

DOORSTEP PROFITS

Ideas from a 14-stop tour around Bintesh Amin's new community

INNOVATION

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Lidl ideas, big sales
'Read my discounter survival plan'

Page 32 >>



RETAIL

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WHOLESALE

'Push firms on price to fund Living Wage'

● Retailers who press suppliers for lower cost prices could add 2% to gross margin, says former Bestway chief David Gilroy.

● Wholesalers and manufacturers will suffer as stores struggle to pay increased salaries, trade warned. **Page 5 & 19 >>**

NEWSPAPERS

Express cuts hit retailers' revenue



● Circulation increase fails to offset cost of slashed margins.

● Newsagent predicts move that 'devalues newtrade' will lead to £1,600 annual loss. **Page 4 >>**

'I'm being forced to shut on Sundays' says Newport retailer in bus route row.
Page 14 >>

TOBACCO

Imperial 'softens' gantry demands

Reps less heavy-handed, say stores.
Page 5 >>

Vol 127 No 3
FOR TRADE USE ONLY



A SMOKING SENSATION

David Worsfold gives a tour of his new tobacco 'shop within a shop', which comes complete with a walk-in humidor for cigars. The room is one of several innovative features introduced by the retailer at his revamped Farrants of Cobham store in Surrey, which has helped him "double profitability" at the business since re-opening in November. **Page 12 >>**



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LEADER



But retailers have to pay suppliers regardless, otherwise the facilities won't be there for others to use in the future



CHRIS GAMM

Editor

@ChrisGammRN

If you haven't yet read the response from a cafe owner to a negative TripAdvisor review left by a customer outraged at being charged £2 for a lemon water, Google it immediately. The explanation of the economics of the service industry is brilliant.

In short, the owner explained how business overheads total £27.50 per trading hour, while the waiter costs £12.50 with national insurance and holiday pay. This brings running costs to £40 per hour or 67p per minute.

If all tasks involved with making, serving and clearing away the drink took three minutes, the total cost to the business is £2.40 including VAT. The lemon might only cost 5p, but it is the facilities that cost far more than the ingredients.

I have seen two damning local paper headlines recently portraying retailers as villains for charging to use PayPoint or insisting on a purchase. The accusation is that retailers are capitalising on society's poorest for what should contractually be a free service.

I wasn't the only one to see a parallel between charging for the time taken to produce a lemon water and being expected to offer a service at a cost to your business, especially if a terms cut has tipped the balance.

Retailer Mike Grundy pointed out in a discussion on the PayPoint Pay Fair Facebook group that, using the same equation, the cost of processing a payment transaction is roughly 67p.

The service may well bring footfall and customers might sometimes make purchases. But, then, the customer who expected a free lemon water may have been dining with more profitable guests, or might buy a cake next time.

But retailers, like the cafe owner, have to pay suppliers regardless, otherwise the facilities won't be there for others to use in the future.

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NEWS



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ASOS deal for Pass My Parcel

Smiths News' click and collect service Pass My Parcel has signed leading online fashion retailer ASOS as its second client.

The service is initially being trialled in 20 outlets and will be rolled out across the remaining 3,000 outlets over the coming months.

The announcement was made in its parent company's, Connect Group PLC, trading update which stated: "Pass My Parcel delivered an excellent operational performance over the peak Christmas period remaining on track with its current expansion plans."

The update adds that the next step in the group's strategy to grow the service is the launch of a mobile-enabled returns collection service with a quick response (QR) code sent to customers' mobile phones.

The service launched in October with Amazon as its first client.

Bill Laird dies, 54

Today's Group managing director Bill Laird has died following a long battle with illness.

A statement from the company said Mr Laird, 54, died peacefully in the early hours of Saturday morning.

His retail career included management roles at Somerfield and Woolworths, along with seven years working for Midcounties Co-operative where he was promoted to chief operating officer.

Mr Laird also led the formation of the Today's Group and the Today's Wholesale Service Ltd buying group in 2012 following the demerger from Nisa-Today's.

Today's Group said John Schofield will continue his current role as acting managing director of Today's Wholesale Services Ltd.



New stand gives 8% sales rise

Kent retailer Jatinder Sahota increased newspaper sales by 8% on Monday as he became the first retailer to trial a prototype display stand from News UK. The stand is designed to drive news and total-store revenue during key sales periods by cross-merchandising newspapers with FMCG products in primary display spaces. "I sold out of The Sun before 11am and sold a lot more copies of the Daily Mail and the Mirror," said Mr Sahota. "Sales of confectionery on the stand were up 9% too."

Thousands of pounds of revenue lost 'All it is doing is devaluing the newstrade'

Retailers count cost as Express circulation rises

by Helena Drakakis

Circulation of the Daily Express increased in the first two weeks after it slashed its cover price, according to industry figures, but retailers are claiming thousands of pounds in lost revenue.

The Daily Express announced price cuts of its Scottish weekday edition from 50p to 30p and its Saturday editions to 45p in December. The move came months after Northern & Shell halved the price of the The Star to 20p on weekdays.

Figures provided by a

publisher show that since then, sales of the Scottish daily have increased by around 5.5%, with an extra 2,300 sales per day in the first two weeks of January. Nationally, the Saturday edition increased circulation by 4.1% adding an extra 20,000 copies in week one, followed by a rise of 9.1% or 43,000 copies in the second week of January.

However, an industry source told RN that while the Express had seen more readers, there was no clear evidence to suggest its competitors had shed sales as a result.

Paisley retailer Des Barr said that while he had seen "a couple more over-the-counter sales" of the Express, there had been no change to his HND orders.

He makes 100 Express deliveries each weekday and between 80 and 130 on weekends.

He said: "With a margin cut of 5p, I'm losing around £31 Monday to Saturday which is £1,600 per year. It's a complete loss of revenue. All the Express is doing is devaluing the newstrade. It should be lambasted for this."

Retailer Martyn Brown,

of News-2-You in Leeds, said he had seen no extra sales of the Express since the price cut, or customers switching paper, adding that he made the decision not to reduce the title's price.

He said: "I wrote to my HND customers saying that while the Express had cut its price I couldn't deliver it on such reduced margins. Not one customer has complained or cancelled the paper."

Northern & Shell had not responded to RN's request for a comment at the time of going to press.

PayPoint 'failed to support prosecuted store'

The NFRN has criticised PayPoint for failing to offer a retailer support before removing a terminal from his shop after it was prosecuted for breaching food safety and hygiene standards.

The retailer, who did not want to be named, has been working with the federation to make improvements, but was taken to

court last month and fined £5,000 after pest activity and out-of-date stock was discovered in the store.

NFRN chief executive Paul Baxter said: "We are very disappointed PayPoint did not approach the NFRN in a bid to offer the retailer support, or to improve the consumer experience, before it decided to remove

the terminal.

"The NFRN retail development manager is currently working with the store owner to help improve his retail standards and as a direct result we implore PayPoint to reconsider its stance and give the community of customers back their PayPoint agency."

A PayPoint spokesman

said: "As the breaches were so extreme, PayPoint took a decision to remove the terminal from the site to protect the health and safety of our customers." The spokesman added PayPoint has no plans to re-install the terminal at this time, however the retailer can reapply for the service and be re-assessed.

Indies need to turn screw, says former Bestway chief David Gilroy 'Challenge is industry-wide'

'Push for better cost prices to alleviate NLW pressure'

by Gurpreet Samrai

Retailers need to put pressure on wholesalers for lower cost prices to increase their profit margins in the face of "huge challenges" such as the National Living Wage.

The advice comes from David Gilroy, a former director, at Bestway, who has outlined a seven-point plan to help retailers increase their gross margin and make changes to improve efficiency.

He told RN retailers could add 2% to their gross margin by "pushing hard" for better

wholesale prices, which, for a store taking £10,000 per week, equates to £10,400 additional cash profit in a year or 1,444 man hours at £7.20 an hour.

"The National Living Wage and minimum wage rise might be set to hit independent retailers harder than wholesalers or manufacturers, but this makes their challenge an industry-wide problem that cannot be ignored," he said. "The trade must work together to allow independent retailers to earn sustainable gross margins."

Retailers have told RN

that increasing wholesale prices have forced them to shop around for the best deals rather than stay loyal to one wholesaler.

Vas Vekaria, of Lever Edge Convenience Store in Bolton, said he saves on average £300 a week by shopping around. "The other week I was buying 15-packs of Carlsberg and they were cheaper at Bargain Booze than the cash and carry. That needs to be addressed," he said.

Wholesalers told RN they often work off "wafer-thin margins" meaning there is sometimes no room to re-

duce prices, but added they will continue to do what they can do help retailers and offer the best prices.

Dee Thaya, of Abra Wholesale, added the issue also needed to be addressed by suppliers.

Mr Gilroy's plan also focuses on improving the profitability of retailers' sales mix, paying more attention to fresh food and increasing the range of OTC medicines. To improve efficiency, he advised retailers to get stock delivered and to auto-generate stock orders with wholesalers.

● See column, page 19

Online Aldi 'not a threat'

Aldi's launch of an online ordering service will be "a threat to supermarkets" but will not affect independent stores, according to retailers.

The discounter this month revealed it will set up an online ordering website for wine and non-food items in "early 2016". Rival firm Lidl revealed in July that it was also considering plans to sell wine online.

However, Julie Kaur, owner of Jules Premier Convenience Store in Hadley, Shropshire, said: "This won't affect our wine sales - this is a fight between Aldi, Lidl and the supermarkets."

C4Life app makes for a Nisa diet for children

Children in the London borough of Tower Hamlets are being encouraged to swap sugary snacks for healthier options through a "sugar swap app" as part of the Change4Life initiative. The Year 2 pupils tried out the new tool at the Nisa Local in Manchester Road - the winner of the Tower Hamlets Food for Health Award scheme, which awards stores for their range and quality of fruit and veg. Councillor Amy Whitelock Gibbs said: "This app is an excellent tool to help children and adults learn about sugar and how to make healthy swaps and choices."



Strong Q3 for Booker

Booker Group has reported strong third quarter trading for its retail business with total sales, including Budgens and Londis, rising 10.5%.

However, the firm said tobacco like-for-like sales through its wholesale division, including Makro, declined 6.9% in the 16 weeks to 1 January, which it attributed to the display ban in independent stores.

Imperial 'softens' on gantry position

Independents under contract with Imperial Tobacco claim the company has "softened" its stance on the allocation of its products on gantries following a string of complaints from retailers.

A number of store owners told RN in October they had received letters from Imperial, which claimed they had breached contracts

by failing to dedicate 70% of their gantry space to the manufacturer's products and could face legal action.

The confusion was caused by the termination of a supply deal between Imperial and Philip Morris International, leading to changes in tobacco planograms.

Billingham retailer Martin Ward, who received one

of the letters, said he has had no further correspondence from Imperial on the matter.

"There's been less pressure from reps, who were playing hardball before to get products on the gantry. They've softened a bit, which I think is because retailers fought this."

Peter Robinson, owner of Robinson Retail in Pem-

broke, added: "We've heard nothing from Imperial since we got our letter."

A spokesman for Imperial Tobacco thanked retailers for their "help and support" during the remerchandising process, but added: "We reiterate that retailers found to be non-compliant when audited will continue to be reminded of their contractual obligations."

£35k prizes for digital

Innovate UK is offering five small businesses the chance to win £35,000 funding if they come forward with digital innovations to tackle key problems facing retailers such as food waste, improving customer experience and accessibility. If successful, businesses will get to partner with companies such as Barclays, Tesco and Unilever.

NEWS

BUSINESS



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A merry Christmas for Nisa

Nisa has reported a positive Christmas trading period with year-on-year value sales up 6.3% from £239.2m to £254.3m.

The company added that profits for the 10 weeks to 3 January stood at £52,000 compared to a loss of £2.4m during the same period last year. Chilled food was the best-performing category for the group during Christmas, with sales growing 23.8% to £42.9m, while case volumes were also up 5.7% from 19.2m to 20.3m.

Nick Read, chief executive at Nisa, said: "Last year the business made a loss during the Christmas period, so to register a profit of over half a million pounds, in a challenging marketplace and during a turnaround year for Nisa, is particularly gratifying."

Paperware revamped

Spar has revamped its own label paperware range this month with better quality materials and pricemarked incentives to offer greater value for money to shoppers.

The group's toilet and facial tissues have been upgraded from two ply sheets to three ply, while a new £1.75 price flash will run on Spar luxury soft four-pack toilet tissues.

In addition, the range will be expanded with two new facial tissues and the launch of shelf-ready-packaging for the firm's cube and twin pack pocket tissues.

Susan Darbyshire, Spar UK brand director, said its paperware range is worth up to £5m in retail sales, adding: "We have made significant improvements to the quality while at the same time offering shoppers great value for money."

Price Drop campaign to drive Londis sales

Londis said it will drive impulse sales in its stores with the launch of its latest Price Drop campaign this month.

The scheme is offering half price or less deals on a number of big name

brands, including Cadbury, Heinz, Lucozade and Persil, until 8 February.

John Pattison, Londis retail director, said: "January is a tough time for consumers and retailers, with everyone feeling the

pinch after the Christmas excess.

"What we're doing is offering the big brands at the best prices in your local shop. We're making it clear to customers that they can save money on their

doorstep without having to travel to a major supermarket."

Mr Pattison said Londis will support Price Drop with in-store marketing to grow shopper awareness of the deals.

Extended hours and new 'customer service support function' Growth for Scots store

One Stop pledges 'better service' to its members

by Steven Lambert

One Stop is aiming to "bring a better service" to its franchise members early in the new year by extending opening hours at its business support centre.

The move means the One Stop franchise support team will now be on call on Saturdays between 8am and 12pm to deal with queries and problems from store owners. The service will continue to operate between 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

In addition, One Stop said it has appointed a new member to the team to head up a "customer service support function", which will deal with specific retailer issues.

One Stop said the changes have been prompted by feedback from retailers during its franchise forum meetings.



John Miller, head of One Stop franchise operations, said: "We want their businesses to succeed and grow, but understand sometimes problems can occur.

"We are delighted to be able to extend our franchise support opening hours. As we continue to grow we will also consider further extensions."

The news comes as the owners of One Stop's first franchise store in Scotland revealed positive early trading figures since joining the group.

Javid and Shaista Iqbal said average sales at their shop in Blackburn, West Lothian, are up 15% since fully converting to One Stop in September.

The retailers added that sales in the week leading up to Christmas grew 37% compared to the previous year, while Christmas Day sales were up 25%.

Mr Iqbal said: "It's great to feel that we are part of something much bigger than our one store and the support we receive is second to none."

Bestway reveals £3bn annual turnover

The Bestway Group passed £3bn in annual turnover for the financial year, despite seeing a fall in profits through its wholesale business.

Results posted for the year ending 30 June 2015 revealed annual turnover at the company grew 20% from £2.55bn to £3.06bn, while profit before tax

grew 39.9% from £267.1m to £373.8m.

The figures were bolstered by a positive performance from Bestway's cement manufacturing business, with turnover up 17.5% to £205m and profit before tax up 19.9% to £682m.

In addition, the Bestway Group said its Well Pharmacy business, acquired

from the Co-operative in October 2014, had "slightly exceeded expectations", with turnover for the nine months to June 2015 standing at £583m.

However, turnover at Bestway Wholesale dropped from £2.37bn in 2014 to £2.27bn, while profit before tax fell from £49.2m to £44.6m.

Zameer Choudrey, chief executive of Bestway, said: "The past financial year has been very exciting for the group. Despite difficult business conditions we have maintained our focus on our strategic goals by increasing turnover and market share of our businesses both in the UK and in Pakistan."

NEWSTRADE

Exclusive offer for NFRN members gets under way 'Encouraging' initiative by publisher

Telegraph half-price HND deal's cautious welcome

by Helena Drakakis

Retailers have cautiously welcomed a move by The Telegraph to offer customers eight weeks' half-price newspapers when they sign up to HND.

The offer, which started this month, is being run exclusively with NFRN members with the Daily Telegraph and Sunday Telegraph suggesting the move is part of a longer-term strategy.

A Telegraph spokesman said: "With up to 50% of The Telegraph delivered to homes or businesses, we are

committed to working with independent retailers and we look forward to continuing these relationships."

Jon Powell, of the Kiosk in Newport, said he welcomed the offer. "HND is where my efforts are going and I want longer-term strategies that don't include the permanent price cutting we've seen from The Star and The Express."

However, while Les Gilbert of Chard News, in Somerset, called any initiative to grow the category "good news", he felt that price cuts, even for a limited time, could have a

negative impact. He said: "I am worried that price cuts, even to attract HND, could see other papers follow suit long-term. By contrast, News UK's offer on free home delivery is really well thought out."

The Telegraph initiative follows on from News UK's free-delivery scheme. By the end of last year, the company had signed up 40,000 new HND customers as a result of Deliver My Sun which offers 12 weeks' free delivery. This was followed by Deliver My Times in December.

NFRN Store2Door new

business development manager Phil Williams said: "At a time when some publishers are responding to the current difficult trading conditions by slashing cover prices and margins it is encouraging to see that others are taking a more long-term view."

"The Telegraph has continued to be very supportive of the independent sector and consistently offers real value to new customers."

Alongside the half-price offer, the initiative is being supported with PoS material, including leaflets, posters and display units.

More Star Wars from Topps

Topps is to launch further additions to its Star Wars Force Attax collections.

The Star Wars Force Attax Extra collection will be available from 3 March with another offering available in September 2016.

Star Wars Force Attax Extra will feature new images and characters from the Star Wars: The Force Awakens film. Since the sequel's release in December it has become the third highest-grossing film of all time.

There are 138 cards including mirror foil, holographic foil, unique Star Wars holographic cards and new stand-up character cards.

Sale time for Tindle

Newspaper entrepreneur Sir Ray Tindle is selling part of his 200-strong local newspaper portfolio to three managers in a bid to ensure the future of the titles.

Titles including the South London Press, the Mercury and the Pulman Weekly News in Dorset will be bought by three executives under the company Capital Media Newspapers. The three managers will each own a 30% share with Mr Tindle retaining a 10% share.

NRS's new format

The first report from the newly revamped National Readership Survey (NRS) is to be released in mid-February.

The survey will be the first report after the NRS was replaced last year by the newly created Publishers Audience Measurement Company.

Fans lap up Bowie tributes

The nationals saw significant sales uplifts last week as they covered the unexpected death of 69-year-old rock icon David Bowie. The Sun sold an additional 35,000 copies, up 10%, and The Times, which featured a wraparound cover, sold 43,000 more, which equalled an 11% rise. The Telegraph said it saw a "significant uplift" while the Mirror saw sales rise by an estimated 6%. The Independent, which ran a 16-page supplement, reported a 32% uplift, with the i up 9%.



Mini Mirror i rival 'getting closer'

Rumours the Mirror is working to launch a rival to the Independent's i have been all but confirmed.

A spokesman told RN that the newspaper group is "exploring alternative revenue streams across the publishing division"

and "has seconded some resource as part of this".

The comments came after reports that a team being led by Sunday editor Alison Phillips is working on a cut-price newspaper which would "seek to replicate the success of the

Independent's i newspaper", which launched in 2010 and currently retails at 40p.

Des Barr, of Sinclair Barr Newsagents, in Paisley, said: "The Mirror is not a main player in Scotland but if the Record or other papers

follow suit then it's going to be bad news for retailers.

"I believe publishers should be focusing on their core product instead of diluting the market with cut-price products."

The Independent did not want to comment.

NEWS

PRODUCTS

Naked to reveal K for kale

PepsiCo is getting shoppers off to a healthy start to the new year with two new products being added to its Naked smoothies range.

The first, Naked Kale Blazer, contains 30% vegetables, two thirds of which is kale, and is also a source of vitamin K, fibre and potassium. It will be available in 450ml (RRP £2.36) and 750ml (RRP £3.49) bottles.

The second is a 750ml bottle of Naked's Red Machine, a smoothie containing strawberries, raspberries and cranberries, which will join the existing 450ml variant.

PepsiCo will support the products with sampling activity, PoS material and digital marketing.



Purdey's gets Elba

Britvic has teamed up with acclaimed actor Idris Elba, above, for its "biggest ever" marketing push for its Purdey's fruit drinks.

The Luther and The Wire star will front a new campaign called 'Thrive On' launching in April, which will include digital and outdoor campaigns and a series of short films themed around people looking to better themselves.



Everything in moderation for Heineken

Heineken is building on its responsible drinking stance with the launch of a new marketing campaign targeted at 'millennial' shoppers looking to limit their alcohol intake. TV and digital ads will run this month under the tagline 'Moderate Drinkers Wanted', and will be used to encourage consumers to trade up to more premium beer brands, according to the manufacturer.

Energy drink's TV ads promote fitness 'One Can and You Can' message to consumers

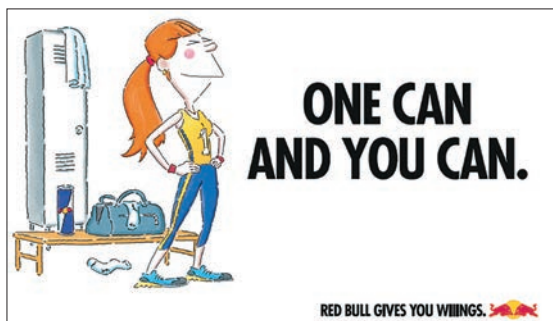
Red Bull campaign aims to boost winter activity

by Steven Lambert

Energy drink Red Bull is returning to TV screens this month with a marketing campaign designed to keep people active over the winter months.

The initiative, which runs under the tagline 'One Can and You Can', includes a number of animated ads showing how a can of Red Bull can give consumers the energy to keep up fitness and exercise regimes.

It will be supported with outdoor ads appearing at



busy commuter spots, student sports clubs and fitness clubs, which will feature various Red Bull athletes and brand ambas-

sadors.

Shoppers will also be encouraged to visit the Red Bull website for their chance to claim free cans of

the drink. It marks the first activity for the brand since the launch of its limited edition Red Bull Air Race can last May.

It also follows swiftly on from rival soft drink brands, Glaceau Smartwater and Evian, launching campaigns to capitalise on consumers aiming to stay fit in the new year.

Gavin Lissimore, head of category marketing at Red Bull, said: "The campaign is about helping consumers to find that motivation to get moving."

Japan Tobacco in non-US Natural American deal

Japan Tobacco (JT) has completed a deal to acquire the Natural American Spirit brand outside of the United States.

The move, which was first revealed in a company statement in September,

will see JT acquire nine cigarette and three RYO brands in the Natural American Spirit range.

The 'additive-free' products are currently supplied to retailers in the UK from Santa Fe Natural Tobacco

Company, a subsidiary of Reynolds American Inc.

In a statement, JT said the acquisition would "strengthen the group's business foundation" and help develop its premium tobacco portfolio outside the US.

Daniel Torras, managing director of JTI, said: "We will work closely with Natural American Spirit in the UK to build a business plan which will enhance Natural American Spirit's already strong growth."

Hot products for your shopping list



Actor Idris Elba is the face of Purdey's fruit drinks' new sales campaign



Two new Naked smoothies join the range for 2016



Japan Tobacco has acquired the Natural American Spirit brand for outside the US



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NEWS

PRODUCTS

King Pot's new taste

Pot Noodle has added a Chinese Chow Mein flavour to its King Pot format.

The flavour is now available with an RRP of £1.36 in cases of 12, the fifth addition to the range which includes Bombay Bad Boy, Chicken & Mushroom, Beef & Tomato and Original Curry flavours.

It follows the launch of the 'You Can Make It' brand repositioning in 2015, and forms part of its 2016 plan which will be supported by a £5m marketing investment.

The brand said it is confident the launch will drive category value by customers trading up from the 90g to the 114g version.

Monique Rossi, marketing manager for Pot Noodle, said: "Chinese Chow Mein has been one of our most popular flavours to date and its addition to the King Pot range is a great way to kick off 2016 for Pot Noodle."

Nisa gives it Welly

Nisa is launching a new range of cooked meats in its stores.

The Welly range will consist of five products, four ham – 115g Honey Roast Ham (RRP £1.19), 115g Cooked Ham (RRP £1.19), 300g Wafer Thin Honey Roast Ham (RRP £2) and 300g Lean Breaded Ham – (RRP £3) and one chicken – 300g Wafer Thin Roast Chicken (RRP £2). Available now, the range is sourced from British farmers.

Richard Morris, marketing controller at Welly, said: "We hope to offer consumers affordable great tasting British cooked meats."



Blue-lander from Ciroc

Ciroc is launching a limited edition blue bottle to celebrate the release of film Zoolander 2 in February. The bottle has been inspired by Derek Zoolander's famous 'Blue Steel' pose. The limited edition 70cl bottle (RRP £38.50) will be available from all major wholesalers from the end of the month.

New flavour to give fruit confectionery 1.5% growth 'Great platform for in-store activity'

Skittles sticks its neck out with Tropical giraffe ads

by Gurpreet Samrai

Wrigley is launching its Skittles Tropical flavour in the UK this month following its success in America.

Available to retailers from 25 January in 55g single bags (RRP 49p), 125g hanging bags (RRP £1 and pricemarked packs) and 174g sharing pouches (RRP £1.28), the brand said the new flavour is expected

to deliver more than 1.5% growth in the fruit confectionery category.

As part of the brand's multi-million pound investment for 2016, the launch will be supported with a new TV ad, featuring a rainbow-eating giraffe on a beach alongside the strapline 'Aloha the Rainbow, Taste the Rainbow', from this week, as well as a digital campaign expected

to reach more than 10 million people.

Dan Newell, Wrigley confections marketing manager, said: "Tropical flavour has always been popular in the UK. It represents a huge sales opportunity for retailers to keep up-to-date with the latest flavour trend in the fruit confectionery category.

"The Skittles Tropical launch also offers a great

platform for retailers to generate in-store activity during the winter months."

The brand said Skittles Tropical is a best-selling flavour in the US, and UK customers voted it the product they would most like to see added to the existing £38m Skittles range.

Skittles Tropical flavours include orange, passion fruit, tropical punch, watermelon and pineapple.

US success blazes trail for zero-calorie Monster

Coca-Cola Enterprises is hoping to drive incremental growth in the energy category with the launch of a new zero-calorie Monster variant.

Monster Energy Ultra White, a sparkling citrus flavour, is now available in a

£1.19 pricemarked pack.

The drink's launch across wholesale and convenience this month follows a grocery and forecourt launch at the end of last year.

Caroline Cater, operational marketing director at Coca-Cola Enterprises, said:

"The Monster Energy Ultra range has been hugely successful in the USA, and we're looking forward to working with retailers to replicate this performance in Great Britain.

"Customers who have launched Monster Energy

Ultra so far have seen a 50% growth in Monster sales on average."

The company said the Monster Energy portfolio in Great Britain has hit the £123m sales mark this year and is growing by 18% year on year.

Hot products for your shopping list



Chinese Chow Mein joins the King Pot Noodle line-up



Monster Energy Ultra White is a new zero-calorie option



Skittles Tropical's launch is to be given a huge promo push




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Alcohol bill gets rejected

A bill proposing restrictions on the retailing and advertising of alcoholic drinks and changes to licensing laws to tackle health issues and alcohol-related crime has been rejected.

A majority of the Scottish Parliament Health Committee said they did not support the general principles of the bill and they were not persuaded it was "an effective and workable package of measures to tackle alcohol misuse".

The draft Alcohol Licensing and Public Health Bill was brought forward by Dr Richard Simpson MSP and was opposed by the Scottish Grocers Federation (SGF).

John Lee, SGF head of public affairs, said: "We need a simpler licensing system not more and more legislation."

Mike's taste of Europe

A Yorkshire retailer is winning over shoppers from Aldi and Lidl with the launch of a dedicated international food section.

Mike Nicholls has started stocking food from countries including Germany, Ukraine and Poland in his Londis Dringhouses business to attract customers looking for similar products in the discounters. He said: "Lidl and Aldi have bought their own products over to the UK from Germany. We introduced a similar range that would help us compete against them. It's been very successful so far."

Mr Nicholls has created a promotional bay to stock international products, which include impulse items such as crisps, cakes and snacks. The move formed part of a £43,000 refit of the store, which was reopened under the Costcutter fascia in November.

● p22 – 23 Retailer profile



Selfie stars set for choc treats from Binnys

Canterbury retailer Bintesh Amin is offering customers a free bar of chocolate if they take a selfie of themselves inside or outside his shop and post it on his Facebook page. The idea to drive footfall in his new store, Binnys, came to him after customers requested having their picture taken in front of an alcohol miniatures display. "It sparked an idea that if I offer chocolate to others who want a selfie in-store, then it could drive interest and footfall in the new store," he said.

Innovative ideas prove a hit with customers Final phase of work ready to start

David doubles profit with 'three into one' revamp

by Steven Lambert

A Surrey retailer has "doubled profitability" and grown tobacco sales by 20% just two months after the launch of his new concept store.

David Worsfold officially reopened his flagship Farrants of Cobham store in November following a complete redevelopment costing just under £1m.

The investment was used to grow floor space from

1,600sq ft to more than 3,000sq ft, and led to the introduction of innovative new features at the business.

These included a seating area for customers to browse magazines, a dedicated confectionery zone for children and a specialist tobacco room with a walk-in cigar humidor allowing smokers to browse products away from the shop floor.

Mr Worsfold said the changes were a result of

bringing "three shops into one", leading him to close his Farrants Office shop and another CTN in town.

"Since the changes, our tobacco sales have gone up by 20% and our cigar sales are up 30%.

"Our news and confectionery sales are both up by 8% as well," he said.

"We have doubled our profitability at the same time, and now we're looking to increase turnover and margin."

Mr Worsfold said he is now looking to start "phase two" of the relaunch, which will include the creation of a dedicated smoking room for cigar and pipe smokers and the launch of community room to host local events and training courses.

He said: "We're only 75% there with the shop. By Easter, you'll see Farrants rocking as it should be."

● Read the full retailer profile in next week's RN.

Warning after card fraudsters' £50m haul

Retailers are being advised to ensure they are protected against card fraud, as figures reveal fraudsters cost UK retailers almost £50m in 2014.

The NFRN, alongside Barclays, has published prevention information, which states up to 40% of fraud gets through systems undetected

as "fraud evolves almost as quickly as technology".

Margaret McCloskey, NFRN head of operations, said: "Retailers should use the UV counterfeit detector to check if a credit/debit visa card is authentic. With contactless, retailers need to be aware of multiple transac-

tions in a shift with a card, in case it is stolen."

Lost or stolen cards is cited as the second highest type of loss, with remote purchase the highest.

The total loss from face-to-face transactions in 2014 was £49.2m, from £60.8m in 2013 and £54.6 in 2012 – a sig-

nificant drop from £218.8m in 2004.

Ways of identifying a counterfeit MasterCard or Visa card include checking the first four digits of the embossed card number match the numbers printed below and checking holograms and ultraviolet motifs.

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Mo's local ready meal sales boost

A Glasgow retailer has seen a significant uplift in sales since he started offering locally-sourced ready meals in-store.

Mo Razzaq, of Family Shopper in Blantyre, reported a £1,000 per week sales uplift following the installation of a new chiller and a selection of ready meals.

Mr Razzaq approached a nearby Indian restaurant, which is now supplying him with curries and pakoras, and a local butcher who is providing traditional Scottish fare. He said: "I installed a £4,000 chiller and refreshed my meal selection using local suppliers. By doing that I've seen a £1,000 a week increase in sales."

The retailer wants his Family Shopper to become a destination store for family meals. He added: "I'm also putting two chillers at the end of aisles: one that stocks loose fruit and the other loose vegetables. "I want to give people meal ideas and recipe cards so they can pick up everything they need."



Magazines-only store opens doors

Magazine specialist Magculture has opened its doors near London's Clerkenwell district, known as the city's creative design hub. The 400sq ft shop boasts 500 magazine titles, displayed in a setting where customers can browse. Attached to the shop is a design studio run by owner Jeremy Leslie. The shop builds on the Magculture website which has been running for 10 years as a portal to discuss and champion magazines. "It's very deliberately magazines only; we felt London deserved a pure-play magazine shop," said Mr Leslie.

● *Retailer viewpoint, p36*

Transport company's changes kill retailer's trade 'It's short-sighted' says angry newsagent

End of the line for Sunday sales as bus route moves

by Helena Drakakis

A Newport retailer has been forced to shut up shop on Sundays following a 50% loss in takings since bus routes were diverted away from the city's high street.

Before 11 December Jon Powell, of the Kiosk, said he had 51 buses pick up and drop off every hour outside his shop. That number has reduced to zero since Newport's bus company

changed the route, channelling buses to a new shopping centre.

While Mr Powell welcomed the new shopping centre, he claims the subsequent alteration to bus routes is cancelling out any benefit of increased footfall to independent retailers.

He said: "Last Sunday my takings were £50. That's a profit of £7. Once I've paid staff, it's a loss, so I'm closing. Compared to my

January takings for the last two years, this is dire."

Mr Powell and 120 other independent traders, have now gathered a petition of 3,000 signatures of customers who want the high street drop-off to be reinstated.

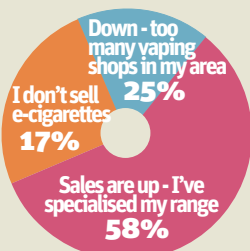
However, the bus company, Newport Bus, has told Mr Powell it is carrying out its own survey and will report its findings next week.

Mr Powell added: "The bus company says our loss of trade is not its problem, but it is our city bus company and it has some social responsibility.

"Shoppers use its services and if more shops close on a Sunday there's a knock-on effect on whether people come to the city centre. It's short-sighted."

Newport Transport did not respond to RN's request for a comment.

RN READER POLL



How are e-cigs selling in your store?

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION

Do you make a saving by shopping around between wholesalers?



Have your vote now

Go to betterretailing.com/retail-newsagent

Politicians welcome Scottish Local Shop Report

The first Scottish Local Shop Report has been welcomed by politicians as a "significant resource" for increasing their understanding of the convenience store industry in Scotland.

A motion lodged by Gordon MacDonald MSP congratulating the Scottish Grocers Federation on the publication of the report led to a debate at Holyrood last

week, attracting cross-party support.

During the debate, Lewis MacDonald MSP highlighted the ongoing issue of illicit trade and called for the Scottish government to add responsibility for combating the issue to a ministerial portfolio. Minister for business Fergus Ewing MSP also highlighted that the industry in Scotland is highly

entrepreneurial and reiterated his pledge to maintain the small business bonus scheme for business rates throughout the lifetime of the next parliament and called for cross-party support.

SGF head of public affairs John Lee said: "The response from MSPs to the report has been overwhelmingly positive and it

will undoubtedly improve their understanding of our industry.

"The minister's comments on the small business bonus scheme were very welcome and we will work with him to try to create the cross-party support required to ensure the scheme becomes a permanent fixture within the business rates system."

YOUR ISSUE

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PUTTING THINGS RIGHT AFTER FLOOD STRIKES

Heavy rainfall in December put 2015 in the top 10 wettest years on record since 1910, forecasters have revealed. The floods caused by storms Desmond, Eva and Frank in December and over the new year devastated thousands of homes and businesses, including newsagents and convenience stores, which are now facing massive clean-up costs.

Figures published by the Association of British Insurers (ABI) reveal a total spend of £24m on emergency payments to households and businesses between 3 December and 3 January.

With flood warnings still in place in regions across the country, RN has spoken to three organisations and a retailer about how to protect your business and the support and advice available for flood victims.

James Dalton

Director of general insurance policy, Association of British Insurers (ABI)
 The top priority for business insurers is to help and support customers through this difficult time, so let them take charge – by making emergency payments, arranging temporary trading premises and starting the drying out and repair process as soon as possible.

There are six key stages to getting properties repaired in the wake of a flood:

- In the immediate aftermath, insurers will be in affected areas proactively contacting customers. Businesses may need to deal with the broker they bought their insurance through. Insurers will make immediate emergency payments to help cover the cost of essentials.
- Damage needs to be assessed, and in severe cases your insurer will appoint someone to come and do this as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Your business will need cleaning and stripping out once the waters have receded.
- A drying company will then be appointed to disinfect and fully dry out the property, and issue

Make sure you are fully covered, stores warned Owners face massive repair bills

Check insurance warning after floods ravage stores

by Cherry Casey

Retailers are being sent a stark warning to ensure they are fully covered by their insurance as store owners in areas devastated by recent flooding face hefty losses.

Storms have swept across parts of the UK causing extensive damage to homes, infrastructure and businesses, including independent stores.

Janet Brookes' P & J Brookes Newsagents in Mytholmroyd, near Hebden Bridge, was submerged in six feet of water on Boxing Day, causing a tobacco gantry to collapse and damage to all food stock. She is facing paying for the damages after struggling to get insurance after her store



Janet Brookes' shop under water in the town of Mytholmroyd

everything and managed to save some of the stationery, but all the food has been thrown out, so we'll be re-stocking sweets and chocolate from our own pocket," she said. Margaret McCloskey, head of operations at the NFRN, is urging retailers to ensure their businesses are covered "for all eventualities".

she said. "One retailer I spoke with this morning believed he was covered with the insurance broker, but he wasn't. His business has been heavily damaged by the floods and he's lost a lot of expensive stock such as tobacco. This now needs to be paid for by him." My Local in Rochdale was also heavily flooded.

"So much mud has got into the refrigeration and EPOS equipment. It needs to be completely gutted and rebuilt, which will cost hundreds of thousands of pounds and take weeks. We do have insurance, or obviously that's what it's for, but it's frustrating for the teams involved."

Meanwhile, a paperboy at James Wilkinson's Pybus Newsagents in Boroughbridge was taken out on a tractor to deliver newspapers last week after a road to one of the nearby villages flooded.

Simon Danczuk, MP for Rochdale, said the effects of flooding are far-reaching. "Business has been fairly precarious at any rate, as it always is, but it's even more so now."

RN, 1 January

a certificate once this has been done.

- A builder will be appointed, or you can request a contractor of your choice, to carry out repair and reconstruction work.
- Your insurer or loss adjuster will discuss with you when it is safe to resume trading from your business premises.

We would always recommend that businesses shop around for the most affordable cover that suits their needs, and for those at high flood risk, it can be worth using a specialist broker to find insurance.

Margaret McCloskey

NFRN head of operations

Any retailer that is prone to 'flood situations' must plan to expect the unexpected and have a 'flood plan' for the future – retailers can sign up to flood warnings.

When floods are predicted, removal of stock and equipment and important documentation is a must. One retailer we are dealing with had his tobacco products under the counter and this was totally destroyed. On reflection, had he planned in advance, these could have been removed instead of now having to be replaced without any insurance cover.

With respect to flood proofing, retailers should try to have equipment in their store that can

weather the water conditions, for example chillers that can survive water damage.

We are working with 19 retailers at the moment. The NFRN charities fund has financially supported several retailers. Additionally, depending on the individuals' circumstances, we have been offering emergency loans.

We are also talking with retailers on rebuilding their businesses as part of our retail standards services, and we have been communicating with suppliers for retailers to ensure their accounts are suspended, direct debits are stalled and terminals requiring repair can happen – this allows the retailer to put his attention back into the labour side of the business.

Catherine Bell

Cockermouth Paper Shop in Cumbria, flooded for a second time in December after undergoing a £300,000 refit in 2009.

We opened up in temporary premises 150 yards away in 2009, because if you let your customers go they make alternative arrangements and don't come back. However, it was 18 weeks before the shop was up and running again.

I didn't know what I was doing so I got a surveyor at first, but if I had managed it myself from the

beginning I think it would have been quicker.

After you've done it once you know exactly what you're doing the second time, although you hope it never happens again. You do learn it's easier to keep the water out than deal with the consequences so we have a massive stack of sandbags at the back of the shop and we are in the throes of getting flood doors for the front and back. When we do the refit, some of the units are going back in with metal bottoms and some will be removable. Where water got in under the window this time, we are also going to waterproof. Anything that can be done on the prevention side is going to be done.

My advice would be try to deal directly with your loss adjuster and insurer because your insurance company can help you more than anybody else in my experience.

Sarah Vallins

Welfare manager, GroceryAid

The help we provide is to minimise the impact on personal life and finances, be it from the flooding or any other unexpected incident. For example, GroceryAid is currently helping a family who run a village shop and have been flooded three times in the last five years.

The retailer cares for her disabled child and her husband, who suffered from a nervous breakdown, while keeping the family business going.

They are on our Carers programme, receive quarterly payments and an annual respite break grant. When the shop was flooded again in December we immediately responded to their call for help.

Their insurance was taking care of the clear-up and restocking of the shop, but the lack of an income meant the family couldn't afford their residential electricity bill and were in arrears. GroceryAid cleared this bill for them, so they can now concentrate on getting the business up and running.

OPINION

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YOUR SAY How do you plan to combat the latest wave of price-cutting measures announced by the supermarkets?

Pradip Amin

Birds Supermarket, Portsmouth

When the supermarkets are cutting prices we have to follow suit. But I think the wholesalers are too slow. It takes a good three months before offers come through and then the independents have missed the boat. I've heard of some retailers even buying from supermarkets and 99p shops and selling on because it's cheaper than going to a wholesaler. They are often cheaper than our pricemarked goods. Independents are doing anything to keep afloat.

Bharti Chavda

Westminster Grocery, London

I try to compete with supermarket products by highlighting my pricemarked range. Own-branded supermarket products might be cheaper, but I think I'm cheaper on branded. I don't have a lot of space to promote goods, but



Independents are using their imagination to do battle with big supermarkets' price cuts

I know my customers are price-conscious. Next month I have a Sainsbury's Local opening 300 yards from me. I know they are not cheap so I am hoping customers will try them, but come back to me.

Mohammed Aslam

Day-Today, Wallyford, East Lothian
I opened this 3,000sq ft store

around two and a half years ago and my strategy was to go head-to-head with the supermarkets. I'm shifting volume at an average 10% margin. I leaflet every three weeks to around 5,000 homes and I have a rotation of offers. For example, I'm selling morning rolls at half the price of the supermarkets. It's working for me. I've got a weekly turnover of around £70,000.

YOUR STOCK AB InBev has made the decision to publish nutritional information, including calorie counts, on 80% of its alcohol labels. Do you think this will change shoppers' habits?

Paul Howes

Bargain Booze, Dunstable

I can't see that having an impact in this store. For example, Stella is an InBev product and customers are loyal to that brand. I think people who regularly buy alcohol think about taste and price first and calories and nutritional information comes way down the list. Sometimes if we have offers on, customers loyal to one brand may switch but generally, a Stella drinker is a Stella drinker.

Faisal Naseem

Party Time, Arbroath
InBev produce a lot of alcohol so that's a big operation, but I can't see it having an impact. The customers who regularly buy alcohol in my store aren't necessarily health-conscious. As for the occasional wine drinker, I



Brand loyalty will not be affected by increased nutritional information, retailers say

did stock a Weight Watchers wine when it came out around four years ago but I stopped stocking it because it didn't sell. However, that could be that Weight Watchers was too far ahead of an upcoming trend.

Arjan Mehr

Londis, Bracknell
I've done well in my store with a gluten-free range and rice cakes

which appeal to weight-conscious shoppers, but I think alcohol is one of those categories where that kind of labelling won't make an impact. I'm sceptical about it. In my store labelling tobacco and going dark hasn't affected tobacco sales at all. Labelling everything to that degree might satisfy the government or health lobbies, but I don't think it changes customer behaviour.

LETTERS

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Letters may be altered by the editor for reasons of clarity or of length

WHY ARE CARRIAGE CHARGES STILL INCREASING?

Why, in a time when oil prices are at an all-time low, are wholesalers still insisting on increasing carriage charges?

Despite being at a 10-year low, oil prices are constantly the excuse wholesalers give as to why this charge is increased year on year. My shop is in Glasgow and I am supplied by Menzies. I currently pay around £47 per week, but this is a 10% increase on last year, and the year before.

Retailers are being ripped off. This is nothing short of an abuse of monopolistic power. And, at a time when circulation is down it is extremely unfair.

Why isn't the NFRN doing more about this? Why isn't there a campaign? No other deliveries that I receive require a carriage charge.

The last 'investigation' into carriage charges was a white wash. The conclusion was that there was no abuse of power. I disagree. I have now contacted Anne McLaughlin, MP for Glasgow North East, and asked her to take this to the Competition Commission.

Retailers cannot be apathetic about this issue. We don't need more NFRN dialogue. We need to pull together and take action for the benefit of everyone.

Waqar Chaudry
Milton Stores,
Glasgow

Menzies did not respond to RN's request for a reply to this letter.



Every penny counts, so support is essential

I feel as though I'm turning into a scrooge, but every penny counts. Every company we deal with is trying to screw us into the ground. They all use the well versed catchphrase – "we are creating footfall so we can pay peanuts".

This industry is one of the worst for cutting terms, and expecting us to lie down and be grateful. This leads me to Christmas Day, which we all know is a non-publishing day. However, Smiths charge us a service charge under T&Cs, but for doing what?

How in the name of Dick Turpin can you justify charging for a non-existent service? £7 might not seem a lot but if you multiply that by, let's say, 10,000 customers that's £70,000 pure profit for a service that doesn't exist. They also charged me for 26 and 27 De-

cember and 1 and 2 January when I chose to close for a well-earned break.

Again, there was no service. You didn't pay my driver so where was the service? We get an insertion fee for weekend mags which in itself is 2% less than the minimum wage, then if you are unfortunate enough to send any back they take the insertion fee back even though we have spent a lifetime putting supplements in. Do the decent thing Smiths and return the Christmas Day tax.

Graham Doubleday
Newmarket,
Ashton-under-Lyme

A Smiths News spokesman said:
"In response to Mr Doubleday's letter - the delivery service charge is an annual cost payable in weekly instalments. This is aligned to the information provided to our customers about our DSC template which clearly states that 'no reductions from the stated charges will be made for non-delivery days'.
"In this light, we would also reassure our customers that when additional bank holidays have been announced

in England and Wales we have not levied a different rate on any such day and where customers are closed for extended periods we do suspend the delivery service charge, for Christmas this is seven days over the two week Christmas period. We would like to stress that we remain clear and open with retailers in our charging practices."

'Storm in a teacake' not about loyalty

It's a few years since I've written to you, but I have to strongly object to your 'Storm in a Teacake' article on the back page (15 January issue).

As a proud and loyal Scot, I must point out that I, and the majority of Scots, voted to stay British and the pathetic reaction to Tunnock's Teacakes is by a very small petty group who are in denial about the result of the referendum, so please do not refer to them as loyal.

I've just bought myself a new kilt with all the trimmings and look forward to wearing it with pride while handing out Tunnock's Teacakes to my English, Welsh and Irish friends at the next gathering of newsagents.




Rory O'Brien
Papersdirect,
Glasgow



We get an insertion fee for weekend mags which in itself is 2% less than the minimum wage
Graham Doubleday

Newmarket,
Ashton-under-Lyme

INDUSTRY PROFILE

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IAT



Want your promotions to appear alongside 70,000 other stores' best deals? With few consumers willing to download an app for every store they use, IAT's CEO and founder Matt Norbury believes his BigDL platform is the best way to communicate deals to customers

RETAIL NEWSAGENT Tell us about IAT

MATT NORBURY We're a technology company and for the past two or three years we've moved our focus to working with retail, looking particularly at how retailers can retain customers and offer effective promotions. A lot of this comes down to how well retailers can use smartphones.

RN Why smartphones?

MN About 80% of adults have a smartphone and on average people check them 221 times per day. Despite this, not one high street chain appeared in the Daily Mail's top 500 apps list last year.

RN Why is this?

MN As a consumer, why would you bother to download a convenience store's app or even a high street fashion chain's app? Only a very loyal subset would ever really want a Mark & Spencer app on their phone, for example.

RN What's your solution?

MN A big part of our business is BigDL – or Big Deal Local – a platform which helps retailers to communicate deals to customers. We're bringing together every deal on the high street from 70,000 participating stores. We have a device that sits at the checkout, consumers can redeem an offer immediately and retailers are rebated within a week by the supplier.

RN What benefit does this kind of technology have over other forms of marketing?

MN Most independent retailers continue to rely on leaflets but it's a struggle to work out which customers put them straight in the bin and which ones engage with the deal and walk into your store.

RN One of the big challenges for retailers this year will be paying the National Living Wage. Can this kind of technology help boost retailers' profitability?

MN If you could be totally targeted in who sees your offers, you don't need to just say you're cheap and cut your margins – which is not sustainable. Technology can help retailers achieve a really healthy balance of great promotions, but ultra-targeted,



We have a device that sits at the checkout, consumers redeem an offer immediately and retailers are rebated within a week by the supplier

measured and capped, so a retailer's liability and risk is completely controlled.

RN Which independent retailers are you working with currently?

MN We're working with Today's Group, as well as a number of other convenience chains, and that means their promotions sit alongside deals with Pizza Express, for example. We'll market the app to consumers later this year, but independents can get involved today and start using it. The appeal for consumers is based on the number of local businesses that are on the app.

RN How have you been working with independent retailers?

MN We've been working with a number of FMCG brands including Danone, Birds Eye, News UK and Molson Coors to help them encourage independents to stock their core ranges. We've been offering a reward scheme that gives retailers the chance to earn up to £1,000 worth of e-firm points per year.

RN What kind of effect have you seen where you've worked with these brands?

MN Across all the brands we've worked with we've seen an average increase in distribution of their core products of 18%. For brands like Birds Eye which already has a strong presence in stores, this increase is sizable.

** Company CV **

Company IAT

CEO & founder Matt Norbury

Profile Software developer and digital marketing firm set up 13 years ago when Mr Norbury was still at school. Most recently, the company has been working on retail projects for companies such as the Today's Group and Specsavers and has benefited from over £20m private investment.

Latest news IAT is offering independent retailers 50% off the price of joining its BigDL app. The £100 deal includes an iBeacon, PoS, store listing on the app and deal promotion all year on the app and website. Retailers can claim it by emailing hello@bigDL.com and quoting the code bigDL-RN-50%.

**

**

DAVID GILROY

GUEST
COLUMNIST

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The only way independent retailers can truly offset the cost of the new National Living Wage is to increase profit margins. And with price rises out of the question, it's up to wholesalers and suppliers to secure a sustainable future for the convenience market

Act now to increase margins

For years, most companies have awarded annual salary increases of between 1% and 2.5%, keeping overheads tight and perpetuating the low-pay culture. But astonishingly, the Conservative government has blown this apart. As well as its plan to raise the National Living Wage to £9.20 per hour by 2020, by 1 April this year, the minimum wage will be £7.20 per hour. This is a massive 70p and 10.7% increase on the current wage.

In my view, this is the right thing to do. This move will reward people properly for being in work, thereby making work more attractive and so reducing the cost of benefits to the state. It follows that this will increase the quality of the workforce and help drive up productivity. It should also encourage employers to recruit workers younger than 25, thus getting more of them into work.

But however many benefits these wage increases will bring, the grocery industry now faces the huge challenge of paying for them.

Aldi and Lidl have responded by declaring their intention to apply hourly rates higher than the planned minimums much sooner than the government legislation dictates. Of course, this is a competitive move designed to pile even more pressure on the beleaguered multiples.

For wholesalers, sales and profit margins are under real pressure. Increased costs and food deflation means all operators have to move more volume for the same or less sales value.

I expect them to adapt to the legislation by changing the age profile of their workforces, applying productivity initiatives, implementing recruitment embargoes and maybe introducing new technology to increase efficiency.

But what about independent retailers, whose options are much more limited?

Local stores already operate on



tight staff numbers, with little or no ability to reduce them. To a certain extent, they can use technology to improve productivity. Smart technology such as contactless payments could cut queue times, while apps to allow ordering via smartphones and auto-replenishment can save retailers time.

But in reality, retailers only have one serious solution – increasing their profit margins. And given that raising their selling prices significantly isn't an option, this means a reduction in the cost of goods instead.

Retailers need to put further pressure on wholesalers for lower cost prices. The growing availability of websites and apps that allow price comparison between wholesalers has made this easier, and with increasing transparency about pricing, retailers are becoming increasingly savvy about what a good deal looks like.

But the onus is also on suppliers to support retailers.

Wholesalers must do what they are supposed to do and extract lower cost prices and better terms from manufacturers, then recalibrate their pricing for retailers. If they don't, retailers will do it for them by buying from the multiples, cherry-picking, sourcing stock illegally or doing more grey

trading, and suppliers will end up selling less.

Many wholesalers facing competition in urban centres such as Birmingham, Manchester and London have already improved their service and pricing. More retailers want cash and carry prices for delivered goods too, and there is currently a big debate around that.

Manufacturers, in turn, need

to rework their pricing so there is more shared margin to pass on to wholesalers and retailers. I support pricemarked packs, for example, but the margins on them have to be decent. They have slowly decreased over time so retailers and wholesalers make less from them, with margins on cigarettes down from 6% or 7% to 5% or less being one of the worst examples.

The National Living Wage and minimum wage rise might be set to hit independent retailers harder than wholesalers or manufacturers, but this makes their challenge an industry-wide problem that cannot be ignored. If retailers can't make enough money to stay open, that affects wholesalers and manufacturers too. The trade must work together to allow independent retailers to earn sustainable gross margins.

David Gilroy is the managing director of Store Excel and a former director of Nurdin & Peacock and Bestway

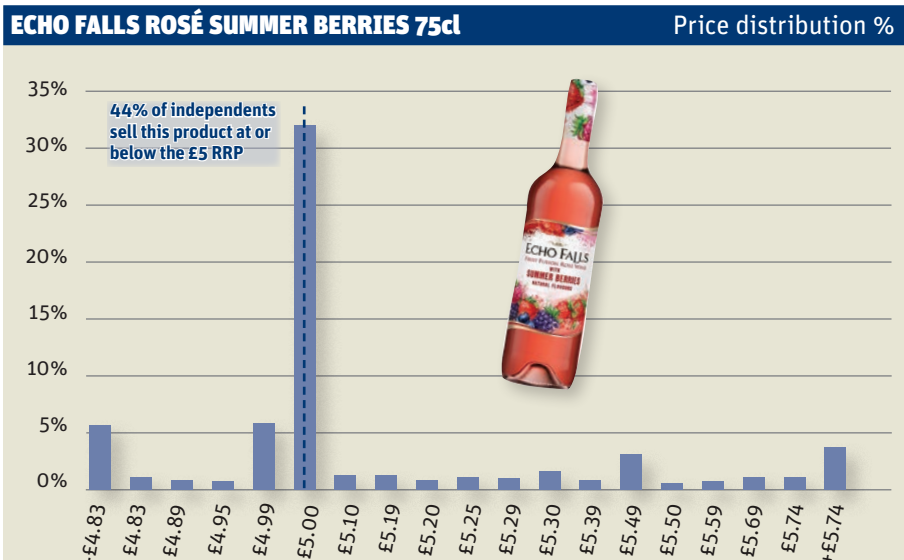
* Seven ways to increase your profit margins

- 1 Push hard for better prices from wholesalers.
- 2 Improve the profitability of your sales mix. Sell more non-food items such as selfie sticks, wood and wild bird feed.
- 3 Increase your OTC medicines range. This category is in good growth and offers big margins.
- 4 Focus on fresh food. Sales and margin opportunities are excellent, but stock must be managed effectively to control waste.
- 5 Stock some bigger packs such as 240 teabags, 85-wash soap powder and 3l soft drinks, which generate higher transaction values and more cash profit.
- 6 Don't duplicate range. Make sure every foot of shelf space counts.
- 7 Ask your wholesale team for advice – it's their job to help.

PRICEWATCH

ROSÉ WINE

ROSÉ WINE PRICES AROUND THE UK							
PRODUCT	RRP	AVERAGE	RETAILER 1	RETAILER 2	RETAILER 3	RETAILER 4	RETAILER 5
Echo Falls Rosé 75cl	£5.99	£4.93	–	£7.99 (White Zinfandel)	£5.49	£4.50 (2 for £7)	£6.99
Echo Falls Rosé Summer Berries 75cl	£5.00	£4.98	£4.29	–	£5.00	£4.00 (Offer)	£6.99
Blossom Hill Rosé 75cl	£6.49	£5.14	£7.09	–	£6.89 (Grenache)	£5.99	£7.99
Hardys Bin 161 Rosé 75cl	£5.00 (PM)	£5.05	£7.49 (PM)	£6.99 (Hardys Bin 545)	£5.00 (PM)	£5.00 (PM)	£8.00 (Hardys)
Jacob's Creek Shiraz Rosé 75cl	£8.49	£7.59	£7.71	–	£7.49	£7.99	£8.29
Kumala Rosé 2003 75cl	£6.99	£6.56	–	£11.25 (Zenith)	–	–	£6.79
Isla Negra Merlot Rosé 2003 75cl	£5.00 (PM)	£6.45	–	£10.49 (Offer £4.99)	£5.00	–	£6.99
Yellow Tail Rosé 75cl	£6.99 (Bestway)	£6.68	–	–	£8.99	£5.99	£7.99
Casillero Del Diablo Shiraz Rosé 75cl	£7.49 (Bestway)	£6.90	–	–	£7.99	–	£8.29
JP Chenet Merlot Rosé 75cl	£6.99	£6.89	£6.37	–	–	£5.99 (Offer)	£6.49
Makulu Pinotage Rosé 75cl	£5.00 (PM)	£6.30	–	–	£5.00	£5.00	–
I Heart Zinfandel Rosé 75cl	–	£5.73	£5.99 (I Heart Grenache)	£6.99	–	–	–



EPoS Data Facilities Management

Average selling prices and best-selling products rankings are sourced by EDFM Ltd from EPoS data from over 3,500 independent retailers throughout the UK. The prices given on this page are the prices at point of purchase.

RRPs are sourced from Booker and are correct at time of going to print.

Pricing strategies

RETAILER

1



NAME SAM CUPID
STORE Ormsgill Convenience Store
LOCATION Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria
SIZE 1,700sq ft
TYPE council estate

With the majority of the wines I sell I roughly stick to RRP, although I go slightly above where I can. I usually stick to the cheaper brands, such as The Tree Mills, The Straw Hat and Batany Creek, as well as what's being promoted by Best-one. I put fast-selling rosé bottles in the chiller, although I give most of my chiller space over to white wine, which is more popular. Echo Falls and Blossom Hill are my best-selling rosés, as these are brands that customers are familiar with and know provide good quality for a decent price.

RETAILER

2



NAME MAÏR EVANS
STORE Londis
LOCATION Bangor, Gwynedd
SIZE 3,000sq ft
TYPE forecourt

We go slightly above RRP, and try to buy promoted stock where we can, as wine sells better when it's on offer. Rosés share the chiller with white wine, which take up more space because they tend to sell faster. We also stock a few upmarket brands that we bought on promotion a while back, including a boxed Namaqua rosé and Oyster Bay. We're a forecourt store so our customers will often buy wine on impulse when they're filling up on the way back from work.

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RETAILER

3

NAME **IAN HANDLEY**

STORE Handley's Newsagents

LOCATION Northwich, Cheshire

SIZE 900sq ft

TYPE village

We set prices to achieve around a 20% margin, although I'm careful to not overcharge because we have a Spar round the corner. I've had my alcohol licence for just two and a half years, so I'm fairly new to this market and am learning as I go. The majority of my wines are under £8, and I stick to this market segment because we have a specialist wine shop nearby where people go to buy premium and speciality wines. I also sell Gallo and Barefoot rosé, which are very popular.

RETAILER

4

NAME **AMIT SONCHATLA**

STORE SNA Supermarket

LOCATION Witts Hill, Southampton

SIZE 2,000sq ft

TYPE main road

We stick to around £5 a bottle on wine because most of our customers are very price-sensitive. We also sell Booker's own brand rosé, Seven Tenths, at £5.50, as well as Copper Beach and Valencia, which we sell for £3.59 and £5.50 respectively. Hardys is particularly popular when it's priced at £5, and Echo Falls is our bestseller. We stock all white wine and some rosé in the chiller, and then the reds and rest of the rosé goes in a cabinet nearby.

RETAILER

5

NAME **JOHN HANNA**

STORE Smokemart

LOCATION Brighton

SIZE 550sq ft

TYPE high street

I usually stick around the RRP's on my invoices, and go slightly above for more popular wines. I try and buy as much wine as I can on discount, because a lot of the promotions run by wholesalers can give margins as low as 6%, whereas my target margin varies between 10-15%. My three best-selling rosé variants are Barefoot, Gallo, and Oxford Landing, which I sell for £7.25, £7.49 and £7.99 respectively. Although this market has been pretty static for a while now, I've noticed more of my customers have developed an understanding of wine, rather than just looking at its ABV content.

THE ENTREPRENEURS

The world's best business brains and what you can learn from them



RAAJA NEMANI

Route to the top

Raaja Nemani is the CEO and co-founder (along with Aaron Firestein) of Bucketfeet, an American online retailer specialising in artist-designed footwear. The company connects people through art by collaborating with emerging artists from around the world to design each shoe. Nemani and Firestein met while volunteering in Argentina. The two became friends, and upon Raaja's departure from Buenos Aires, Aaron (nicknamed "Bucket") sold him a pair of shoes on which he had drawn an artistic design. Raaja continued his year-long journey and realised the shoes were an easy conversation starter; saying that people from all over the world would comment on

their unique design and that several friendships were sparked from these initial conversations.

After Nemani had completed his travels, he sent Firestein a Facebook message asking if he would be willing to move to Chicago and create a business around the idea of artist-designed trainers. Firestein agreed, and the two moved to Chicago in 2010 and officially launched the business in 2011.

Key achievements

- Nemani helped steer a company that connects to a community of 14,000 artists from over 100 countries.
- Started a successful business through a Facebook message
- Went from Associate to business entrepreneur and CEO in 10 months.

Lessons for your store

- 1 Follow your true interests – even though Nemani has a successful career in finance, it was starting Bucketfeet that really motivated him.
- 2 Taking breaks makes you more productive – Nemani went travelling for a year to clear his head.
- 3 Make the first move – it was Nemani who sent Firestein a Facebook message and proposed the launch of Bucketfeet.



RETAILER PROFILE



Big sales from Lidl ideas

York retailer Mike Nicholls has been working closely with Costcutter to take on the discounters at their own game. **Steven Lambert** reports

What's the best way to compete against the rise of the discounters? Play them at their own game, says York retailer Mike Nicholls.

Since moving away from the toys and stationery industry to take over his father's convenience store in Dringhouses, York, Mike has made it his mission to drive more footfall and sales to the business.

However, this has been easier said than done in recent times with growing competition from supermarkets and a Lidl opening up nearby.

To combat this, Mike has been working closely with his symbol group, Costcutter, who convinced him to turn his Mace store into what he calls a "super Costcutter", which is now being used as a testbed to trial new incentives from the company.

"I could see the opportunity to do something different. It's part of the reason we invested £43,000 in a refit and reopened as a Costcutter in November. We're trying out a totally different outfit with the store, and we're doing a lot of new things that Costcutter has never tried before."

These new incentives include the introduction of a dedicated international food section in the business, something that Mike says has been directly influenced by shoppers' changing attitudes to international food sold in Aldi and Lidl.

"Aldi and Lidl bought their own food over to the UK and although it took a while

to convince people, once they tried it they kept coming back. Their products have a stronger taste and, now that more people are used to that, they're looking for these kind of products elsewhere."

Mike says he is now working with a company called Monolith, an international food importer who supplies him with products from a number of countries, including Germany, Poland and Ukraine.

"We get products such as crisps, cakes and confectionery, all impulse lines, which we put on a one metre bay," he says.

"We've done this so we can add incremental sales and have a range that we can use to compete against Aldi and Lidl."

"Even though we don't have many Polish or German shoppers nearby, people have been picking up the products and it has been very successful so far."

Other new additions to the store include an on-site bakery, allowing Mike and his staff to serve freshly baked bread and baguettes to customers on a daily basis, while the fresh fruit and veg section has also been extended to a two metre bay housing pre-packaged goods from Costcutter's Independent own label range.

"These are areas that Aldi and Lidl are trying to move into so we want to improve our offering," says Mike.

"We've also changed the store around and moved the front counter, which has given us more space, and now we've gone from stocking 1,500 lines to 2,500 lines."



I regularly read RN and I find it interesting to read up about other retailers in profiles. It's good to look at other stores and it does give us ideas on how we can improve"

MIKE NICHOLLS



Mike Nicholls' store serves up freshly-baked bread and cakes, fresh fruit and veg alongside local beers and ales



"We've changed the store around and moved the front counter, which has given us more space, and now we've gone from stocking 1,500 lines to 2,500 lines"

With majority of his trade coming from regular shoppers, Mike says he wants to build stronger ties with the local community. He says he will do this by using Costcutter's new Local Pride charity scheme to help raise money for worthy local causes.

"If we have someone who wants to do a charity drive, we will invite them to use the store and we will make up graphics and posters to support them and get their message out," says Mike.

He adds he is now looking into the possibility of launching an in-store loyalty scheme to encourage more shoppers to visit the store regularly.

"We're looking to offer a card that will give one point for every £1 spent. We'd look to link this up with our Facebook page to see if we can do some exclusive deals for people who get involved with the loyalty scheme."

With total sales up 15% since opening his revamped store two months ago, Mike says learning from the discounters and adapting their plans to suit his business has paid off.

He says: "If you have a shop near an Aldi or a Lidl you need to change the way you do things. Find out what the community wants, give people a good offering and choice and find suppliers that will give you a good range."

VISIT MY SHOP

Costcutter

13-15 Wains Grove
Dringhouses
York
YO24 2TU



Want to see more of Mike's store? Go to betterretailing.com/mike-nicholls

MY NEIGHBOURHOOD





Bintesh Amin is planning to take his new store from its current £1,000 turnover per week to £15,000 within just three years? How? As he tells **Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski**, by looking at his community and his community and analysing where and how he can meet its needs

Opportunities on the doorstep



Bintesh Amin has a new store, a 1,000sq ft convenience store in the heart of Canterbury. Its reputation when he arrived was of a store that regularly sold cigarettes and alcohol to underage customers.

"I found out about this store because my father-in-law was in a cash and carry and the owner asked if he wanted to buy it," he explains. "We put it in a price after doing some numbers on it and offered them a price which they didn't accept. Eventually it got to the point where they were about to be prosecuted and they really had to sell up so we put in an approved deal and they accepted."

This, therefore, is a project that means building a lot of relationships afresh, including negotiating with the local chief of police to grant an alcohol licence to a site that had caused her force so much grief over the years.

But how do you start again, launch a wholly-improved business and ensure what you're offering

is right for the customers in your area? How do you build a store which works with, and finds a niche next to, a host of existing businesses large and small? Regular readers of his monthly column will know that this a question Bintesh has been wrestling with ever since he opened the store, now operating under the independent "Binnys" brand name.

Last week, RN took a trip with this award-winning retailer to look around his new store's catchment area and discuss the opportunities and challenges that he has found. It was an exercise which highlighted just how valuable it can be for retailers of all kinds to take a moment and think about where and how they operate.

His plans are to take the currently £1,000 turnover of the store and by year three increase this to £15,000. On the next two pages he highlights 14 opportunities to profit he's found that will help him reach this huge growth forecast. ➤➤

MY NEIGHBOURHOOD

Waitrose

Waitrose is my biggest footfall driver. I went and introduced myself to the store manager and we've both worked together to help stop underage smokers using this area to get their cigarettes. If I see anyone go in to Waitrose who I know is underage I'll let them know and they've said they will do the same. A site opposite a supermarket

wouldn't usually interest me, but this is a good catchment area. There are things that Waitrose doesn't do that I think we could do really well. I know that customers get tired of waiting for their food to go, too, so even where we do the same things, if I could offer a quicker service then I think it would be very popular with their customers.

Fit4Less

There is a gym above the Chinese restaurant next door and I've spoken to some of their members who use our shop. They've said that the price of energy drinks and protein products is very high in there so I'm looking at ways we can promote our range of these products, which we sell at considerably cheaper prices.



Cafe de China

I'm looking at wholesaling for this nearby Chinese restaurant. I've spoken to them about their wines and their prices. I'm going to see if I can beat what they're paying or do a special deal with them. We've already done some wholesaling in our other store, at Blean, but this restaurant is our neighbour so it would be silly not to get there first with them.

The American University

A lot of students from America study here so I definitely want to work with them. I'm currently trying to get to know a few of the students directly before approaching the university itself. I've got a plan to stock American confectionery in the store and if a student comes in just for that then that's basket spend, but they may well tell their friends and could buy other things from us too.



It's important to have good relationships because I want to be here for the long term

The Odeon

Being across the road from the Odeon is really good for us because we get a lot of customers coming in for their sweets or for a soft drink. Our prices are a lot cheaper than those charged inside the cinema.



Local houses

I did a walk around a few weeks ago and there's a lot of houses in the area which could take our newspaper delivery service. I'm trying to make sure that residents know about our HND as well as the deals we do and the alcohol range we're offering.



Travelodge

This is one of the businesses I'd really like to start delivering newspapers to. We haven't been doing HND for very long but I think there's an opportunity to supply papers to a number of hotels and shops in the area.

Candy Cafe

This cafe does baguettes and sandwiches and it's in a great location. It's £5 in the morning for a baguette and a coffee, but they open at 8.30am which is too late for a lot of the trade. This is the sort of market I'll be going for. It's quite an old-looking business and the couple who own it look like they want to retire soon. I'd like to take it over, leave it as a cafe but put Binny's branding on it and drive shoppers between the two businesses.





Boots

The guys who work at Boots have really helped me out. They've helped move stuff around in the store and even gave me a hand when we were clearing the stock out of the old shop. It's important to have good relationships because I want to be here for the long term.

Student accommodation

There's a lot of building going on in the area and a number of student accommodation blocks are being built very near to the shop. This will be great for the store as we can have a relatively captive customer base. Over the next few years all this work will have a big effect on the area and there'll be a lot more young people living very close to the shop.

Canterbury College

The college is mainly for further education so there's people doing A-levels and other qualifications there. It's being redeveloped at the moment so they've shut this entrance. When it gets to September they will reopen it and students will naturally come past our store on the way to town or to the buses. This should be really good for food to go sales so I want to make sure I've got the right range ready for them.

BT Office

I get a lot of customers coming from here in the mornings - I've started recognising them and developing a rapport with them. My idea is to deliver lunches to them at a set time where we hand out a menu and they can order a sandwich from us. This is the kind of thing I want to do with a range of businesses locally.



My idea is to deliver lunches to them at a set time

Canterbury Christchurch University

The marketing department of the university saw my videos online and really liked them so I'm going to go in and talk to them about how we can work together. When term starts in September and I

want to use things like Freshers' week to make sure that new students know about our store. I think a lot of our success is going to be about word of mouth, but working with the university will definitely help too.



Students will naturally come past our store on the way to town or to the buses



Pizza Hut

The guy who owns this franchise is really nice and, at £3.99 for a pizza and a drink, he's got a deal that I'm not sure I could compete with - although once we've got our food to go operation up and running I'll still try offering pizzas and see whether or not they sell. I've already spoken to the owner about working together on some kind of linked discount, maybe where people who spend with us get £1 off a pizza.

What opportunities are there in your neighbourhood?

Take a leaf out of Bintesh's book and look again at where you might be able to grow your business by better catering for the specific needs of your community. The following questions will help you on your way...

Do I know the people who run businesses locally?

From the manager of the large Waitrose opposite his store to a Pizza Hut franchisee owner a few hundred metres away, Bintesh makes it his business to know the people behind local businesses - useful whether it's to solve problems like underage sales or in organising bespoke promotions.

What developments are planned in my area?

The earlier you know about a new office block or student accommodation building planned nearby the more time you'll have to develop the key areas of your store that will cater to these new customers' needs. Bintesh is expanding his world beers, specialist confectionery and food to go categories in time for a new influx of students next year.

Am I connected with businesses and institutions online?

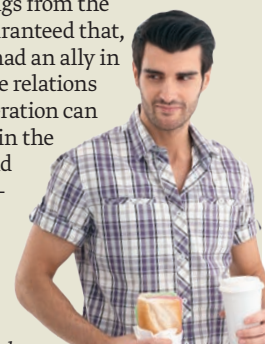
This is a great way to stand out in your area. Bintesh has been using Twitter and Facebook to engage with his local community and this was picked up by the marketing team at Canterbury Christchurch University who now want to arrange a meeting on how they can work together in September.

How can I help other businesses?

It's not a one-way street. When staff at Boots helped Bintesh to clear old stock and furnishings from the store they guaranteed that, in him, they had an ally in the area. These relations built on cooperation can be invaluable in the good times and the more challenging. ●



Let us know what ideas you have at betterretailing.com



Are you taking advantage of every opportunity?

DATE NIGHT IN



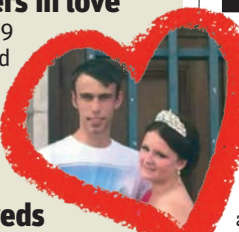
With couples willing to spend as much as £120 on a special night in, offering everything they need can be extremely lucrative. **Nadia Alexandrou** finds out more

Love your customers

THE COUPLES

The teenagers in love

Liam Minshull, 19 and his girlfriend Nikita, 16, from Cheshire have been together for over a year.



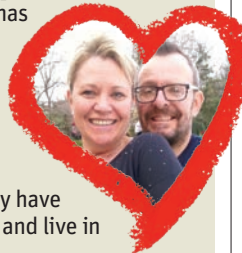
The newlyweds

Islington residents Marta Dziok-Kaczyfska and her husband Matt have been together 10 years and married last August. They both turn 29 this year.



The busy parents

Mike Baillie has been with Thea for nearly 25 years and married for 16 years this summer. They have two children and live in Cambridge.



Half of us are now eating out less and with the credit card bills and cold weather which January perennially heralds, it's a fact that is particularly true at the beginning of the year. The question for retailers, however, is whether they're reaping the benefit of this trend.

With Valentine's Day just a few weeks away suppliers to recommend retailers to focus on date nights at home in order to get shoppers to spend on the core 'night in' categories. But what do real couples really want for a date night from their local shop and how do suppliers advise you cater for them? Plus, what do brilliant retailers do to attract romantically-minded customers? RN decided to find out.

Can you describe your ideal Valentine's Day night in?

Liam Minshull I would prepare a candle-lit dinner – probably attempting a roast dinner. We would then cuddle up on the sofa and watch a film, most likely a romantic comedy.

Marta Dziok-Kaczyfska We go out a lot so a meal at home cooked from



The most important things are the meal ingredients, the card, roses, and the gift

Flowers offer great margins and boost basket spend



scratch would be really special. I would bake a cake, and at some point Netflix would be involved, accompanied by some good quality chocolate and wine.

Mike Baillie Thea would have a long bath before dinner while I set up the music, set the table and put the flowers I bought her in a vase. After swapping cards and small gifts, we'd cook together, eat and watch a film.

What would you want to be able to buy to cook a romantic meal?

Liam Minshull Everything that goes into a roast dinner – pork, potatoes, gravy, carrots, peas, and Yorkshire puddings.

Marta Dziok-Kaczyfska I'd want to be able to get special ingredients such as asparagus and organic meat. If I was baking I would need eggs, butter, cooking chocolate, and mascarpone – for a cheesecake.

Mike Baillie Something simple and quick to make from our local store, with fresh vegetables and meat. >>

#FREETHEJOY

Cadbury

NEW

START TAKING A
BIGGER BITE
OF CAKE SALES*



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Source: Sub sector of Nibbles and Bites Cake now worth £79.5M +10 yoy Nielsen 20th July 2015 MAT.

DATE NIGHT IN

“

Creating a dedicated night in display will make sure your customers see everything you have to offer



What snacks and drinks would you want to find in a local shop?

Liam Minshull I'd want to buy a bottle of wine, beer and a box of chocolates.

Marta Dziok-Kaczyfska It would be good to have good quality wine and chocolates available – perhaps some cheese with grapes and nuts too.

Mike Baillie Red and white wine is a must and a bottle of bubbly – prosecco at least but preferably champagne – would be great too.

What else would you buy?

Liam Minshull A bouquet of roses, a gift (bottle of perfume or a teddy bear) some candles and a selection of rom-coms on DVDs.

Marta Dziok-Kaczyfska A card and a gift (books or clothes). Also something to decorate the table would be nice – fake petals for example.

Mike Baillie A card, scented candles and a movie if Sky Movies doesn't do the trick.

If you had to set yourself a budget for this night, how much would it be?

Liam Minshull I would budget no more than £120. The most important things are the meal ingredients, the card, roses, and the gift.

Marta Dziok-Kaczyfska Around £50 probably. I would prioritise getting top quality wine and chocolates.

Mike Baillie Around £50, but the priority would be on decent ingredients for the meal. We would prefer to buy a very decent bottle of Cava or similar than cheap champagne.

RETAILER TIPS

How to get them to buy from your store

So how do you attract discerning shoppers like these and get them to spend their (rather large) night in budgets with you? Two great retailers give their advice.

Trudy Davies

Woosnam & Davies in Llanidloes, Powys



Create a window display For Valentine's Day I create a red and white-themed window display with gifts, cards, candles and chocolate, and decorate it with cut-out hearts and stickers.

Offer a free prize-draw People shopping for Valentine's Day can enter their date into a free prize draw for a bespoke hamper of chocolates from various suppliers.

Upsell scratchcards and lottery tickets My staff and I suggest to those buying Valentine's Day cards that they buy a lottery ticket or scratchcard to put inside. A lot of people take us up on it.

Dean Holborn

Holborn's, Redhill, Surrey



Create a display of floral gifts

We get great margins from our flowers – up to 60% – and around Valentine's Day we advertise them with a display of tulips and roses to drive sales.

Offer a multibuy promotion

Every year Palmer & Harvey runs different romantic-themed multibuy promotions. This year it's a bottle of 'I Heart' prosecco and a 135g box of Thorntons for £10.

Use props to add the 'wow' factor

I use helium balloons and flowers to create a good atmosphere in my store and put a display at the entrance to catch the attention of passers-by. ●

MERCHANDISING AND RANGING KEY AREAS TO CONSIDER

Here are the key areas to consider when merchandising and ranging, and how you can use them to cater to the likes of Marta, Liam and Mike.

Display

From the basics such as chocolate and wine to the extras such as candles, cards, teddies, and even rose petals shoppers like Marta, Mike and Liam don't want to have to search in every corner of your store to find what they want. Indeed, only 13% of people visit all aisles in convenience stores, according to Mondelez, so creating themed-displays that hold everything a customer needs is crucial. "Creating a dedicated night in display will make sure your customers see everything you have to offer," says Susan Nash, trade communications manager at Mondelez.

Sharing bags

Like so many couples, the three RN spoke to organise their evening with enough time for their favourite film or TV show – often with a bag of chocolate, sweets or snacks. Suppliers are reflecting this with a steady flow of products being made available in appropriate formats. "Sharing bags such as our recently-launched Skittle

Tropical pouches are great for couples looking to enjoy and share a sweet treat during a night in," says Tony Lorman, Wrigley European confections business unit director. Premier Foods, meanwhile, brought Cadbury Amaze Bites to convenience this month with an RRP of £1.99.

Premium alcohol

Two of our couples, Marta and Mike, prefer to splash out on better-quality alcohol on a special occasion. According to Diageo, the rise of premium is something that can be seen in the wider market thanks, in part, to consumer confidence being at a nine-year high. "Premium spirits, such as Johnnie Walker and Tanqueray London Dry Gin, are enjoying growth in the off-trade," says Paul Isherwood, head of off-trade category development at Diageo. Mr Isherwood encourages retailers to use these bottles in 'night in' displays to encourage people to spend a little extra.



Sharing formats are perfect for couples

Does your display have the wow factor?



“Pricewatch is the first page I turn to in RN, it makes me money every week!”



Glyn Taylor,
newsagent,
Co Durham

Shahid Razzaq,
convenience
store owner,
Glasgow



Are you charging the right price?

RN is filled with advice from more than 500 retailers on product selection and pricing to help you make the biggest margins and get the best wholesale deals.

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or order online at www.newtrade.co.uk



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www.newtrade.co.uk



PREVIEW



Detox opportunity

Coca-Cola Enterprises is targeting shoppers on a post-Christmas detox with an outdoor marketing campaign for Glaceau Smartwater.

RRP 57p – 89p

Outers 12 – 24

Contact 08457 227222



Pot Noodle addition

Pot Noodle is adding a Chinese Chow Mein flavour to its range of King Pots this month.

RRP £1.36

Outers 12

Contact 01293 648 000



Cocktail influence

Danone Waters has launched cocktail-inspired pack designs on bottles of Evian for a limited period.

RRP not given

Outers not given

Contact 0208 7995888



Marshmallows relaunch

Tangerine Confectionery is relaunching its Henry Goode liquorice and Princess MalloWS marshmallows with improved recipes and revamped pack designs.

RRP 89p – £1.39

Outers not given

Contact 01253 603 613



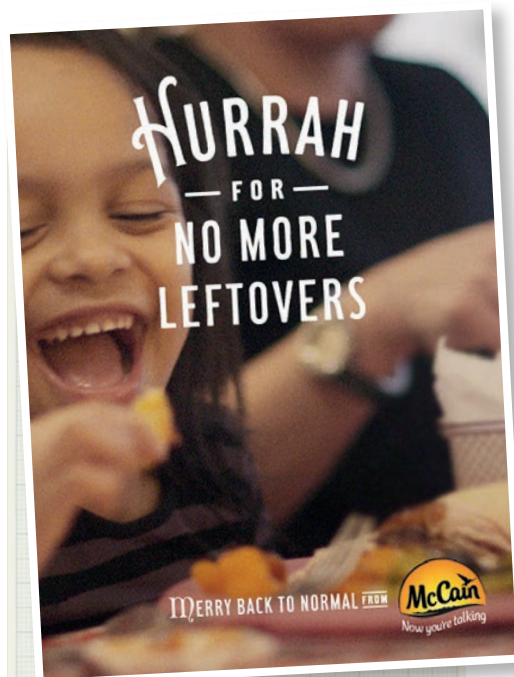
McCoy's updated

KP Snacks has relaunched McCoy's with a new recipe promising a better texture and stronger flavours.

RRP 79p

Outers 30

Contact 01207 291910



McCain makes merry

McCain has launched its 'Merry Back To Normal' campaign showing families getting into their new year mealtime routines.

RRP various

Outers various

Contact 0800 146 573



Different tastes

Heinz is updating its stage 3 baby food pouches with a wider spout and three new flavours, including Sweet & Sour Chicken and Spaghetti Bolognese.

RRP £1.79

Outers various

Contact 020 8573 7757



Amaze-ing cakes

Premier Foods is widening the appeal of its Cadbury cakes range with the launch of Cadbury Amaze Bites in the convenience sector this month.

RRP £1.99

Outers not given

Contact 01727 815850



Responsibility drive

Heineken has launched its latest responsible drinking campaign with TV and cinema ads running under the tagline "Moderate Drinkers Wanted".

RRP various

Outers various

Contact 0845 301 0330



Time to get Tropical

Wrigley is expanding its Skittles range with a new Tropical flavour available in 55g, 125g and 174g packs.

RRP 49p - £1.28

Outers various

Contact 01752 752094



Love for bread

Retailers are being encouraged to take on Cuisine de France's Mini L'Amour heart-shaped loaves to pick up extra Valentine's Day sales.

RRP £1.50

Outers 60

Contact 0844 499 3344



Big Soup sponsorship

Heinz is backing its Big Soup range with sponsorship of the Colin Murray and Friends show on TalkSport radio.

RRP £1.19 - £1.79

Outers 6 - 12

Contact 020 8573 7757

THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES

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Next big thing

JOIN THE DOTS TO MAKE SALES FROM NEW CRAZE

Adult colouring seems to get more popular every week, with new variations on the theme to keep fans occupied and entertained

ULTIMATE DOT 2 DOT is the new title from Anthem Publishing aimed at capturing the 'next big thing' in adult colouring. Dot-to-dot is considered to be the biggest emerging sub-category. This one-shot will contain 24 puzzles printed on single sided, A4 pages, saddle stitched and priced at £2.99. It contains 100% original artwork features including cats, flowers, dinosaurs and buildings. The puzzles are adult-oriented ranging from 350 to 600 dots per page. They take 15-20 minutes each, promising six to eight hours of entertainment.



ULTIMATE DOT 2 DOT
On sale 26 January
Frequency one shot
Price £2.99
Distributor
Marketforce
Display with
Colouring Heaven,
Colouring Heaven
Special

Round up



HELENA DRAKAKIS
Magazines
reporter

THINKING LATERALLY

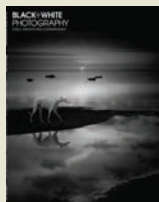
In recent weeks we've reported on an increasing trend in cross-category marketing. In the newspaper category this has already started, with The Sun positioning items like chocolate bars and bottled water together with its daily news offering. The aim is to tie newspaper sales to time-of-day sales, for example breakfast missions or mid-morning snack trips.

Like any neat idea, there are lessons to be learned throughout the trade. In magazines there are some early pioneers of the move towards 'brand experience' rather than simply selling a magazine. Men's Health, for example, has created its own range of vitamin supplements called the Men's Health Lab, while Cosmopolitan launched its own fragrance through the Boots chain last year.

The relevance of this to the newsagent and convenience sector might not be obvious, but it points towards a more sophisticated way of nudging consumers towards an extra sale. Larger convenience stores are already cross-marketing, for example, bottles of wine with ready meals. I spoke to one retailer before Christmas who had positioned her seasonal food magazine titles on a special stand featuring cake-making ingredients and equipment and traditional Christmas fare. A colleague also told me that a while back KitKat experimented with chocolate bar hook-over display units so customers related the idea of the famous chocolate bar's slogan "Have a Break, Have a KitKat" with time out to read a newspaper or magazine.

However cross-marketing applies to your store, thinking laterally could be the key to extra sales.

Take a Break's **PUZZLE MAGAZINES**
THE BEST SELLERS THROUGH INDEPENDENTS



BLACK+WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

Black+White Photography is the magazine dedicated to monochrome photographers. The February issue includes a Photography Holidays & Courses guide, offering a wide range of workshops for people who want to develop their photography skills in the UK and abroad, as well as expert advice on a variety of subjects, including portrait photography. Featured in this issue is Pedro Abascal's powerful documentation of his homeland Cuba.



On sale 21 January
Frequency monthly
Price £4.75
Distributor Seymour
Display with Outdoor Photography, Amateur Photography



On sale 16 January
Frequency one-shot
Price £4.99
Distributor Comag
Display with music collectables



BOWIE STARMAN

This special souvenir magazine is dedicated to the life of the late David Bowie. From Ziggy Stardust to the Thin White Duke, there has never been a performer as ahead of his time as Bowie. This 84-page special publication pays tribute to his eclectic career – from the critically acclaimed release of his latest album Blackstar to the story of his early years – using the Daily Mirror's archive.



On sale 28 January
Frequency monthly
Price £3.95
Distributor Frontline
Display with science and history titles



WONDERPEDIA

February's issue of Wonderpedia features a round-up of 2016's "Worst Case Scenarios", examining what would happen if Islamic State got the upper hand in the Middle East, the consequences of a Donald Trump victory in the US elections and envisaging the catastrophic outcome if Putin declared war on NATO. There is also the Essex whaleboat, an article on journeying across Siberia and 11 pages of awards-nominated nature photography.



On sale 20 January
Frequency weekly
Price £2.20
Distributor Frontline
Display with Bike, Performance Bike, Ride



MOTOR CYCLE NEWS

Motor Cycle News is the UK's top selling motorcycling magazine. This issue brings the best of biking. Publishers boast that the title is the biggest motorcycle media brand in the world and has been at the heart of motorcycling since its launch more than 60 years ago.



On sale 27 January
Frequency monthly
Price £4.30
Distributor Frontline
Display with Motorcycle News, Performance Bike, Ride



BIKE

This issue of Bike magazine has a brand new look and inside is crammed with more content focused on what the brand encompasses – more bikes, more tests and more adventure. This 140-page issue also contains a free 2016 events guide supplement, 32-pages of the best events near and far to inspire readers' biking summers.



Bestsellers Sport

Title	On sale date	In stock
1 Angling Times	26.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Angler's Mail	26.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Countryman's Weekly	27.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 British Homing World	22.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Match of the Day	09.02	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Shooting Times & Country	03.02	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Match	26.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Boxing News	21.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Cycling	16.02	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Kick	10.02	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Carp Talk	26.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Four Four Two	03.02	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Sporting Gun	02.02	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 Improve Your Coarse Fishing	16.02	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Sea Angler	11.02	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 Rugby Leaguer & League Express	25.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 Carpworld	05.02	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 Match Fishing	29.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 Advanced Pole Fishing	09.02	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 Crafty Carper	17.02	<input type="checkbox"/>

Data from independent stores supplied by

SmithsNews

Sticker Collection

BRAND NEW!

Starter Pack: £2.99 RRP

Sticker Packet: 50p RRP

On Sale Soon!

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THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



CAMPERVAN

Campervan is a magazine for lifestyle-conscious people between the ages of 30 and 50 with an interest in outdoor living, style and fun. It covers all models of campervan, ranging from modern vehicles to classic campers. All brands of camper will be featured, in both professionally-converted and self-build form.



On sale 21 January
Frequency quarterly
Price £4.99
Distributor Warners Group Distribution
Display with Out and About, Practical Motorhome



BUILD IT

This bumper issue of Build It includes two free tickets to any Build It live show worth £24, plus a free Beginners Guide to Self Build book. There's also tips on making sense of builders' quotes and a re-evaluation of solar panels alongside smart ideas for eco-living. There's also an article on how to create a characterful oak home, giving readers the tools to transform a 1960s box into a light-filled home.



On sale 27 January
Frequency monthly
Price £4.35
Distributor Seymour
Display with Homebuilding & Renovating

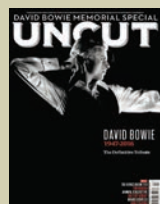


REAL HOMES

Building on Real Homes' expertise with big renovations, the March 2016 issue will debut a new design and masthead. This new package includes more of what its publisher says its affluent and dedicated readers want; more real case studies, more expert help and advice and more inspiring design ideas. Plus there's a free 68-page magazine bag for anyone planning to transform their home.



On sale 28 January
Frequency monthly
Price £3.70
Distributor Marketforce
Display with Ideal Home, House Beautiful



UNCUT: DAVID MEMORIAL SPECIAL

The March issue of Uncut is a commemorative edition dedicated to David Bowie. This definitive tribute includes a 5,000 word obituary from acclaimed author and Uncut contributor David Cavanagh, plus touching interviews with some of Bowie's key collaborators from the past 45 years. The cover features an iconic image of Bowie as 'The Archer'.



On sale 21 January
Frequency monthly
Price £4.99
Distributor Marketforce
Display with Mojo, Q, Classic Rock



UNCUT: ULTIMATE MUSIC GUIDE

To honour David Bowie's legacy, Uncut is reprinting its deluxe edition of the Ultimate Music Guide dedicated to the rock legend, which was one of the best-selling editions from 2015. The cover features an iconic image of Bowie from the peak of his career. Unearthed from the NME, Melody Maker and Uncut archives, there are classic interviews with Bowie from throughout his career, along with in-depth reviews of all 26 albums.



On sale 21 January
Frequency monthly
Price £9.99
Distributor Marketforce
Display with Uncut, Mojo, Q

Retail viewpoint Jeremy Leslie

Owner, Magculture,
St John Street,
London



THE DEATH OF PRINT? NOT IN MY SHOP...

I have banned the words "death of print" when I give talks and in my new shop. I first wrote about what a crazy notion that was back in 2001. It's one of the reasons 15 years later, I've opened Magculture.

I've had a website with the same name celebrating magazines for 10 years. It's early days for the physical shop. We've been open for three weeks.

At Magculture, staff are magazine specialists. The focus is quality mainstream and independent magazines and we're based in what you'd call the design and creative centre of London, in and around the Clerkenwell area.

Most of our 500 titles are priced between £8-£15 and the shop is a space for readers to spend time in. Its presentation, with almost all the titles front facing, is very deliberate.

I didn't want to look like a traditional newsagent. I wanted a space that matched the titles - for the time and work that's gone into producing them, they deserve respect.

As I see it, publishers have addressed declining circulation and the rise of digital by cutting costs and corners, and so print dying becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

In fact, Magculture the shop wouldn't exist without the website. That platform has been invaluable in marketing to an audience, but people also want to spend 30 or 40 minutes browsing in store. Sometimes they don't buy; sometimes they spend £80. The two platforms co-exist.

I completely understand why newsagents are turning away from print and concentrating on higher-margin products.

But I wouldn't be doing this if I didn't believe magazines had a profitable and sustainable future.

COMING UP IN NEXT WEEK'S RETAIL NEWSAGENT



DAVID WORSFOLD ON CREATING A WALK-IN TOBACCO HUMIDOR FOR HIS STORE

Plus, are you using digital technology to keep your business safe? And RN speaks to one parent to find out what baby care and pre-school range you need to offer



Partworks

Title	No	Pts	£
DeAgostini			
Build the Millennium Falcon	55	100	8.99
Cake Decorating	201	210	2.99
Cake Decorating Relaunch	150	165	2.99
Dinosaurs & Friends	48	60	5.99
Official Star Wars Factfile	104	120	2.99
Zippo Collection	10	60	19.99

Eaglemoss

3D Create & Print	53	90	6.99
Batman Automobilia	80	80	10.99
Build A Solar System	22	104	6.99
DC Comics Graphic Novel	12	60	9.99
Disney Cakes & Sweets	124	120	4.50
Doctor Who Figurines	62	70	7.99
Marvel Chess Collection	56	64	8.99
Marvel Fact Files	149	150	3.50
Military Watches	51	80	9.99
Star Trek Off. Starships Coll.	64	70	10.99

Hachette

Art of Crochet	21	120	2.99
Art of Knitting	52	90	2.99
Art Therapy	44	100	2.99
Black Pearl	106	120	5.99
Build the Mallard	74	130	7.99
Build the U96	73	150	5.99
Classic Pocketwatches	90	80	8.99
Dr Who Complete History	5	80	9.99
Judge Dredd Mega Collection	27	80	9.99
Marvel's Mightiest Heroes	55	60	9.99
My 3D Globe	55	100	5.99
Your Model Railway Village	113	120	8.99

RBA Collectables

Amazing Dinosaur Discovery	47	80	5.99
My Zoo Animals	20	60	5.99
Precious Rocks, Gems & Minerals	52	100	5.99
Real Life Bugs & Insects	70	85	5.99

Collectables

DeAgostini

Magiki Kittens	2.50
Geckos & Co	1.99

Magic Box

Zomlings Series 4	0.50
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Collectables

Topps



Disney Frozen Friendship Activity Cards
Starter **£4.99**
Cards **£1.00**



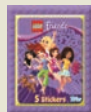
Minions
Starter **£4.99**
Cards **£1.00**



Journey to Star Wars: The Force Awakens
Starter **£4.99**
Stickers **£1.00**



Rugby Attax
Starter **£4.99**
Cards **£1.00**



Lego Friends
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



Shopkins
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



Lego Ninjago
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



Star Wars Force Attax
Starter **£4.99**
Cards **£1.00**



Star Wars Stickers
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



Match Attax 2015/16
Starter **£3.99**
Cards **£1.00**



UEFA Champions League Official Sticker Collection
Starter **£2.00**
Stickers **£0.50**



Merlin Official Premier League Sticker Collection
Starter **£2.50**
Cards **£0.50**

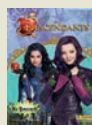


WWE Slam Attax Then, Now, Forever
Starter **£4.99**
Cards **£1.00**



Minions
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**

Panini



Descendants
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



Inside Out
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



Disney Frozen My Sister, My Hero
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



Northern Ireland Sticker Collection
Album **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



Disney Princess Fabulous Talents
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



Peppa Pig
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



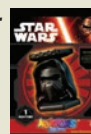
Dragons
Starter **£2.99**
Cards **£0.50**



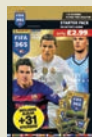
Road to UEFA Euro 2016
Starter **£4.99**
Cards **£1.00**



England Official Sticker Collection
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



Star Wars Abatons
Starter **£7.99**
Cards **£1.00**



Fifa 365
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



The Good Dinosaur
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



Fifa 365 Adrenalyn XL
Starter **£4.99**
Cards **£1.00**



Ultimate Spider-Man
Album **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



Jurassic World
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



Wales Sticker Collection
Album **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



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- ✓ Debt Advice Counselling
- ✓ Family Welfare Issues
- ✓ Almoner Home Visits
- ✓ Support for the Disabled and their Carers

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The helping hand of the Newstrade
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EXTRA! EXTRA!

 **Steven Lambert**
 steven.lambert@newtrade.co.uk
 020 7689 3357
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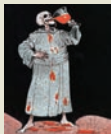
Back in the day

101

YEARS AGO

22 January 1916

The famous cartoons of Louis Raemaekers, the Dutch artist, have been recognised as the most powerful issued during the war, and there will be a big audience for the new fortnightly serial 'Raemaekers Cartoons'. Each issue will contain 12 cartoons in colour.



50

YEARS AGO

22 January 1966

An Isle of Wight newsagent thought his last moment had come when he came face to face with two Russian bears which had been on the run from Ryde's Children Zoo on Monday. Jack Eade said the bear stared him in the face, put a paw on his shoulder and opened its jaws wide.



25

YEARS AGO

26 January 1991

Publishers, wholesalers and newsagents have all been pulling out the stops to get the latest news on the Gulf War to the British public. The Sun broke new ground by producing an afternoon Gulf War edition and distributed over 20,000 copies of the paper in the London area, while the Daily Mirror also put on a late edition on the historic day.



'Kinder Surprise' eggs not all they're cracked up to be

Kinder Surprise eggs are well known for containing fun toys, but police in London have discovered a rather more sinister 'gift' inside a batch of the chocolate eggs – cocaine.

Officers making routine checks at a pub in Kingsbury in March discovered two

suspicious-looking punters carrying yellow Kinder egg containers filled with wraps of the class A drug.

Further investigations at Jono's Pub in November also turned up more of the cocaine-filled plastic eggs, which had been stashed away in bins, wrapped in lottery tickets and even hidden in a



brick. The pub is also alleged to have 'stolen' a Sky TV package and CCTV and removed money from fruit machines, and was allegedly the scene of a 40-man brawl during a

birthday party in January, according to an Evening Standard report.

Brent police have now applied to the local council for a review of the pub's licence after claiming the business has turned a "blind eye" to drug dealing.

Certainly not the best news for Kinder owner Ferrero, which comes at the same time as it launches its latest product in the UK, Kinder Joy...

Morrisons' Ham-mer horror

A Morrisons customer got a nasty shock after tucking into one of the company's raspberry turnovers – only to find a piece of boiled ham and a suspicious looking hair inside.

Kurt Harrison was about to dig into the treat bought for him by his sister from a Morrison store in Preston. That was until he cut into it and found its rather unexpected contents. The disgusted shopper posted a picture of the piggy pastry on Instagram with the message "Hi Morrisons, please could you explain why there is a piece of

ham and a pube in my fresh raspberry turnover?", which has since been reposted by hundreds of people.

Mr Harrison told The Sun, "After scraping the cream off to be positive it was what I thought, there was another smaller piece of ham rolled up with a black hair sticking up from the middle. In all fairness, Morrisons seemed just as shocked as I was."

The supermarket has launched an investigation into the case of the strange filling, but we think it won't be adding it to its core range any time soon.

VIEW FROM THE COUNTER with Mike Brown



We have a new addition to the family – a black Labrador puppy called Mabel. My three daughters got her for me for Christmas as a complete surprise.

Accessories include a pink collar, pink bowl, pink blanket, pink bed and pink toys – yes, you've got the idea. She is gorgeous and much loved. They reckon a puppy needs to pee every half hour – which I think is rather conservative.

She came from Ashington, near Blyth in Northumberland, so technically she is a Geordie. As usual we have ignored my father's advice of never buying anything that eats – well not as much as a Labrador anyway.

In the recent storms the Leeds Rhinos ground was badly flooded so I hope it will be dried out for the start of the season on 4 February when we play Warrington. I can't wait!

Congratulations to Kevin Sinfield coming second in the Sports Personality of the Year Award. It was a great honour for Kevin, as well as showcasing rugby league.

The new year is off to an inauspicious start with the reduction in cover price of the Daily Express Saturday edition to 45p with the margin applied to the new price.

In my shop the Express is one of those titles to have maintained sales over recent years so I don't think I will achieve the volume in sales to make up for the lost margin.

Despite the incessant rain the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, drew large crowds when he reached Stokesley as part of his pilgrimage around the diocese. Stokesley marked the 200 mile point of his journey, and he walked around the town to talk to residents, shoppers and market stall holders.

I doubt if Justin Bieber would have caused such excitement and enthusiasm. Just like the brilliant Christmas decorations in people's homes last year, it seemed just the tonic everyone needed.

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