collection – there are 300 stickers in all – expect a strong nostalgic pull for older football fans too.



**PREMIER LEAGUE  
OFFICIAL MERLIN  
STICKER COLLECTION**

**On sale 15 December**

**Frequency one shot**

**Price £1.99 album,  
50p stickers**

**Distributor Topps**

**Display with Match  
Attax, UEFA Champions  
League sticker  
collection**

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## WEDDING IDEAS

The Christmas and New Year period is the most popular time for couples to get engaged and as 2017 hovers into view, the brides and grooms-to-be will be eagerly starting to plan their nuptials, making it the perfect time to relaunch Wedding Ideas magazine. The publication has upped its size to a more browse-able A4 coffee-table format, with improved paper quality and an increased cover price.

**On sale 21 December**  
**Frequency monthly**  
**Price £3.99**  
**Distributor Seymour**  
**Display with Brides, You & Your Wedding**



## STEAM WORLD

With an increased cover price and a free calendar for 2017 as a gift, Steam World, the country's best-selling historical railway magazine is anticipating enjoying its traditional seasonal lift - the corresponding issue saw sales rise by as much as a third. The January edition has a suitably snowy winter's scene as its cover image, with a look at steam trains in winters gone by.

**On sale out now**  
**Frequency monthly**  
**Price £4.60**  
**Distributor Seymour**  
**Display with Steam Railway, Heritage Railway, Classic Trains**



## DIVER

Watersports monthly Diver also features a free calendar. This has proved to be a hugely popular item which helped the 2016 New Year issue double its sales. Seymour is expecting a similar sales uplift 12 months later. As well as the lavish calendar, which features under-water wildlife photography and scenes, the issue focuses on diving holidays for the year ahead.

**On sale 15 December**  
**Frequency monthly**  
**Price £4.40**  
**Distributor Seymour**  
**Display with Sport Diver, Dive, Scuba Diving**



## CLOSER

The double issue of Closer will be out around the time you read this and is set to stay on the shelves until after the big day. As distributor Frontline noted, the similar issue last year saw sales increase by a third, as two weeks' worth of television listings and details for the Christmas period was added to the usual mix of celebrity news, features and pictures.

**On sale 13 December**  
**Frequency weekly**  
**Price £1.90**  
**Distributor Frontline**  
**Display with Heat, Grazia, OK!**



## GRAZIA

Another Christmas double issue, this one will remain on the shelves until 3 January, meaning it should enjoy a high profile throughout the festive period. The publication gives an added seasonal sheen to the usual Grazia mix of fashion tips, hints and features, and a wealth of celebrity news and trends. The double Christmas issue during the 2015/16 period saw sales grow by a whopping 60%, with Frontline expecting similar results this year.

**On sale 20 December**  
**Frequency weekly**  
**Price £2**  
**Distributor Frontline**  
**Display with Heat, Closer, Hello!**



## Bestsellers Computers & gaming

Title	On sale date	In stock
1 Computeractive	21.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Official Xbox Magazine	16.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Official PlayStation	20.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Webuser	28.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Micro Mart	30.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 PC Gamer	15.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Edge	05.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Games TM	29.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Retro Gamer	29.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Mac Format	23.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 PC Advisor	11.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 PC Pro DVD	12.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Computer Shopper DVD	12.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 Linux from DVD	07.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Neo	22.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 Official Windows	06.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 Computer Shopper CD	12.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 PC Pro CD	12.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 Custom PC	12.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 Imagine FX	30.12	<input type="checkbox"/>

Data from independent stores supplied by **SmithsNews**

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# THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



## WHAT CAR?

The January issue, complete with its high feature predicting what the biggest and hottest cars of the year ahead will be, is traditionally its biggest selling issue, with a sales uplift of something in the region of 13% expected. The motoring category continues to hold up well, with What Car? holding its position.



**On sale 15 December**  
**Frequency monthly**  
**Price £4.99**  
**Distributor Frontline**  
**Display with Top Gear**



## HEAT

The double issues keep on coming, as the women's weeklies sector joins the bulging, bumper crop of food and drink, crafts and TV listings magazines. Heat's double issue puts a suitably seasonal spin on its usual celebrity and fashion-based fare. Last year's issue enjoyed a 20% sales boost, with its huge TV listings section helping, as well as the year end fun diary drawing in a wider audience.



**On sale 13 December**  
**Frequency weekly**  
**Price £1.99**  
**Distributor Frontline**  
**Display with Closer, Grazia, Hello!**



## TAKE A BREAK SERIES

It's the next issue of the regular, themed monthly magazine from the Take A Break empire. This New Year special has plenty in keeping with the concept of "New Year, new you", with lots of dieting tips and ideas, including ones that blend its true story feel with actual skimming ideas. It's topped off with competitions offering prizes worth almost £25,000.



**On sale 20 December**  
**Frequency monthly**  
**Price £1.80**  
**Distributor Frontline**  
**Display with Take A Break, Real People**



## DISNEY STARS

With its current theatrical release Moana still starring in cinemas, the mighty Disney, arguably the only film studio that is a brand in itself, is as powerful as ever. The latest edition of this pre-school magazine comes with a high-ticket item, featuring a mask and fan based around some of its ever-popular Disney Princesses range. Expect the usual demand from toddlers.



**On sale 23 December**  
**Frequency monthly**  
**Price £4.99**  
**Distributor Seymour**  
**Display with Frozen, Disney Princess, Disney Junior**



## STAR WARS ROGUE ONE STICKER COLLECTION

As you're reading this, the next in the seemingly never-ending Star Wars movie canon lands in the shape of Rogue One. Forget where it fits in the whole saga of the Force, what is noteworthy is that this one will be huge at cinemas, with Topps' sticker collection sitting neatly alongside its existing trading cards set. The fact it fits into the original films' timeline gives it an added appeal to older collectors.



**On sale 16 December**  
**Frequency one-shot**  
**Price Starter pack £2.99, stickers 50p**  
**Distributor Topps**  
**Display with Star Wars Rogue One Trading Cards**

## Industry viewpoint

**Tom Edmondson**

UK marketing manager, Eagle Moss Ltd



## GO BACK TO THE FUTURE THIS XMAS

**A**s we approach the Christmas and New Year period, Eagle Moss is proud to announce the launch of the much-loved Build the Back to the Future Delorean, which will be a great addition to one of the biggest-selling movie franchises.

Launching at a busy time for partworks, Christmas is the perfect time to invest in a new hobby and this will be the ideal collection to push to your customers. Our target audience comes from a large base of build-up and model enthusiasts

**Top tip**  
 Regular orders will help you ensure stock and repeat purchases

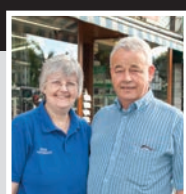
and movie fans of the iconic Delorean car. Build the Back to the Future Delorean launches on 28 December and it will be key to display all copies prominently for this build-up to complement the national TV campaign. We also remind you to reorder early issues if you sell out as stock will be readily available and we are committed to supply for independent retailers. Look out for our national display competition, and Comag can also send you promotional packs to support this launch. Our three tips for boosting sales are:

1. Display prominently
2. Reorder when sold out
3. Encourage shop saves

Each regular order will be worth at least £200 to you.

The build-up sector for partworks represents a significant opportunity to encourage repeat purchases on a weekly basis, as well as the exclusive Eagle Moss specials for this collection. Customers in this sector purchase significantly more copies than other categories and Eagle Moss is dedicated to providing you with all of the support to maximise sales.

## COMING UP IN NEXT WEEK'S RN



## MERYL AND DAVID WILLIAMS HAVE KEEN EYES FOR UNUSUAL STOCK THEIR CUSTOMERS LOVE

Plus, how to give your shoppers quick and easy solutions for an evening meal which keep them coming back for more, and brush up your laundry knowledge with RN's latest quiz





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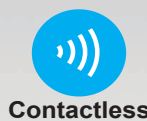


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