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'Contract void if you touch stock'



- Imperial Tobacco told retailers have the right to terminate gantry agreements if they alter range without permission.
- NFRN advises members and writes to manufacturer boss Melvin Ruigrok after seeking legal advice. Page 5 >>



NEWSPAPERS

Retailers' backlash fear over jihadi poll

'Consider the repercussions if you want to work with us.' Page 4 >>

MEN'S MAGAZINES

Lads out, geeks in; tech titles to fill gap

Publishers report rise of gadget sector as FHM and Zoo bow out. Page 7 >>

CONVENIENCE

My Local: we'll win back lost shoppers

Strong promotions, availability promise and charity drive planned after rocky launch. Page 5 >>



Underground success Jasvinder Randhawa (pictured left), Vimesh Patel (second from left) and Gavin Mahal are on track for greater sales with their new Simply Fresh store at St James's Park tube station in London. It was officially opened by Costcutter chief executive Darcy Willson-Rymer (centre) and Simply Fresh managing director Kash Khera (right) last Friday. Retailer profile, page 24 >>

INNOVATION

'My hi-tech system cuts admin and errors'

Dee Sedani eyes national launch for custom management software. Page 12 >>

Inside the Nisa Retail Academy - why improving store standards needn't be rocket science. Page 26 >>

COMING UP IN

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LEADER



Next week, we are putting our various areas of expertise to the test again for the RN Retailer Choice Awards



CHRIS GAMM

Editor

@ChrisGammRN

Last week, I was introducing Newtrade's new marketing assistant Tom Thorn to RN. We discussed how RN aims to give a return on investment to its readers, who own and run such a wide variety of store types and have a broad range of interests.

One way we do this, I said, is through the team building expertise in an array of areas and telling readers something new about each area every week. This week's issue is a good example.

RN symbol expert Steven Lambert was at the opening of the new Simply Fresh store in St James's Park tube station last Friday to see firsthand its focus on impulse and premium meals.

News editor Gurpreet Samrai, meanwhile, visited Nisa to find out how it trains its members and the core areas any store should focus on. And Chris Rolfe worked with RN property columnist Barry Frost to identify the need to closely manage your credit rating as a key topic for his latest article.

As I write this, features writer Nadia Alexandrou is with dozens of retailers at the London district council meeting and features editor Tom GK is interviewing One Stop founder Kevin Threlfall. You can read both features in our next issue.

Next week, we are putting our various areas of expertise to the test again. Every member of the team has nominated five suppliers, initiatives or retailers that have done something outstanding this year, across eight categories, for the RN Retailer Choice Awards.

It's called Retailer Choice because you will be picking our eight winners. So look out for the feature in next week's issue and then visit betterRetailing.com to cast your vote.

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All the coverage of this year's event

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A LOT OF THE PHONE CALLS I GET ARE REACTIVE AND I WANT RETAILERS TO BE PROACTIVE BEFORE PROBLEMS HAPPEN

- EMMA BROCK, WHO RUNS THE NISA RETAIL ACADEMY, URGES RETAILERS TO USE TRAINING TOOLS TO PROTECT BUSINESS Page 26 >>

NEWS

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'System flaw' sees court on Horizon

Subpostmasters who believe they have been wronged by the Post Office and its controversial Horizon computer system are planning to go to court.

The Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance (JFSA) is planning group legal action on behalf of its members who have been found guilty of crimes and misconduct which, they say, is down to the flawed computer system rather than any wrongdoing.

The JFSA said it had "no other option" and has called on retailers who think the system has caused them problems to contact them.

A statement said: "A significant number of people have now signed up with the legal team, who have already undertaken considerable work on our case, and have a very positive view on the prospects of success."

Simply Fresh sets '10' target

Simply Fresh managing director Kash Khera said the group is aiming to open at least 10 new stores in central London by the end of March next year.

Mr Khera made the claim during the official opening of the new Simply Fresh store in St James's Park tube station, the symbol group's first dedicated small format business.

"We're looking to have around seven to 10 new stores in central London by the end of the first quarter. It's a big opportunity for us," said Mr Khera.

● Retailer profile, p24



UK's 'oldest store' reopens for trade

A store dating back almost 700 years and believed to be the oldest in the UK has reopened its doors after being shuttered for two years. Boxford Stores in the west Suffolk village of Boxford is being run by Neil Cottrell, who owns the Village Deli in nearby Bures, and Robin Windmill, after being bought by garage owner Lawrence Mott. It sells newspapers and deli and farm shop-style products, after residents were canvassed about what they wanted the store to stock.

Ipsos receives hundreds of complaints 'It could end up killing somebody,' says Mo Razaq

Retailers fear backlash over The Sun's jihadi front page

by Gurpreet Samrai and Tim Murray

Retailers have hit out at The Sun over its front page on British Muslims having "sympathy for jihadis" and challenged News UK to think about the repercussions of such stories if it wants to continue working together.

The tabloid's report on Monday of an opinion poll, which stated that one in five British Muslims had "sympathy for jihadis", has provoked anger among retailers and sparked safety concerns.

Mo Razaq, of Premier Mo's in Glasgow, has been personally trying to contact The Sun's editor to raise his concerns. He said: "We have already had incidents of attacks in Scotland after what's happening in Paris."

"And what The Sun has put as a headline is misleading and is just going to give extremists even more of an excuse to start attacking people."

"Violent attacks on newsagents are already on the increase this year and this isn't going to help. It could end up killing somebody."

Raaj Chandarana, of Pre-

mier Tara's News in High Wycombe, said: "I had a few customers asking 'what's all this about?' Retailers have also been talking about it on WhatsApp."

"We have strong relationships with News UK, so it's disappointing. I'm not going to put my heart, feelings and emotions above my profit margin and bottom line, but they should think twice before printing this kind of story if they want to work with retailers. They should think about the repercussions when we're the ones making money for them."

Meanwhile, Vas Vekaria of Lever Edge Convenience Store in Bolton said: "I thought it was a step too far and that's coming from a Hindu. I've seen the reaction on Facebook and I think it's out of order. I know there's a problem with extremism, but whoever wrote the headline should have used their common sense."

The Independent Press Standards Organisation (Ipsos) has said it has received hundreds of complaints about the front page.

The Sun declined to comment.

Extend business rate relief, says ACS

The Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) has said that business rate relief should be extended into 2016 following the publication of figures on the discounts for small businesses.

A report from the Department for Communities and Local Govern-

ment showed that local authorities had granted more than £1bn in relief in the financial year 2014-15, up almost 8% on the previous year.

ACS chief executive James Lowman said: "Business rates are one of the most significant costs that small businesses

face, which is why small business rate relief is such an important and valuable policy. The small business rate relief scheme needs to be renewed in 2016 alongside further support to allow local authorities to offer more effective discretionary rate relief schemes."

Ramesh Shingadia, owner of two Londis stores in Southwater and Horsham in Sussex, said: "We've got some real challenges, so anything that can be done to make it easier for us is welcome."

"We get business rate relief and it helps tremendously."

Legal advice for NFRN members over tobacco manufacturer 'Heavy-handed actions'

Move stock and contract void, Imperial warned

by Gurpreet Samrai

Imperial Tobacco will be in breach of its gantry contracts with store owners if it moves stock without a retailer's permission, the NFRN has warned. Doing so will mean retailers have the right to terminate their contracts, the federation has told its members after seeking legal advice.

The move comes after claims the manufacturer is over-allocating space for its own brands and reps have been "heavy-handed" in getting new lines on shelves

despite a lack of space.

In a letter to retailers, NFRN chief executive Paul Baxter said: "The federation is taking a robust line on this because so many of you are being hassled."

Mr Baxter said in the letter that he has written to Imperial Tobacco general manager Melvin Ruigrok on behalf of retailers stating their rights, adding: "I have specifically reserved your rights to terminate your contracts for the fixtures due to the breaches of the agreement which Imperial Tobacco is committing."

The federation is advising retailers that under their agreement, Imperial is not allowed to reallocate space unless there has been a change in market conditions or customer demand, which it doesn't believe there has been. It also states although the firm can modify gantries, it cannot move stock without a retailer's permission and unless it has given written warning. It adds it cannot move retailer's stock if it would breach health and safety regulations or contracts with insurers.

However, Mr Baxter said he does not encourage the termination of contracts and suggests retailers wait for the outcome of his talks with the firm.

The NFRN has revealed it is also set to launch its own gantry offer for members, which Mr Baxter said would be "very advantageous".

An Imperial Tobacco spokesman said: "We remain confident of the manner in which we execute the terms of our contractual agreements with our customers."

Praise for c-store standards

One Stop founder Kevin Threlfall has praised the improvement made by the convenience sector, but warned it showed multiples how to survive.

Speaking to RN ahead of his keynote speech at the Independent Achievers Academy gala dinner next week, Mr Threlfall said: "Convenience is the shelter from a perfect storm for supermarkets. They are attacked by convenience because stores have improved. Lidl and Aldi have a really incredible offer. Convenience is the place to be."

He also said online retailing had cannibalised many sales in the big four grocers.

● Full interview next week.

Vip's beer chair is a social media hit

Derbyshire retailer Vip Measuria has given his social media persona a boost by launching a selfie competition in his store. He created a Foster's and Strongbow armchair at The Prior Way in Borrowash for customers to take a selfie on, with the picture with the most likes on 30 November winning an 18-pack case of each brand, and runners-up taking away selfie sticks. "I did it to get more engagement from our customers," Mr Measuria said. "The post has reached more than 5,000 people which is our most viewed by far."



Tribute to Cooke

Menzies Distribution's commercial and marketing director David Cooke died on Sunday after a long battle with illness.

Mr Cooke joined Menzies in September 2009, taking on responsibility for retail and publisher-facing account management, product allocation and customer service, having previously worked with Tesco.

Menzies described him as "a person of great loyalty and decency" who was "never too busy to offer support or talk through a problem".

My Local chief bullish after rocky start

My Local chief Mike Greene said the group is working hard to win over new shoppers after admitting it "lost customers" during its rocky launch last month.

A last-minute disagreement with Morrisons led to the supermarket removing vast amounts of stock from M Local stores just days before they were due to be

reopened under the My Local fascia.

Despite Nisa stepping in to replenish stores at the last minute, Mr Greene said it had lost business as a result. "It was a challenging first couple of weeks because of the stock issue," he said. "It is fair to say we lost a couple of customers during this time."

However, he added that recent strong promotions from Nisa, along with offers such as £1 for a fresh cup of coffee, were attracting "new and old" shoppers to stores. He added that My Local will launch its charity incentive this week, with each of its 130 shops choosing a local good cause to support.

At the same time, Mr Greene said the chain will introduce a guarantee on the availability of everyday essentials such as bread and milk.

He added: "In the next couple of weeks, I expect we will be back to where we were with Morrisons, and we will move on from there."

Fake note warning

Crimestoppers has launched a new campaign to help stamp out the use of fake banknotes in the run-up to Christmas. The charity wants businesses to look out for dodgy notes and report any instances.

NEWS

BUSINESS

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App for a perfect c-store

A new digital app aimed at helping independents make more informed choices on the products they stock has launched this month.

The My Perfect Store app is free to download on iOS and Android devices and is being backed by major manufacturers including The Weetabix Food Company and Burton's Biscuits.

It will offer retailers information on developing their 'perfect' range, and will give rewards to stores following its stock advice.

The technology has been launched by Liverpool-based firm The Mothership Group following a pilot scheme in local stores in London and Liverpool at the start of the year.

Director Dave Harker said: "Our aim is to make independent retailers even more successful."

Modern depot for Blakemore

Blakemore Wholesale is improving its service to retailers in the Bangor and Gwynedd area with the launch of a new state-of-the-art depot.

The company closed its site in Caernarfon Road last Saturday to move into new premises at the Llandegai industrial estate on Monday.

Blakemore said its latest depot would offer store owners click and collect services, an in-house butchery, a wider range of fruit and veg and a new Chinese range, including fresh meat, grocery and non-food items.

The Llandegai business will officially open on 30 November, with Blakemore offering one-off deals, competitions and free food and refreshments on the day.



Friendly welcome for Ashish and Hareesh

Londis has welcomed Ashish (pictured second from left) and Hareesh Patel (centre) to its estate following the completion of its 'Bring a Friend' recruitment campaign, which encouraged Londis store owners to invite fellow retailers to join the symbol group. Ashish and Hareesh – who received £50,000 to develop their new store – were urged to join by Londis retailer Ben Patel, who has been rewarded with a luxury holiday worth up to £10,000.

Initiative to be rolled out to 2,600 stores 'This is something we want to be leading on'

Costcutter trending with social media programme

by Steven Lambert

Costcutter is launching a training programme for its retailers to improve their social media skills and help grow awareness of their businesses online.

The company has completed a pilot scheme to develop Facebook and Twitter accounts for six Costcutter retailers and six Mace retailers. It is now looking to roll out the initiative nationally to more than 2,600 stores early next year.

Alan Kasch, who introduced the scheme at his Mace store in Worcester, worked with Costcutter to



promote bespoke promotions and competitions online to drive footfall to his business.

He said: "We were able to push out a number of beer and wine deals before England's opening game in the Rugby World Cup. We had

such a big response that we had to get in extra staff to help us get in more stock.

"We don't want to fall behind the other symbol groups when it comes to social media. This is something we want to be leading on."

Mr Kasch said store owners involved in the pilot have now fed back their findings to Costcutter, adding that the group is discussing the possibility of offering different tiers of support to retailers based on their social media skills.

Sean Russell, digital marketing manager at Costcutter, said: "With two thirds of adults in the UK owning a smartphone and 90% of 16- to 24-year-olds having one, a strong social media presence is key to reaching consumers who are not consuming media in the traditional way."

New brand identity marks Filshill's 140th

JW Filshill has unveiled a new brand identity and updates to its KeyStore convenience chains as part of its 140th anniversary plans.

The Glasgow-based wholesaler has revealed a refreshed logo, updated branding on its delivery vehicles and a new website this month.

Simon Hannah, managing director of Filshill, said

the investment will enable the company to grow its presence in a 'challenging marketplace' and help it compete more effectively against discounters and multiple convenience stores.

"The fact our research shows that none of our competitors stand out in terms of their marketing provides us with a timely

opportunity to ramp up our own activity. Particularly as, at consumer level, there is less awareness about KeyStore and few differentiating factors between the other c-store brands," said Mr Hannah.

In addition, Filshill has launched a campaign designed to strengthen ties between its KeyStore retailers and communities.

The scheme, called 'We'll Support You Ever More', will see Filshill join up with Education Scotland to provide support for schools in KeyStore areas.

This will include giving away free water to pupils on school sports days, offering free sports kits and launching a 'holiday feeding' programme to help vulnerable children.

NEWSTRADE

Technological advances fuel interest in titles FHM and Zoo closure set to 'boost interest further'

Lads' mags demise 'great for technology titles'

by Tim Murray

Gadget and tech magazines are replacing the once booming lads' mags sector, according to publishers and retailers.

The gadget market has enjoyed a strong year buoyed by the continued advancements in devices, tablets, and phones, according to publishers. However, many believe the impending closure of lads' magazines FHM and Zoo will lead to a further sales spike.

Future's T3 saw an 80%-

85% growth in print sales this year. It repositioned itself under the banner Life's Better With T3, underwent a redesign and refined its content following research.

Paul Newman, editor in chief for Future's tech magazines including T3, said: "We've been able to grow our sales but not at the expense of the sector as a whole. Other magazines such as Stuff and Wired are seeing sales looking pretty strong too."

"We're seeing some of the older categories like

lads' magazines and even traditional computer magazines fading, with these broader, aspirational tech and gadget premium magazines aimed at men aged between 30 and 45 emerging.

"They're not just gadget-based, there's lifestyle, menswear, eating out and more in them."

Haymarket's Stuff has also enjoyed success this year, with last week's news moving it into the top three paid-for men's magazines in the UK.

Mark Ansell, of Liskeard

News in Cornwall, said: "A lot of men have moved on to something that's a bit better to read. It won't be a huge loss with FHM and Zoo going. They've just naturally died, especially when you think of the heady heights."

"Things like Stuff and T3 are selling a lot better now. I think tech magazines have already replaced the lads' mags."

Alastair Lewis, brand director for Stuff and What Hi-fi talks about its recent successes in our Industry Viewpoint on page 40.

Twirly deal on

DC Thomson has signed a deal with DHX Brands to secure the publishing rights to Twirlywoos, the hit CBeebies show.

The pre-school TV series combines animation with live action sequences. Each issue of the magazine will be themed around an episode and will come with a covermount gift linked to the theme.

Tom Roe, commercial director at DHX Brands, said: "The magazine will allow fans to fully immerse themselves into the fun world of Twirlywoos." The magazine will launch in 2016.

Exclusive to print

A study based on 2,000 magazine buyers has revealed that 69% exclusively access content in print.

The research, carried out by the Professional Publishers Association (PPA) alongside YouGov, found that within print there were four consumer personas: print zealots (19%), print conservatives (15%), print flexers (17%) and print dabblers (18%). Loyalty and spending power were one of several criteria analysed.

Guardian invests

The Guardian is boosting its coverage of the north of England, with a freshly appointed team of five editorial staff based in Manchester. The team, headed up by north of England editor Helen Pidd, will start in January.

Guardian editor-in-chief Katharine Viner said: "At a time of unprecedented global reach and influence for the Guardian, we'll be shedding light on the issues affecting this crucial region and adding a northern perspective to national and global conversations."

Frozen success prompts move to three-weekly cycle

Frozen magazine is to move to a regular three-weekly cycle from January 2016, publisher Egmont Publishing has announced. The magazine, whose circulation was recorded as 91,011 for the first half of this year, is currently monthly and is this year's best-selling children's magazine. Jo Doubtfire, publisher of Egmont's Disney magazine portfolio, said: "This is the perfect time to increase our publishing to 17 issues a year and give young fans even more opportunity to immerse themselves in the Frozen experience through the brilliant stories and activities in the magazines." The first of the three-weekly issues starts with Issue 18 on 13 January.



'No effect' from latest eastern rises

Price rises across a raft of titles in the east of England are now in effect, but retailers say the increases from publisher Archant have not had any impact on sales.

The company has increased the price of titles including the Eastern Daily Press, East Anglian Daily Times, Ipswich Star and Norwich Evening News by 5p a day, with Saturday editions and some weeklies

increasing by 10p per issue.

The price rises have had little or no effect on sales thus far, according to some retailers. Phillip Sutton, of Camden Road Supermarket in Great Yarmouth, said: "On every movement on price there's always one or two who stop buying or complain - always the same customers - but it's a very low percentage, nothing significant."

An Archant spokesman said: "At this stage it's too early to understand the full impact, although in the first three weeks pre-increase trends have been maintained."

● Archant has this week launched Love Your Pet, a new strand that runs across print and other media. The content, aimed at engaging pet owners and animal lovers and taking in everything from train-



ing to celebrity pet owners, is available for sponsorship by businesses.

NEWS

PRODUCTS

Sunmagic launches healthier smoothies

Sunmagic said it will target growing numbers of shoppers looking for healthier soft drinks with the launch of its first range of 'functional' smoothies.

The range comprises three products – an Antioxidant Smoothie containing apple, red beet and carrot; an Immunity Smoothie containing carrot, mango and ginger; and an Energise Smoothie containing apple, kale and kelp.

Sunmagic said the new lines will contain less sugar compared to traditional smoothies and will provide drinkers with one portion of vegetables and one portion of fruit.

The products will be available to retailers in 330ml bottles (RRP £2.39).

Cadbury's pricemark extension

Mondelez is extending its range of pricemarked Cadbury Dairy Milk packs with a new Fruit & Nut Chopped bar.

The 95g block comes with a £1 price flash and is available to retailers from this month in case outers of 17. Mondelez has also launched the brand in non-pricemarked packs.

The manufacturer revived its £1 pricemarked Cadbury bars in May following calls from independent retailers, who claimed they had lost sales when the price was increased to £1.29 last year.



Celebrities join in search for the next Milk Tray Man

Mondelez has enlisted some celebrity help in its bid to find the next Cadbury Milk Tray Man for an upcoming marketing campaign. The likes of (left to right) Thom Evans, Denise Lewis, James Coombes, Joey Essex and Spencer Matthews all sported the Milk Tray Man's signature black polo neck and took part in a series of challenges at a secret 'bootcamp' as part of a publicity stunt backing the initiative.

Help for indies to target 'cig-a-like' converts Multimedia campaign includes TV and digital ads

Vivid spends £4m to push 'next generation' vaping

by Steven Lambert

Nicocigs has unveiled further details of its £4m marketing plans to support its next generation of Vivid e-liquid vaping products.

The company launched the revamped Vivid range in August, which included new technology and a wider range of e-liquid flavours.

It claimed the changes would help independent re-

tailers target growing numbers of smokers switching from 'cig-a-like' vaping products to e-liquids.

Nicocigs will promote the products with a multimedia campaign, which will include online and digital coverage running throughout December. The brand will also feature in TV ads, which Nicocigs said will be seen by 38 million adults in the UK.

In addition, Vivid will

be promoted at more than 1,600 outdoor sites between 30 November and 31 December, and will also be sampled at various festivals and social events next year.

Nicocigs said it will support independent retailers during the campaign by offering them PoS units, in-store promotions and starter kit discount vouchers.

The company had previously committed to sending

its sales team to 12,000 independent stores to grow awareness of the Vivid range.

Nikhil Nathwani, managing director of Nicocigs, said: "The challenge is to remain on the counter. We have a strong field sales team which we will continue to support, and we will continuously focus on new products to drive innovation and lead the way in vaping technology."

Kettle's Christmas spirit with festive flavours

Kettle Foods is expanding its Kettle Chips range for winter with the launch of limited edition Christmas-themed flavours this month.

The news comes a week after the manufacturer

unveiled the launch of its Kettle Chips Chef's Signature range featuring recipes prepared using premium ingredients.

Kettle is aiming to grow its seasonal sales with two 'Christmas special' variants

– Beef, Red Wine & Shallot and White Stilton & Cranberry Relish.

Both will be available in 150g sharing bags and will be on sale until the end of December.

At the same time, the

firm has released its latest winter flavour – Soy, Ginger, Chilli and Honey – which will be available until March and will replace Thai Sweet Chilli, Lemongrass & Coriander, which was launched in the summer.

Hot products for your shopping list



Sunmagic has launched its first range of smoothies this month



Fruit & Nut Chopped is the latest £1 pricemarked Cadbury chocolate bar

Festive flavours have been added to Kettle Chips' crisp range





“
**WE KNOW WE CAN
RELY ON NISA FOR
AVAILABILITY AND
DELIVERY ACCURACY.**

Our sales
have increased
41%
since joining
Nisa

“We were originally with Costcutter and when they decided to split with Nisa it was a case of who to stay with. Although our relationship was with Costcutter mainly, we knew what Nisa could deliver. That's why we chose to go direct with them.

We knew we could rely on availability and delivery accuracy, which is so important in ensuring our customers always have the products they want, when they want them. We've got six stores so it is key for us that we can rely on Nisa to ensure they are always fully stocked and supplied.

We've got to know all the staff at Nisa, including all the people on the ground and they've all given us a lot of support. We've been delighted with the support we've been getting, in fact. Nisa has been very active with us. It's been really beneficial.

The choice of Nisa over Costcutter wasn't that difficult and is already proving to be the right one.”

Franco Margiotta

MARGIOTTA FOOD & WINE, EDINBURGH

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NEWS

PRODUCTS

Smooth move, JPS

Imperial Tobacco claims it will create a 'revolution in cigarette technology' with the launch of its latest cigarette brand, JPS Triple Flow.

The product includes new features such as an 'easy draw' filter and a high-quality tobacco blend mixed with a mineral filter to provide buyers with a smoother smoke, according to the company. It will also use a special paper designed to reduce the amount of smell and smoke emitted.

Imperial brand manager Emma Stew said 'smooth blend' products now make up a quarter of total cigarette sales, adding that JPS Triple Flow would offer retailers margins of around 6% when sold at RRP.

Imperial will launch Triple Flow on 1 December in King Size 19s packs with an RRP of £7.49, with price-marked packs at £7.35 also available.

Britain's best Crest

Dairy Crest is showing its support for farmers with the return of its Best of British packs on its Country Life block butter.

The packs feature a Union Jack design along with the Red Tractor logo and claims that Country Life is 'made exclusively with British milk'. They will appear on 250g blocks of Country Life Salted and Unsalted butter from this month (RRP £1.60). Louise Pike, head of butters and spreads at Dairy Crest, said: "The pack will have great impact on shelf and remind consumers to buy British."



Fairy helps bake a wish come true

Home cleaning brand Fairy marked its 12th consecutive year of supporting Make-A-Wish by backing the charity group's annual Bake-A-Wish campaign last weekend. The event, held at the Westfield shopping centre in Shepherd's Bush, London, included a giant bake sale to generate funds for Make-A-Wish, while cakes were judged by a panel including The Saturday's singer Rochelle Humes. Fairy also donated £10 to Make-A-Wish for every plate washed during the proceedings.

Manufacturer aims to add more than 150 stores in 2016 'We're incredibly pleased with results'

SnackPartners expanded after sales boosted by 20%

by Steven Lambert

KP Snacks has set out plans to expand its SnackPartners category management scheme for independent retailers next year.

The initiative saw KP Snacks work with six retailer ambassadors to develop new planograms and strategies to grow the snacks category.

This was rolled out to 150 newsagents and convenience

stores at the start of the year, with KP claiming retailers using the scheme saw sales of crisps, snacks and nuts increase by an average of 20%.

Matt Collins, trading controller for convenience and wholesale at KP, said the firm was now looking to bring SnackPartners to more independent businesses in 2016.

"We've been incredibly pleased with the results of

SnackPartners this year and now we want to take this forward. Our ambition is to bring this to more than 150 stores next year. We want to work with retailers who have the ambition and desire to grow the category, and are looking for the advice and guidelines to do this."

Mr Collins added the company is currently running trials with a third party field sales company,

Cosine, to support a wider rollout of SnackPartners.

Meanwhile, KP revealed it is investing more than £1m to revamp its McCoy's crisps range, with updated packaging, reformulated recipes and new flavours being unveiled in February.

The company is also introducing its first on-pack 'three for £1' offer on Skips, Frisps, Discos and Wheat Crunchies early next year.

Thorntons targets £139m sales opportunity

Thorntons is revamping its Continental chocolate range to target a £139m sales opportunity for boxed chocolates next spring.

The brand will be given a packaging redesign and updated flavours in a bid to grow interest from shoppers

around Valentine's Day, Mother's Day and Easter.

New chocolates being added next year include Dark Espresso, Chocolate Milano, Seville Caramel Orange, Salted Caramel Praline and Apricot Danish.

Michelle Bernacki, senior

product marketing manager at Thorntons, said the changes will help differentiate Continental from the company's Classic Collection boxed chocolates.

She added: "Half of shoppers currently leave the boxed chocolate fixture with-

out purchasing. And 18% of shoppers who give flowers, and 31% who give wine, said they would give Thorntons Continental instead."

The relaunched range will come in 142g and 284g boxes, while a 284g gift wrap box will also be available.

Hot products for your shopping list



Imperial is promising a 'smoother smoke' with its new JPS Triple Flow



Thorntons Continental chocolate range is to get new flavours and packaging

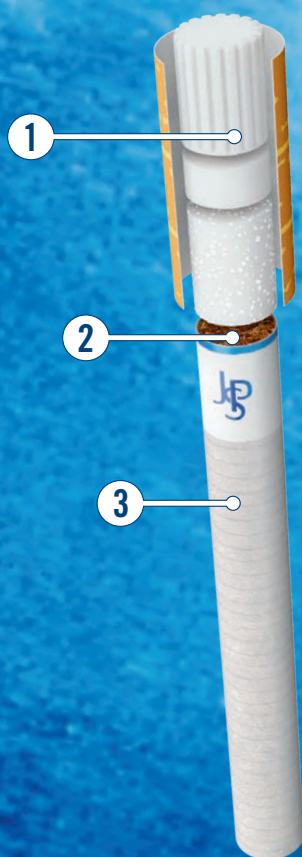


Best of British packs are to return on Dairy Crest block butter

EXPERIENCE OUR ULTIMATE SMOOTH.



NEW
TRIPLE
FLOW



**1 EASY DRAW
CHANNELS**

**2 SMOOTH
TOBACCO BLEND**

**3 LESS SMOKE
SMELL PAPER**

BORN THAT WAY
JPS
JOHN PLAYER
SPECIAL
SINCE 1970

RRP/PMP: For the avoidance of doubt, retailers are free at all times to determine the selling price of their products. Standard stock also available.



www.imperial-trade.co.uk

For Tobacco Traders Only

NEWS

REGIONAL

Knifeman flees from umbrella

A retailer saw off a knife-wielding thief with an umbrella and chased him down the street, forcing him to flee empty-handed.

Prabaharan Kulam was alone in Brands Hill Post Office, Slough, on Sunday 8 November, when the incident took place. The would-be robber had covered his face and demanded Mr Kulam give him cash from the till.

But rather than hand over money, Mr Kulam picked up an umbrella and, after a stand-off, sent him packing.

Mr Kulam said: "I had pressed the panic button and was looking for something to fight him off with when I saw an umbrella a customer had left behind in the shop. We're an easy target, but I wanted to stop him and show we're not a pushover."

Police are searching for the suspect.



'Forget about business', it's time to dance

NFRN members gathered in Edgbaston, Birmingham, last week for the West Midlands District Gala Dinner. National president Ralph Patel and NFRN chief executive Paul Baxter attended the event and took part in the evening's entertainment (left). West Midlands district president Ramesh Sahota thanked those present for taking time out of their stores to attend and urged them to "forget about business" for the evening and focus on having fun.

Retailer develops software to streamline business Fingerprint technology popular with customers

Dee's found the code to a better retail experience

by Tim Murray

A Derbyshire retailer who has developed his own software to save him from hours of admin is now planning to offer others the innovative technology.

Dee Sedani has worked with a programmer to develop three bits of software that use fingerprint technology and tablet devices to save time and money across his two One Stop stores.

The first development enables him to track his

news deliverers and pay them through PayPal, cutting down on his time.

Another allows staff to clock in and off using fingerprint technology, creates timesheets and then sorts out his payroll.

The third advancement is customer facing, with the same fingerprint reader being used to check the ages and details of customers who've signed up, speeding up sales and avoiding the need to check ID every time they buy age-restricted products. Around 1,000 customers

have already registered in one store and more than double that in the other.

Mr Sedani said: "Staff love it as there are less errors when it comes to paying them, the customers love it too, it's quite exciting for them using the fingerprint reader."

The system has evolved during the past year or so and has only been in place for a month or two, but Mr Sedani is already looking at the next step.

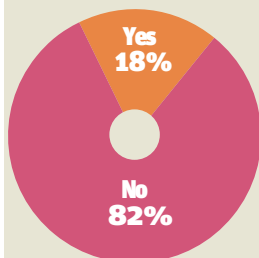
"We want to launch it in the UK for retailers," he said. "It will only cost

£1,000 for all three packages as well as the fingerprint reader and a tablet. We're just tweaking a bit of the design and sorting out a few bugs."

He called in an expert, Ian Wooldfer, to help with the programming - there are some four million lines of code involved in the process - but Mr Sedani's own experience helped on two counts.

"I have a programming background but it also works for retailers because it's been designed by a retailer," he said.

RN READER POLL



Following news PayPoint chief exec Dominic Taylor is on a crusade to rebuild relationships with retailers, do you think they can be repaired?

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION
Have you used social media to boost sales in your store?



Have your vote now

Go to betterretailing.com/retail-newsagent

Echo troubles highlight need for change

Problems with late delivery of the South Wales Echo last Friday, along with the knock-on effects this caused retailers, highlight the need for a better restitution process.

The statement was made by the NFRN's head of news and magazines, Brian Murphy, after the

paper was printed in Birmingham rather than Cardiff, following technical problems which meant reruns were needed.

Matthew Clark, Penylan News, Cardiff, said: "I understand there were problems and I don't want to single out the South Wales Echo, but I had to

get cover for the shop and go out and deliver 60 copies. I make £7.20 on those and it cost me £30."

South Wales Echo newspaper sales director Alan Tyldesley said: "While we apologise for our lateness to market last Friday with the South Wales Echo, our overall achievement this

year has been exceptional.

"Having said that, our aim with other publishing colleagues, is to achieve 100% of our deadlines.

"Unfortunately on this occasion a severe mechanical issue impacted on our schedule for that night."

REGIONAL

All party group chairman 'fed up' at politicians' attitude 'Crimes need to be taken seriously'

MP: police still not tough enough on retail crime

by Neville Rhodes

Retail crime is not being taken seriously enough by police and crime commissioners and some politicians.

That was the message to other parliamentarians from MP Guto Bebb, chairman of the recently formed All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Retail Crime, speaking at a House of Commons reception for the NFRN last week.

Mr Bebb, the Conservative MP for Aberconwy in north Wales, said he was concerned police and crime commissioners didn't regard retail crime as a priority. He added he is "fed up" with the attitude of some politicians who seem to regard retailing as a matter of no great significance for them.

"Retail crime is not victimless. Shopkeepers are the victims, and crimes against them need to be highlighted and taken seriously," he said. The importance of community



Guto Bebb MP (right) addresses the NFRN's House of Commons reception

shops was among the top three local concerns in his constituency, he added.

The reception, hosted by Mr Bebb, was for NFRN national councillors and officials, and was attended by MPs from across the UK.

Thanking Mr Bebb for hosting the reception, NFRN national president Ralph Patel said the formation of a parliamentary group focused on retail

crime had been a long-standing aim of the federation, and he hoped it would push the issue higher up the political agenda.

Mr Patel described a number of recent serious attacks on retailers, some leaving them with life-changing injuries, and warned that these attacks were not only on the increase, but were becoming

more violent and more terrifying for store owners and their staff. "Sadly, hardly a day goes by when someone working in a shop does not become a victim of crime," Mr Patel said.

Mr Bebb said the incidents outlined by Mr Patel showed why the APPG was necessary, and urged NFRN members to ask their own MPs to support the new retail crime group.

Food tops sales fall figures

Food retailers saw the biggest fall in sales for more than three years in October, according to figures from the Office for National Statistics.

Total retail sales fell by 0.6%, but experts believe the underlying trend is still one of growth. The fall came after a successful September, boosted by the Rugby World Cup.

Food retail suffered the most in October.

Analysts expect November figures to grow again, thanks to Black Friday, wage growth, low interest rates and returning consumer confidence.

Somerset raid haul

More than 45,000 cigarettes and over 80 litres of spirits were uncovered during a raid in Somerset.

Seven retail premises and five storage units were targeted by HMRC officers, Devon and Somerset Trading Standards, and Avon and Somerset Police last week. Around £21,500 in cash and one car, being used to store excise goods, were also seized.

A man was arrested on suspicion of evasion of excise duty and money laundering in Yeovil on 18 November and bailed until January 2016.

Backing British

The Yorkshire Post has launched a campaign calling for clearer labels on dairy products so consumers can support British farmers.

The campaign has been backed by the NFU and farming minister George Eustice.

Gearing up for Small Business Saturday

Retailers are getting ready to showcase their businesses for this year's Small Business Saturday, taking place on 5 December.

The event, now in its fifth year, aims to boost not only trade in individual stores, but also across town and city centres.

Jon Powell, of the Kiosk Newsagent in Newport, has been a vocal supporter of the event and is pulling out all the stops for the day. He is setting up stalls in the square in the centre of the city for small businesses to sell and sample their wares.

"It's bigger and better

this year," he said. "We've done giveaways in the past and we'll be doing that again. We've had samples on stalls before, this time people will actually trade. There's a real buzz around the city centre at the minute and this ties in with that. We'll have half a table

and we'll be signing people up for HND."

Amit Patel, of Belvedere News, Food & Wine in Kent, said he's looking at taking part in a similar way to previous years by giving away free chocolate with every newspaper purchased.

Shock at death of NFRN stalwart Kirit Patel, 67

Tributes have been paid to NFRN stalwart Kirit Patel, who died on Friday night at the age of 67.

Mr Patel, who was the current treasurer of NFRN

Credit Union, joined the federation in 1979 and was a former London district president and national councillor. Tom Searle, a NFRN national councillor, said: "Kirit was

a friend to everybody and whoever he knew he touched. He had tremendous kindness, understanding and wisdom. He was known throughout the federation

and everybody who knew him will be devastated by his early passing."

He is survived by his wife, Aruna, and son, Simon.

NATIONAL COUNCIL

NFRN NATIONAL COUNCIL LONDON

17-18.11.2015



Neville Rhodes reports from the NFRN national council meeting

Challenges and changes in news

The news category has been “awash” with service challenges and changes over the past few months, and the NFRN’s news operations team has been fully stretched in dealing with them, committee chairman Ray Monelle reported.

Late deliveries of newspapers continue to present problems, and although the number of missed cut-offs is down on the same period last year, much more needs to be done by publishers to ensure they stick to their scheduled arrival times at the wholesalers.

“Generally, the problems stem from late inbound, with several titles arriving together close to the cut-off. The publishers need to take responsibility. A 15-minute improvement to their delivery times would make a tremendous difference,” Mr Monelle said.

On a brighter note, he said recent Audit Bureau of Circulation figures suggested that the decline in newspaper sales may be slowing, and some magazines were also showing greater resilience to the online threat.

However, he emphasised that sales were still being lost because the service from news suppliers was not good enough, as shown by the record number of calls to the NFRN helpline.

Brian Murphy, NFRN head of news, highlighted the problem of late supplies of magazines, explaining that this is partly the result of plant closures, causing remaining print sites to be overstretched. This sometimes caused



NFRN national council members meet MPs at the APPG retail crime reception

delays and split distribution to wholesalers, in turn leading to delayed deliveries and shortages to retailers, with some outlets receiving their copies before others.

Mr Murphy said he had discussed the problem of phased deliveries to retailers with the wholesalers and they had agreed that “in the event of shortages, where distribution would not be fair, there will be no distribution.”

On the long-standing problem of illicit sales of magazines on market stalls and at car boot sales, Mr Murphy said the industry was working with the Real Deal scheme, which is run by market operators and requires stall holders to show that their stock had been acquired legitimately, and had also employed a private investigator to follow up leads.

Peter Wagg, speaking on behalf of the NFRN’s news operations committee, said evidence of illicit sales was urgently needed, and he appealed to retailers who knew where this was occurring to provide details, backed up with



The problems stem from late inbound, with several titles arriving together close to the cut-off. The publishers need to take responsibility

Ray Monelle

NFRN news operations committee chairman

photographs if possible, to the committee by contacting the NFRN’s head office.

Parliamentary group welcomed

The meeting of the national council was adjourned on the first afternoon to allow members to attend a reception at the House of Commons to mark the setting up of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Retail Crime.

Speaking at the reception, Ralph Patel, national president of the NFRN, welcomed the new parliamentary group, which is chaired by Guto Bebb MP, Conservative member for Aberconwy in North Wales, and thanked him for hosting the event.

Mr Patel said the formation of the group fulfilled a long-standing aim of the federation, and he hoped it would kick-start the organisation’s efforts to get the issue of retail crime higher up the political agenda.

Retail crime was not only on the increase, but the crimes themselves were becoming more violent and more terrifying for store owners and their staff, Mr Patel said.

He described a number of recent attacks on retailers, including an armed raid at a Leicester store where the owner was robbed of his takings and keys before the attacker then on to his house where his wife and children were sleeping.

Another recent attack resulted in a young man, only three weeks into his job as a sales assistant, suffering life-changing injuries after being stabbed in the neck during an unprovoked assault.

“That’s why the NFRN is so deeply concerned for the welfare of our members, many of whom work alone, either early in the morning or late at night,” Mr Patel said.

Fund changes win approval

A proposal from Peter Wagg, chairman of the NFRN Convalescent Fund, that it should take over the Ratcliffe and Carl Bridgewater funds from the NFRN’s general fund was approved by national council.

Members also voted to change the name of the Convalescent Fund to the NFRN Charitable Trust.

The changes are subject to approval by the Charities Commission.

Mr Wagg also appealed to all members for more nominations for the Empowering Young People awards scheme, which provides financial assistance to young people engaged in worthwhile community activities.



Ray Monelle



Ralph Patel

NATIONAL COUNCIL

NFRN NATIONAL COUNCIL
LONDON

17-18.11.2015



Neville Rhodes reports from the NFRN national council meeting

Wakefield woes need top talks

The difficulties thousands of retailers are experiencing caused by problems at Menzies Distribution's new Wakefield superhub are now so serious that the NFRN must raise the issues at the very highest level with the wholesaler, Yorkshire member James Wilkinson told council.

Mr Wilkinson's concerns were echoed by Mersey Dee member



James Wilkinson

Kevin Jones, who urged the NFRN to write to all publishers, highlighting the difficulties members are experiencing from Wakefield.

Mr Wilkinson said the wholesaler's difficulties stemmed from the very high proportion of new and inexperienced staff at Wakefield, and the rate at which customers were transferred to the new hub.

He spoke of one newsagent who had spent so much money calling Menzies with queries that he sent his telephone bill to the company and received a contribution of £50 towards the cost.

More than 8,000 retailers are supplied by Wakefield, more than a quarter of them NFRN members.

Members should contact the publishers of affected titles themselves to make the industry aware of the scale of the Wakefield problem, Mr Wilkinson said, and he asked for a list of magazine publisher contacts to be made available.

Other newstrade matters raised included concern by Northern Ireland retailers about a letter received from wholesaler EM News advising



Thousands of retailers are experiencing problems because of Menzies' new Wakefield superhub

that carriage charges would be reviewed again in December, and a notification from Newsread about changes to its charging template.



John McDonnell

John McDowell said Northern Ireland retailers, who all have two wholesalers, are already paying more than £100 a week in many cases, and any further increases would threaten the very existence of some members, he believed.

In the Republic of Ireland, wholesaler Newsread had recently taken over distribution of the Irish Times, and had imposed a flat-rate £2.60 a week miscellaneous charge on all retailers for managing disposal of the title's unsolds.

This was in addition to the higher carriage charge for handling the title, Martin Mulligan reported.

Changes needed to attract attendees

Time-pressed NFRN mem-

bers don't want "official" branch meetings, but they do want more multi-branch events, business functions, social gatherings and events that are topical and relevant to their businesses.

These are the findings of consultations among the membership following the call by the NFRN annual conference for the national executive committee (NEC) to develop proposals for restructuring the federation.

Summarising the NEC's initial proposals, chief executive Paul Baxter said the main change

would be to move from a branch structure to a membership structure,

with the districts (or regions in the event of district mergers) managing activities for their members, supported by head office staff.

Under the organisation structure proposed, branches would disappear and all members in

a district would have a vote for a given number of places on the district executive. District executives would then vote for their representative(s) on a national executive. Delegates for annual conference would be chosen by district executives.

Mr Baxter said a three-year transition period was proposed, but emphasised that existing districts would control the pace of change, and he asked for feedback from members by next February, when national council will consider the matter more fully.

However, council accepted a proposal by Mike Mitchelson, a past president and long-standing NEC member, and seconded by national vice-president Ray Monelle, that all districts would retain their existing number of national councillors for the next three years.

Mutual member numbers growing

Membership of Mutual is growing strongly, while

members' claims are below previous levels, thanks to the educational work the insurer has undertaken to ensure that retailers are more risk aware, chairman Peter Wagg reported.

He urged retailers to be particularly alert at cash and carry depots, where they are vulnerable to attacks or snatches.

Kent member Christine Southern highlighted the case of an independent retailer who closed the boot of his car after loading it with tobacco products, walked round to the driver's door to start the engine, heard a bump, and discovered that a thief had opened the boot of his car and was driving off with the tobacco.

Mrs Southern urged the NFRN to talk to the cash and carry operators about installing number plate recognition software in their camera systems, similar to that used on petrol forecourts.

NFRN Commercial 'acceptable' trade

In a trading environment described as "tough and challenging", NFRN Commercial's financial performance remains at an "acceptable" level, with Shoplink's sales in line with expectations, chairman Ian Shaw reported.

Current Shoplink deals available to members include Diamond Mist, Cuisine de France, and three seasonal offers - postal packaging, winter hats and gloves, and party essentials.

The company has confirmed that it has dropped its cashback scheme and is focused on obtaining the best possible terms for members.

NATIONAL COUNCIL

NFRN NATIONAL COUNCIL
LONDON
17-18.11.2015



Neville Rhodes reports from the NFRN national council meeting

'Lack of clarity' led to gantry row

Disputes with Imperial Tobacco over the allocation of space on the company's gantries probably resulted from a lack of clarity in the details of what was involved when the contracts were signed, council was told.

In some cases, Imperial reps had removed Philip Morris products from the gantries without permission, and in others they had instructed retailers to do so.

NFRN chief executive Paul Baxter said Imperial's reps had no right to touch stock on the gantries, which belonged to the retailers.



Paul Baxter

"Members who come under pressure from Imperial will be made aware of their rights, and if they want to take on the company the federation will support them," he said.

Yorkshire member James Wilkinson said most retailers who signed up probably believed that whatever percentage was specified in the contract would apply to all products handled by Imperial at the time.

This included both the company's own brands and those of Philip Morris.

Retailers could not have anticipated that Imperial's distribution agreement with Philip Morris would unravel, he said.

Peter Robinson, owner of three shops in South Wales, said the new agreement had been sold to him as an extension to his existing ones, under which there had never



Peter Robinson



National council votes to open up the NFRN Awards to all retailers

been a problem about accommodating rival brands.

"My concern is that Imperial is now playing hardball in a way that they never have in the past," he added.

He hoped Imperial would "think long and hard" about taking its gantries out of outlets like his own, which were selling approaching £1m a year of the company's products.

£50m card fraud 'still significant'

The scale of face-to-face plastic card fraud has declined sharply over the past 10 years, but at almost £50m a year it is still significant, retailers were warned in a presentation by Dr Steve Strickland, head of Barclaycard's anti-bribery and corruption team.

His main message was that fraud evolves almost as quickly as technology, making it difficult to predict fraudsters' next targets, so it was vital that all businesses which accept plastic cards should



Members who come under pressure from Imperial will be made aware of their rights, and if they want to take on the company the federation will support them

Paul Baxter
NFRN chief executive

be alert at all times.

Retailers accepting cards from overseas banks without chip and PIN needed to be particularly watchful, and should check that the card number that prints on the till receipt when the card has been swiped matches the number embossed on the card.

Asked about spotting counterfeit chip and PIN cards, Dr Strickland offered three tips to retailers. If in doubt, the retailer should check that the number printed in small type immediately under the first four digits of the embossed card matches the embossed number: if it does not, or there is no printed number, the card is probably a fake.

Checking the hologram, or placing the card under a UV light to see if the card's motif is displayed are other options.

However, as Kent member Harry Goraya pointed out, where contactless payment is being



Harry Goraya

used, the retailer may not even see the card, let alone check it.

New services for NFRN members

A new range of services planned for members was outlined to council by the NFRN's head of operations, Margaret McCloskey.

These include a stock-taking service provided by ABACUS, offering a full stock count from £208; advice on licensing matters; and a free helpline consultation for up to 30 minutes on business property issues such as rent reviews and lease renewals.

However, the federation has decided not to proceed with "loss of attraction" insurance cover for members because of its complexity.

Reporting on member recruitment, Mrs McCloskey said 53 sub-postmasters had joined the NFRN since July, and a further 28 non-news outlets were signed up.

Awards open up to non-members

Certain categories of the NFRN awards are to be opened up to non-members from 2016, council decided.

Supporters of the change argued that opening up the awards would help to recruit members to the federation and raise the profile of the event among possible sponsors.

Nominations for the awards open online in January, judging will take place in July and August, finalists will be notified in September, and the gala presentations will be held in November.

LETTERS

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

CIGARETTE COMPANIES SHOULD BUTT OUT

I am fed up with cigarette companies dictating to me what I can and cannot sell.

This morning, my Imperial rep paid me a visit, saying he wanted to remerchandise my gantry.

I have 10 shelves on which Imperial has, or wants, 65%, but now it wants to take off all Philip Morris brands and stick them in a box under the counter.

I pointed out that we already over-face Imperial brands and that it should consider giving up one of its shelves to me.

But the rep said this was not possible. Imperial will be removing 14 facings which are mainly Chesterfield and Marlboro.

I have made it clear to the rep that I will be looking into taking the gantry out and putting my own solution in. Imperial is not working in the interests of retailers or consumers.

I am hoping there will be a solution to this matter and am sure there are many other retailers in this same situation.

Jimmy Patel,
Jimmy's Store,
Northampton



Andrew Miller, head of field sales at Imperial Tobacco UK, said: "We stress that the share of space obligations within retailers' existing contractual terms have not changed. Retailers are therefore free

to stock PML products – or products from other tobacco manufacturers – on the remaining space on the unit. Our sales force will always endeavour to work with retailers to enable them to achieve the best possible solutions

to their individual business needs, as well as help ensure the ongoing success of the category. We note Mr Patel's concerns, however, and his designated Imperial Tobacco representative will be in touch shortly."

PayPoint rep's big mistake

Last week a PayPoint rep came into my shop and announced he was here to take the PayPoint machine away because my wife and I had not paid our bill.

I assured him that every bill to PayPoint had been paid and that he should check his facts. When he rang head office, it turned out he had the wrong shop.

In all fairness, the rep was very nice and very apologetic, but all this happened in-store and in front of customers. I was shocked and embarrassed to say the least, because

I didn't owe them a penny.

I have never rated PayPoint's customer service at the best of times, but this really took the biscuit.

To top it all, when I

rang to complain, I was held in a queue and then left a message but nobody has bothered to get back to me.

Nick Southern,
Southern's Newsagents,
Maidstone, Kent

A PayPoint spokesman said: "We have been in contact with Mr Southern to offer our apologies and are reviewing our processes to ensure the situation does not happen again."

I question the value of this survey

I am sure early this year all registered retailers received a 10-page questionnaire from the Office of National Statistics (ONS).

Dare I say there are thousands of retail outlets out there who, I suspect, are not registered and therefore not on the ONS's radar. I further

suspect that these outlets operate unchecked.

The questionnaire is complex and complicated. You would need a PhD to fill it out. It turned into mission impossible, so after a week I gave up and posted audited accounts. Within days, I had a call from the ONS asking for my help to interpret the accounts.

To top it all, there was a warning saying failure to return the completed questionnaire could result in a fine of up to £2,500.

This begs the all-important question – how do some big names, tax dodgers, escape the ONS's attention?

Name and address supplied

Jon Gough, head of annual business survey, said: "By completing the questionnaire, businesses let us know how they are operating in the current economic climate. Small businesses perform differently to large businesses, so we need information from both to give

balance and integrity to our results. We accept information based on businesses' most recent finalised accounts, so hopefully figures are readily available. To reduce the burden on medium to small businesses, only a proportion are asked to complete the full 14-page questionnaire while the majority complete the shorter 10-page version. ONS is also investigating potential access to administrative data which may help reduce the number of businesses being surveyed in the future."

Is this the best excuse of all time?

We have 20 boys and girls who deliver newspapers to our HND customers.

In the six years I have been in this business I have had all sorts of excuses and reasons why a newspaper has been missed or

incorrectly delivered to the wrong customer – I thought I had heard them all.

Today I received a text message from one of my delivery boys which, after reading and sharing with some of my staff, I felt I must share with RN readers.

The message goes straight to the top of the list of best excuse yet and I can't see it being bettered

It read: "I'm a kinaesthetic learner, which means I talk to myself, therefore I was talking to myself and then I put a paper through a customer's letterbox who is on holiday. I have missed someone but I don't know who."

Words almost failed me after reading this. The paperboy in question is 15 years old and has been doing the same paper round for more than two years.

Ian Smith
I & S Smith Newsagents Ltd,
Premier Convenience Store,
Turriff, Aberdeenshire

OPINION

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YOUR SAY How do you think Amazon's new online grocery service, Amazon Pantry, might impact the convenience market?

Shahnaz Patel

Spar,
Bolton

I really don't think it will have much impact and we ourselves wouldn't use it in-store for last-minute ordering.

Online grocery might appeal to people who are a little less able, but people who prefer to grocery shop in-store will still want to do that.

Online is a different experience; it's more visual and less personal so I don't believe it will take too much trade away.

Karen Bull

Spar Cresent Stores,
Oxon

I can see that online grocery shopping would appeal to people and there is a possibility the convenience sector could be hit.

However, we operate in a small community with lots of outlying villages and having people want the personal service that we offer, so I don't see it having much of an impact here.



Suki Thiara

Marty's Convenience,
Birmingham

It will impact on convenience and people will increasingly want that service.

It would be very difficult for a small shop like us to compete

and start offering a home delivery service because of the extra manpower and cost.

I'm sure our customers do their supermarket shops online, but where we gain is the small top-up shop, which this threatens.

YOUR STOCK Diageo and Maxxium UK have released gift packs across their alcohol ranges in the run-up to Christmas. Do alcohol gift packs encourage shoppers to spend a little more in store?

Ravi Raveendran

Colombo Food & Wine,
Hounslow

As soon as the festive period arrives drinks companies always issue gift packs, but the price always goes up too. I find that people don't want to pay the extra.

A nice bottle bag would be more beneficial to my customers. I clear my usual display behind the counter for gift alcohol and make a big thing of it, but it's a short window for good sales.

Jazz Goraya

Nisa Local,
Northfleet

When it comes to the run-up to Christmas people will spend that little extra on gift boxes, whether it's a treat for themselves or a present.

Alcohol boxes always go down well because it's a present most people will use.

We have a display cabinet of limited editions positioned near the till which, at this time of year, we sell a lot from.

Dave Hiscutt

Landis,
Weymouth

Gift packs make an easier present and around Christmas people will often opt to trade up so gift packs do make a difference.

Boxes and anything that looks premium always go down well.

I display mine behind the till. If I could, I would put my spirit gift boxes on the shop floor, but that's just not viable.



YOUR ISSUE

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ONE STOP BATTLE NOT OVER YET

Organising and running a campaign can galvanise and inspire a local community, but it's a lot of hard work.

However, when you've done the hard work, pulled in support and thousands of names from the local community to back your efforts, it's all the more galling to hit a stumbling block at the final hurdle.

This is what happened to Rotherham retailer Tawfiq Zindani. He rallied fellow stores and residents to battle against plans to open a One Stop convenience store opposite his business, Fitzwilliam News, on an estate in the town, and thought they had been successful in seeing off the threat.

"We put together a campaign, we had a petition to stop it," he says. "We eventually got 2,000 signatures. We succeeded in the campaign, and One Stop was refused permission to turn the pub into a supermarket.

"So we were surprised to see it had got permission on appeal and then a few weeks ago we saw a notice that One Stop is applying for a premises licence. The council didn't even tell us about it."

The issue has been dragging on for more than a year, Mr Zindani says, with objections to the licence due in by the start of December. He says he is still weighing up his next move. He does, however, question whether it's worth continuing to fight against the store.

"We got the local press involved. Everyone was strongly opposed to it," he says. "There's already an Aldi not far off and a big Tesco Extra close too. It would cause congestion and be dangerous for school kids crossing the road to get there.

"I was surprised it got it through, but then it always gets its own way. It's only a



Tawfiq Zindani is angry One Stop got permission for a c-store opposite him

small estate, but we got everyone behind the campaign. We had 2,000 names. Even if we had 10,000 names or 100,000 names, you feel like we'd have lost."

Rotherham council has said that the application was granted some time ago and insists that all interested parties were informed of the proceedings and kept up to speed.

It further states that it couldn't do anything to object to the application for planning, as it was only to change the frontage of the building.

As many retailers have found out to their cost, changing from a pub to a c-store doesn't necessarily need change of use planning permission. A Rotherham council spokesman says: "The planning application was not for a shop and wasn't made by Tesco, it was for a change to the frontage of the building.

"There was no reason for the planning inspector not to approve the application based on the plans submitted."

Meanwhile, Mr Zindani is now weighing up his options, although he feels further objections might be futile. "We've got a few weeks to consider our next move," he says. "We're speaking to the

off-licence next door, we're thinking about doing it all again, but is it worth it? It really angers me, I feel like we've been dropped in the middle of the sea and we've got to find our own way out."

But he is sure that if, or when, the One Stop opens, it will definitely hit his trade. "It's going to affect our business," he says. "It's my livelihood. I own the freehold, I've got a mortgage to pay, children to look after and this could really hit us hard."

One Stop was not available for comment.

“

I feel like we've been dropped in the middle of the sea and we've got to find our own way out

Tawfiq Zindani

Fitzwilliam News, Rotherham

HND HEROES

In association with

News UK

Q&A

Louise Sutton

Wisebuy Variety Store,
Halstead, Essex



WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO OFFER HND?

1

I offer it partly to get people into the shop. If they come to pay their newspaper bill, they may pick up something else as well. Over the 20 years we've been doing it, we've seen off all the rest of the competition in the town, just because of our good quality service. HND is good for my business as it is regular, guaranteed income. There is a bit of administration, but once it is set up it is easy to manage.

WHAT TECHNIQUES DID YOU USE TO INCREASE YOUR ROUNDS?

2

We put the leaflets provided by The Sun and The Times into the papers to advertise their offers to our existing delivery customers. And if a customer buys the paper in-store, we try and sign them up there and then. We find this works really well and our customers love the offer.

HOW DO YOU GET YOUR PAPERS TO YOUR CUSTOMERS?

3

I've got 26 boys, girls and adults who deliver each morning. A round normally takes 20 minutes and two of these are delivered by car as we deliver to the next village. I pay them £15 for the Monday to Saturday deliveries and £5 for a Sunday delivery. Most of them work all week, so they earn £20 a week. Most of the boys and girls start with us when they are 13 and some stay until they go off to university.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR RETAILERS WHO WANT TO START OR EXPAND THEIR HOME NEWS DELIVERY?

4

Firstly, speak to your local rep and make sure you are mapped on the delivermysun and delivermytimes websites. Then take any offer and really push it with all your customers. As HND is a regular income the more customers you can get on it the better.



CONTACT NEWS UK FOR MORE INFORMATION

INDUSTRY PROFILE

Gold Star

World Foods are increasingly seen by many retailers as providing a great point of difference to their business. Vijay Thanwani's Gold Star wholesale specialises in getting on-trend great quality produce to London's many shops and restaurants



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 BW_mag

RETAIL NEWSAGENT Why are world foods so popular?

VIJAY THANWANI People want to try new things. It's shown by the popularity of events such as the Ideal Home Show, the BBC Good Food Show and all the TV programmes too. Variety is the spice of life. People want choice, we are so cosmopolitan.

Here in London there is everything – you will find more choice here than you would do in New York.

RN What's the latest food trend you've seen locally?

VT There are a lot of Afghani bakeries popping up in our area, making some very interesting dishes.

We tried some of the bread and thought let's see if it'll work in the depot. We brought it back to depot and let our sales team try it. Now we are looking to find a supplier.

RN How do you keep up with current trends?

VT Being very passionate about food I personally go out into the marketplace with our buyer every two or three weeks.

We also research the world food trends in London through our team of business development managers who are out on the street, selling and looking after our customers.

They bring back feedback about neighbourhoods, the different demographics and changing restaurants.

We also get enquiries from our customers. We review this in-house every month.

RN How big an effect can a changing demographic have on an area?

VT As one example, Bangladeshis are moving out of Indian restaurants and the Nepalese are taking their place.

I can see it happening and you can't buy the same things. For a period of time you are going to get people changing it to call it Nepalese cuisine.

There will be more in the future. Elsewhere there's an Indian market in Birmingham, there's curry mile in Manchester.

RN Are there opportunities for retailers to take advantage of world foods outside of the big urban areas too?

VT I think so. We have customers from outside London because shops and restaurants currently need to come to London to get speciality South Indian foods.

There's an opportunity to extend this outside of London. We have customers from Milton Keynes and Luton who come to buy Sri Lankan ingredients, so there's clearly a market there.



Variety is the spice of life. People want choice, we are so cosmopolitan

RN Is this an area that's been growing recently?

VT As an example, there are now about 56 Indian restaurants in St Albans – a big burst of restaurants have opened over the last five years.

Prior to that it was mainly takeaways and basic restaurants, but there is a move towards gourmet restaurants now. How does this affect retail? Five Indian shops have opened as a result.

That should be happening everywhere else.

RN Is Indian cuisine still a key part of the market alongside Thai and middle eastern foods?

VT Absolutely, and there's not just 'Indian' food. Now there is Punjabi, Gujarati, Goan, Peshwari, Thali.

The Indian category is breaking up and expanding. The range we need to stock for retailers has had to be broken up too as a result.

RN Finally, why do you think independent retailers would be wise to focus on their ranges of world foods?

VT If you go onto the high street, you'll sometimes see a speciality retailer doing more business than Tesco Express.

That's because he is listening to the community. He's not limited by merchandising decisions from head office. These are the stores which do what their customers want. There's a big gap.

** Company CV **

Company Gold Star

Managing director Vijay Thanwani

Profile Harrow-based independent wholesaler Gold Star specialises in world foods alongside traditional cash and carry categories. The company also offers a delivery service providing coverage to the whole South East.

**

**

BARRY FROST

GUEST COLUMNIST

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Get the credit you deserve

If you want to secure finance for your business, you need to know what a credit search will reveal and deal with any outstanding issues immediately

I am often asked to advise retailers on the best way to fund store development projects and my advice is always based upon each person's individual circumstances.

The cost of any finance will vary greatly, from money that is secured on a property to that where the shopfittings themselves are used as security. This can depend on how long someone has owned a business and whether they own any freehold property, but by far and away the most important factor in the cost of finance, and indeed whether a proposal is accepted or declined, is the information discovered when a credit search is carried out on any individual and also the business itself.

It is important to be aware, therefore, of what a credit search will reveal and what should be done if you are conscious of any issues that might affect your ability to get any type of finance.

Credit searches tell funders a great deal about previous payment history and contain a lot of detail that is critical in making an underwriting decision.

The information is tied to the name and date of birth, but also the address. It will confirm how long somebody has lived at their address and will also show any information linked to other previous addresses. Most types of finance arrangements will show up and there will be a detailed payment history going back several years that gives funders an idea of a person's habits and what types of or how much finance they have. Having no finance can be as

much of a hindrance as having too much, because finance providers want to see payments being made on time. If a person has no finance at all, or very little, a payment pattern can't be identified, which can be an issue.

For many people, credit searches don't cause any issues and they may not even be aware what has been revealed. Others, though, will have had issues in the past that might have adversely affected their credit rating. They may or may not be aware of this, or they may be unsure what to do about it.

When I am advising customers about raising finance, the issue that causes the most problems is adverse credit that is historic and hasn't been dealt with.

Finance companies accept that circumstances can change and situations like redundancy and bereavement can cause financial hardship. Also, businesses can have financial disputes with suppliers, that albeit



It is important to be aware of what a credit search will reveal and any issues that might affect your ability to get any type of finance

temporarily, affect ability to pay.

What they like to see if this does occur, however, is a swift response once circumstances have changed for the better and that any adverse credit indicators such as defaults or county court judgments have been satisfied as quickly as possible. Adverse credit information that hasn't been dealt with is very likely to result in the rejection of an application, and the larger the amount and the longer it goes without being satisfied, the more damage done to a person's credit rating.

So what can you do if circumstances do change and somebody ends up with adverse credit registered against their name? The first thing to do is to deal with the problem as soon as personal circumstances will allow and not to bury their heads in the sand. Find out what the problem is and who it is registered by.

Or, if that is already known, contact the parties involved and tell them you want to settle the matter. Keep a note of all conversations you have and keep any correspondence relating to the matter.

Once you have settled the dispute, the credit reference agencies can be informed. Write a note of exactly what happened and why your circumstances changed and keep that together with any correspondence.

When you begin applying for finance, funders will often only approve applications for people with historical adverse credit information to hand.

Barry Frost is managing director of finance and property consultancy service Commercial Plus

* Checklist

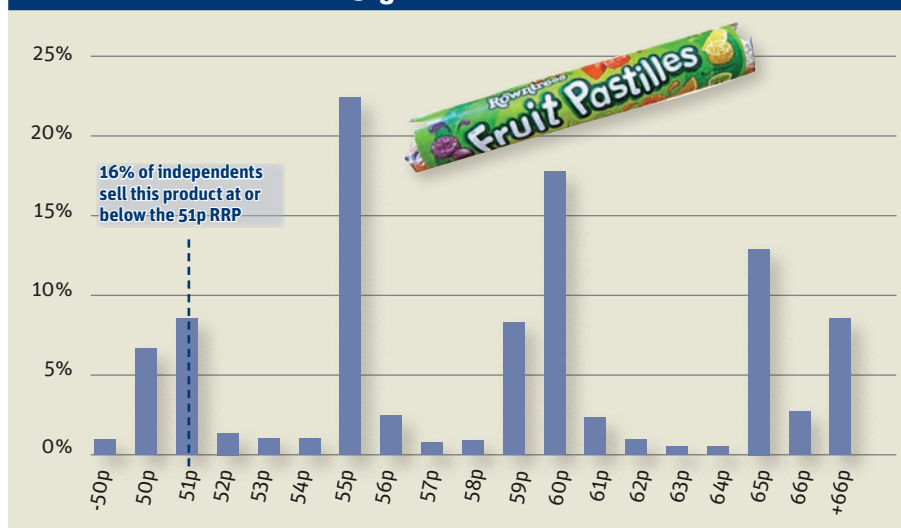
- + Check your** own credit file regularly, particularly before making any finance application
- + If you become** aware of any adverse credit information, don't bury your head in the sand. Deal with it as soon as possible
- + Keep copies** of phone conversations and correspondence relating to the matter
- + Be honest** about any adverse credit you know about when making any new applications
- + Remember**, the longer it goes without being satisfied, the more it will affect you.

PRICEWATCH SUGAR CONFECTIONERY

SUGAR CONFECTIONERY PRICES AROUND THE UK

PRODUCT	AVERAGE	RRP	RETAILER 1	RETAILER 2	RETAILER 3	RETAILER 4	RETAILER 5
Maynards Wine Gums 150g	£1.00	£1.00 (PM-130g)	£1.00 (PM)	£1.79	£1.00 (PM-130g)	£1.00 (PM)	-
Rowntree's Fruit Pastilles 52g	58p	51p	50p	65p	69p	52p	65p
Rowntree's Fruit Pastilles Giant Tube 125g	£1.31	£1.38	£1.00	£1.00	£1.00	-	-
Skittles 55g	58p	49p	50p	65p	65p	55p	55p
Bassett's Liquorice Allsorts 130g	£1.00	£1.00 (PM)	£1.00 (PM)	£1.69 (190g)	£1.79 (190g)	£1.00 (PM)	£1.49
Rowntree's Fruit Pastilles 140g	£1.00	£1.00 (PM-120g)	£1.00 (PM-170g)	£1.00 (PM-120g)	£1.00 (PM)	-	-
Starburst Original 45g	57p	49p	50p	60p	65p	55p	-
Rowntree's Jellytots 42g	57p	51p	50p	65p	65p	55p	55p
Maynards Wine Gums 52g	50p	51p	-	65p	69p	55p	59p
Mentos Chewy Fruits 38g	55p	49p	50p	50p	65p	-	59p
Bassett's Cherry Drops 49g	61p	51p	55p	-	69p	55p	79p
Polo Fruits 37g	55p	50p	50p	-	-	50p	59p

ROWNTREE'S FRUIT PASTILLES 52g Price distribution %



Average selling prices and best-selling products rankings are sourced by EDFM Ltd from EPOS data from over 2,000 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 PAUL KEYS

STORE Key News & Stores

LOCATION Sheffield, South Yorkshire

SIZE 500sq ft

TYPE secondary road

We sell most of our bagged lines pricemarked at £1, and then round most countlines up or down to 50p. Keeping our prices consistent all year round reassures customers that we set prices fairly, which makes them more inclined to shop with us again. On top of our standard range we also sell our own shop-branded bagged sweets through Parfett's. We select bags of sweets such as fruit jellies, liquorice and jelly beans and have them labelled as a 'Key News' brand, which we sell for 50p.

RETAILER

2



NAME ATUL SODHA

STORE Peverells Londis


LOCATION Harefield, Uxbridge

SIZE 600sq ft

TYPE village

I now round most of my standard sweet prices to end in 5s to give customers the value they are increasingly looking for. I'm in the fourth week of a category management trial in collaboration with Nestlé and Londis, who are in the process of helping me create the best range for my store. So far I've seen a weekly sales increase of around £100, and this is just mainly from tidying up take-home bag lines and impulse chocolate, as well as second-sitting bestsellers. I always thought I had a good range, but this has really opened my eyes to the importance of securing the right products.

 **Nadia Alexandrou**
 nadia.alexandrou@newtrade.co.uk

 020 7689 3350
RETAILER**3****NAME** JOHN STEVENSON**STORE** Nisa Local**LOCATION** Stockton-on-Tees**SIZE** 3,000sq ft**TYPE** residential

We generally stick to Nisa's RRP's, but since we're a forecourt we'll add around 5p to each price where we can. This is a fairly popular category, although we have our full Christmas range out now and sales are very slow compared to last year. We stock a selection of hanging bags and children's novelty sweets from Bonds Confectionery, which are very popular. We dedicate around four metres of shelf space to this category, including all along the top of the shelves, which allows us to stock more products.

RETAILER**4****NAME** ANDREW WRIGHT**STORE** Wright Way**LOCATION** Rackheath, Norfolk**SIZE** 550sq ft**TYPE** residential

I adjust my prices to get around a 20% margin on sugar confectionery, and often round to the nearest 5p where I can. I always pass any case deals I buy on to customers through promotions, as this encourages loyalty and repeat purchase. I sell most of my bagged range priced at £1, because they tend to get bought up much faster than standard packs. I merchandise most of my confectionery by the till to encourage impulse purchases.

RETAILER**5****NAME** VIPIN PATEL**STORE** Natsons**LOCATION** Barnes, London**SIZE** 750sq ft**TYPE** high street

Our prices depend on the deals we get on cases, but we mostly stick to prices ending in 5s and 9s for standard ranges. We merchandise our confectionery in a prime location near the counter to encourage customers to buy on impulse as they're queuing up to pay. Polo Fruits are particularly popular, although all the big Nestlé brands sell well in our store. Sugar confectionery sales pick up slightly in the summer, but they tend to be a fairly consistent seller all year round.



THE ENTREPRENEURS

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



ALAN SUGAR

Route to the top

Philanthropist and entrepreneur Sir Alan Michael Sugar started his empire selling car aerials out of a van. According to the Sunday Times Rich List 2015, Sugar has joined the "billionaire's club" with an estimated fortune of £1.4bn, and is ranked as the 101st richest person in the UK. Dropping out of school at 16, Sugar started selling electrical items out of a van after a brief stint as a statistician in the education ministry. At the age of 21 he registered the name Amstrad, a company which grew quickly, offering affordable quality hi-fi turntable covers. In 2005, Sugar starred

in the Apprentice, offering the winners in the reality game show his investment in whatever product they successfully pitched. Sugar also controls British private aircraft charter company Amsair Executive Aviation. He sold Amstrad in 2007.

Key achievements

- Sugar's fledgling company Amstrad doubled in share price each year in the 1980s.
- Sugar was the chairman of Tottenham Hotspur Football Club for 10 years.
- He is chairman of Amscreen, specialising in selling advertising space on digital signage screens.



Lessons for your store

- 1 Your dreams don't always have to be massive – when Sugar first started out, his main ambition was to become self-sufficient and independent
- 2 Higher education is not the only way to succeed
- 3 Give others the opportunity to follow in your footsteps – as Sugar did with The Apprentice.

RETAILER PROFILE



The fast track to success

Becoming the first small format Simply Fresh store was an easy decision for business partners Jasvinder Randhawa, Gavin Mahal and Vimesh Patel to make. After all, it was their customers who helped make up their minds.
Steven Lambert reports

With a longstanding CTN located in a prime location in St James's Park tube station, Jasvinder Randhawa, Gavin Mahal and Vimesh Patel have spent the last four years building up a strong rapport among office workers and local shoppers in the bustling heart of London.

But while their business was well known for its robust range of snacks, magazines, greetings cards and other impulse items, changes in their customers' buying habits and new competition led them to re-evaluate their approach to retailing.

Vimesh says: "We spoke to our customers and many of them felt we should be doing more ready meals and fresh food.

"We've also had chains such as Pret opening up nearby, with more people moving towards coffee and sandwiches for lunchtime."

Feeling they were missing out on a big sales opportunity, the retailers turned to Simply Fresh to help them redevelop their store.

With the symbol group's help, they have transformed their "tired" 800sq ft shop into small convenience store catering to the needs of the thousands of commuters passing by every day.

Being the first small format Simply Fresh store, Jasvinder, Gavin and Vimesh have worked with the group to offer a tight range designed to encourage repeat purchases throughout the course of the day.

For example, the store has been targeting workers at the nearby Transport for London and Ministry of Justice offices during breakfast and lunch with a range of artisan pastries and bread, and a large selection of fresh fruit.

These products are stocked in rustic-looking wooden crates at the front of the store to catch the eye of passing trade and to improve the overall aesthetics of the business.

In addition, Simply Fresh St James's Park features a robust range of high-end ready meals and lunchtime options sourced from local independent suppliers – including the likes of Greenwich-based Soulful Soups and Soho Sandwiches – to attract more business from the 'Pret crowd'.

Vimesh says: "We work with about 30 local suppliers. Before we reopened we had an open day to sample products from them to make sure we were stocking the best quality items for our customers."

The team has been able to take this one step further by working with Soho Sandwiches to offer two eye-catching meal deals to shoppers – a £3.50 offer that includes a sandwich, drink and snack, and a £4.50 promotion that includes the option of a gourmet sandwich and smoothies.

Gavin says: "One of the complaints we heard from customers about Pret was that they don't always completely fill their sandwiches. We chose Soho because they offer



Our customers are looking for healthier snacks, which is why we've increased our range of dried fruit and nuts"

VIMESH PATEL



(l-r) Gavin Mahal, Vimesh Patel and Jasvinder Randhawa are targeting shoppers with gourmet sandwiches and premium ready meals



"We spoke to our customers and many of them felt we should be doing more ready meals and fresh food"

great quality and they fill their sandwiches right to the edge, so customers are getting a better deal."

To complete the package, the store now boasts a range of fresh meat and fish, loose and pre-packed vegetables and a selection of herbs and spices to appeal to shoppers looking to cook for themselves after work. This is complemented with a selection of beers and wines from national and local manufacturers, with a large number of these available chilled from the store's two alcohol fridges.

As Jasvinder puts it: "We're now more like an M&S food store but without the price."

While the shop has only been trading under Simply Fresh for just over a week, Jasvinder, Gavin and Vimesh say the changes have had almost immediate impact, with rising sales and average basket spend up by more than £1.

And the team is already looking at further growth opportunities, with plans to install a coffee machine and proposals to add flowers at the front of the store due to the impending closure of a nearby florist.

Vimesh says: "We've been able to keep the things we've become known for, such as magazines and the Lottery, but now we can do so much more on top of this." ●

VISIT MY SHOP

Simply Fresh

St James's Park
Tube Station,
55 Broadway,
London
SW1H 0BD

📍 @SFStJamesPark



Want to see more of Jasvinder, Gavin and Vimesh's store? Go to betterretailing.com/simply-fresh

STORE TRAINING

Training isn't just about developing your staff or improving your store – it's also about protecting your business from falling foul of regulation.

Gurpreet Samrai went to visit one symbol group which is investing in a range of tools to help its members

In the know



Whether you work in the health, finance or retail sector, training programmes present a great opportunity to strengthen your skills and knowledge. But in an industry where legislation, technology and services are ever-changing it becomes a vital tool to keep your business safe, legal and delivering the highest standard of service.

Over the past year alone, the retail industry has had to come to grips with the tobacco display ban, e-cigarette legislation changes and the alcohol wholesaler registration scheme. Changes which, if not adhered to, could have devastating consequences for businesses. This has made regular training for all staff an even greater necessity.

With that in mind, the Nisa Retail Academy was launched in 2013 to “provide a complete training solution for the group’s members”. Nisa, like many others, outsourced its training facility for years offering members workbooks for a fee. Now, they have access to a suite of free training guides and support on paper and digitally, which it can claim as one of its unique selling points.

The Academy is headed up by former Tesco Express training manager Emma Brock, who was brought in to develop the facility and design its training materials. The main objective of the Academy, according to Ms Brock, is to ensure members are protecting themselves.

“A lot of retailers think they only



A lot of retailers think they only need to train their staff once

Nisa's Retail Academy is free for its retailers to use



need to train their staff once, but actually they need to do it on a consistent basis to ensure their staff are up-to-date on all the legal elements to protect themselves and their business,” she says.

The material is split into various sections – training guides, legal training, retail support guides and factsheets – and is supported by workshops. Each one covers differ-

ents aspects of the business such as age-restricted sales, food safety, health and safety, and upselling.

The training guides feature key information followed by a short test which, on successful completion can be signed off on an employee's training card.

“I worked as a duty manager at Tesco Express for four years so I know the convenience market and how fast paced it can be. I have

designed them so they are quite interactive and have small chunks of information,” Ms Brock says.

“A member of staff will get their own workbook which they go through either with a trainer or by themselves. It can be used whichever way is best for that retailer. It's designed so anyone can pick it up and understand it.”

Legal training remains one of the



Nisa's goal is for all retailers to protect their businesses and avoid the pitfall of inadequate training

Academy's key aspects and it will be launching a legal refresher training calendar for 2016 next month, which covers a different area of the business every month with highly-regulated areas such as age-restricted sales covered more often.

While the training aims to protect retailers' businesses, Ms Brock says the guides and factsheets act as a support tool with some designed to help grow their business.

The academy continues to be developed, and earlier this year, an online training portal, which has a fee attached, was launched in partnership with UpSkill People. It features extra modules and videos and provides retailers with a snapshot of their employees, training to date. But Ms Brock revealed she is now turning her attention to developing an additional programme for the academy aimed specifically at managers.

"We have managers in stores that don't necessarily have the behav-

ioural or operational training to be able to manage people and I think that's something the Retail Academy can help with, whether that's workshops or online learning or a combination of the two. It's about

CASE STUDY "I learned things I didn't know"

Nick Mills, manager of the Nisa Local store in Tingley, is participating in the new Retail Academy online training along with 13 staff.



"I've been in the industry for 24 years and I've learnt things I didn't know," he says.

"We are really impressed with the training package because it's easy to follow and suits everyone however they want to learn as it includes videos, images and text.

"I've finished the course and it's great. Now I am encouraging all my staff to take part because it's a fantastic way of ensuring everyone has the same level of knowledge.

"It is also now part of our induction pack for new members of staff.

"It's too early to say if it has benefited the business, but I am very sure it will.

"The customer service and fresh produce course are really useful and I can see them both highly benefitting not only my staff but my store."



I want retailers to be proactive before problems happen

Each course is designed to be quick and simple to do

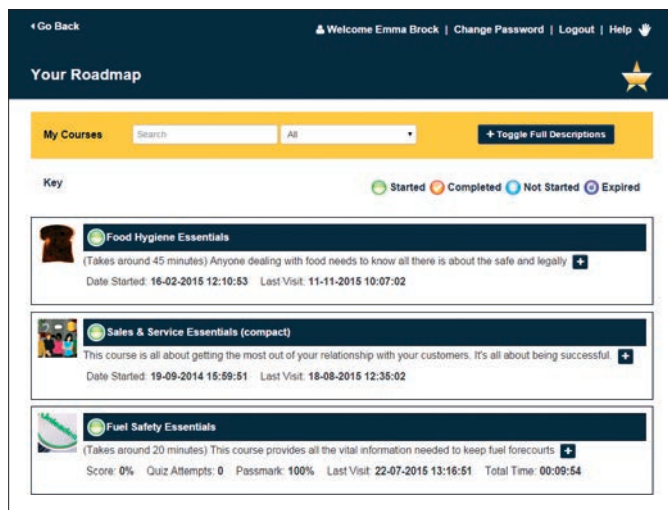
giving them more information about different areas of their business and how they can develop that area whether it's people, fresh or the news and magazines category."

Ms Brock says her biggest challenge is getting retailers to be proactive in their approach to training, and has set herself the ultimate goal of ensuring all members are protecting themselves and pre-empting the devastating consequences of staff being inadequately trained.

"I have had retailers come to me who have to go to court because they have failed a test purchase visit. They come to me and say what can I do?" Ms Brock says. "My response is I can help you going forward, but in this case there's not much you can do to prove you've done training because you haven't got anything in place.

"It can be really frustrating because this material isn't new. A lot of phone calls I get are reactive and I want retailers to be proactive before problems happen. And that's really key for independent retailers because it's their livelihoods. They don't have a big corporate business behind them that can help them or pay their fine.

"If they've got fines of £2,000 and bad press it can be a huge problem for their business. I would really like to try to reduce that impact for members and for them all to be compliant and achieving well in mystery shopper and test purchase visits." ●



AS SEEN ON TV

E-CIGS IN SECONDS



The e-cigarette market has shown rapid growth with an estimated **1.5 million** regular adult users¹ in the UK. This presents a significant opportunity for retailers to capitalise on the category's sales potential.

Here, JTI offers expert advice across **5 key areas** to help you better understand e-cigarettes, ensure you're stocking the right brands and guarantee your share of the profits.

DID YOU KNOW...

INDEPENDENT, SYMBOL, GAS & CONVENIENCE STORES HOLD ALMOST A 50% SHARE OF THE CATEGORY'S RETAIL SALES VALUE²

RANGE

Become a **destination store** by stocking well-known brands and offer a consistent, focused range of disposables, rechargeables and tanks.

This should include E-Lites, the **fastest growing** e-cigarette brand in the UK³.



VISIBILITY



Ensure e-cigarettes are located prominently in store, preferably on the countertop or in a bespoke countertop unit. Rechargeable e-cigarettes, such as E-Lites Curv, should take precedence as they are leading the category with over **50% value share**⁴.

SWISS
MADE
E-LIQUID

Visit www.jtiadvance.co.uk for additional category management advice and www.e-lites.co.uk for further information on the E-Lites product range.

AVAILABILITY

100% availability 24/7 is key to help guarantee repeat visits from local customers.



SALES

Monitor which products are selling well using a good **EPoS system** to help inform your purchasing decision when visiting the depot.

DID YOU KNOW...

E-LITES CURV IS THE FASTEST GROWING E-CIGARETTE BRAND IN THE UK³



TRAINING

It is vital that staff are well equipped to guide customers through the range stocked in store and help them find the best product for their vaping needs. Speak to your **JTI rep** who can provide expert advice and further boost your category knowledge.



RETAILER VIEWPOINT

"E-cigarettes are a must-stock for me having proved both profitable and popular with my customers. I carry a focused selection of brands, including E-Lites, and maintaining a good range and availability has secured me several loyal vaping customers."

*Alpesh Shingadia,
Londis Retailer*

DID YOU KNOW...

E-LITES CURV IS THE BEST-SELLING RECHARGEABLE STARTER KIT ON THE MARKET³



JTI's UK trading company is Gallaher Limited

1. TNS Omnibus Q2 2015
2. Sales value YTD 2015, Nielsen Oct YTD 2015. Not including online sales
3. Nielsen latest 4 week period up to WE 10/10/15 Vs 4 week period prior, share of sales value
4. Nielsen Scan Track Oct YTD 2015

JTI

E-Lites
#ABSOLUTELY

E-CIGARETTES & VAPING



How can you tell if an e-cigarette rep is about to offer you a great opportunity for your store or lumber you with hundreds of pounds of dud stock? It's a tough question in a market that's still new and changing fast. Nadia Alexandrou sets out the questions you need to ask to secure the best result for your business

Ask the right questions

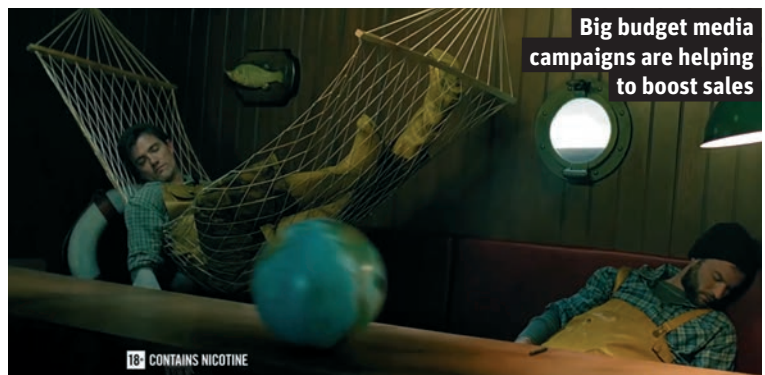
It's busy, a staff member is off sick and then in walks a rep from one of the many e-cigarette and vaping companies operating in the UK. Should you drop everything and listen or send them away? It's a scenario that hundreds of retailers deal with every week.

One thing is for certain, if the products are right and the company knows what it's doing, this is a category that can be valuable to almost any store. "The number of e-cigarette users has doubled in the last two years, and it's becoming more important for retailers to offer established, trustworthy brands that guarantee good quality," says Gavin Anderson, general sales manager for Republic Technologies Limited.

With any store unlikely to sell more than a few brands, ensuring that the person in your store is representing an established, trustworthy company is more important than in possibly any other category. So here's what you need to ask them.



The number of e-cigarette users has doubled in the last two years



Big budget media campaigns are helping to boost sales

Do you advertise?

It's no good having the best product in the world if no one knows about it, so, how does the company advertise itself? Looking at the scale and type of investment behind a product can give a good idea of a company's confidence in its range.

E-Lites, Blu and Vivid, have all appeared on TV, run free sampling

activity and been advertised in print and online as part of multi-million pound campaigns.

Proof that this is effective in driving sales for retailers comes in the form of the bestsellers list: all three feature in the top five e-cigarette brands – along with MV and Nicolites – together representing 73% of the market.



NEW E-LITES CURV

ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE

THIS YEAR, JTI EXTENDED ITS SUCCESSFUL E-CIGARETTE BRAND E-LITES WITH THE LAUNCH OF E-LITES CURV.

Available nationwide across independent and wholesale channels, the range offers a modern, innovative alternative for existing adult smokers and vapers, and a real sales opportunity for retailers.

HOW WILL E-LITES CURV BOOST YOUR PROFITS?

- **No.1 BRAND AWARENESS**
E-Lites is the UK's most recognised e-cigarette brand¹
- **SALES**
Rechargeables are the most popular device type in the category²
- **SUPPORT**
A knowledgeable JTI sales force on hand for category advice

WHY WILL CUSTOMERS BUY E-LITES CURV?

- **QUALITY**
A Swiss Made e-liquid providing a quality taste
- **CONVENIENCE**
Simple one-touch charging in just 2.5 hours
- **INNOVATION**
A unique new oval shape, sitting more naturally in the hand and mouth

BEST-SELLING

RECHARGEABLE STARTER KIT IN THE UK³

SWISS MADE
E-LIQUID

For more information on E-Lites Curv, retailers should speak to their local JTI representative or call the helpdesk on 0800 112 3401.

Retailers can also visit www.jtiadvance.co.uk for further information, support and guidance on tobacco and e-cigarette retailing.

¹ TNS Omnibus Q1 14. Brand Awareness = top of mind, spontaneous and prompted & Nielsen Scan Track Aug '14 ² Nielsen Market Track 2014 YTD

² Nielsen Scan Track to 10th Oct 2015

³ Nielsen latest 4 week period up to WE 10/10/15 Vs 4 week period prior

JTI



E-Lites
#ABSOLUTELY

E-CIGARETTES & VAPING

Are your products up to date?

The newest products are designed to meet the trends suppliers see now in this fast-evolving market. Prime examples are E-Lites Curv and Vivid E-Liquid Capsule which, as well as being heavily supported with marketing campaigns, build upon the traditional 'cig-a-like' model with e-liquid elements that require no manual refills. Both JTI and Philip Morris, manufacturers of the two products, describe them as 'next generation' e-cigarettes.



Do your products meet upcoming regulations?

Although subject to legal challenge, from May next year the EU TPD II regulations are going to restrict the e-cigarette and vaping products UK retailers can sell. As it stands there will be a maximum nicotine strength of 20mg, a maximum capacity of 10ml and some quality-regulations on ingredients.

Richard Russell, brand manager at e-liquid and vaping manufacturer Diamond Mist, is preparing his company for these changes, keeping retailers updated on how this will affect the range next year. "The cost of testing every SKU means we might be dropping a few of the 57 flavours we have, but we're keeping customers updated as we go along," he says.

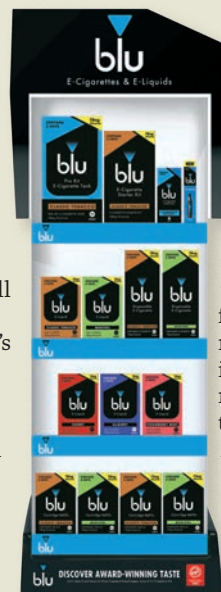


How can you help me merchandise my range?

Nearly every supplier offers free PoS material - mainly in the form of counter display units - so what sets theirs apart?

In this category, where visibility is so crucial, merchandising your display correctly can kickstart sales. Small details such as displays that advertise the brand's full range and flavour, like the ones offered by Blu, or materials that are designed to last with eye-catching colours and finish, such as V2's stands, may help you decide whether a brand is right for your store.

For those who are either limited by space or interested in specialising and expanding in the future, Diamond Mist offers bespoke stands as well as



window wraps (advertising stickers that frame shop windows) and giant plastic models of its products. "We always send out free PoS materials to every new customer, but it's also important to offer more for retailers who want to take this category further," says Mr Russell.

JTI's Jeremy Blackburn also sees this as a crucial aspect of supplier support: "This extra branding support can help retailers drive awareness and

sales even further, and our reps are able to help anyone who wants to get involved with this," says Mr Blackburn.

Can you help ensure I'm a responsible retailer?

As the regulations increase on e-cigarettes there will be a greater need for stores to ensure that they manage this category responsibly too.

"When the age restrictions on the purchase of e-cigarettes came in we sent out notification emails and also designed A3 posters similar to the compulsory tobacco warnings that retailers could display. We also included refusal registers in some information packs for retailers who were entirely unprepared," says Diamond Mist's Richard Russell.

**IT IS ILLEGAL TO
SELL E-CIGARETTE
AND E-LIQUID
PRODUCTS TO
ANYONE UNDER
THE AGE OF 18**

**Keeping up
with new
regulation is
crucial**

Will I see you again?

It's all very well having a sales rep in your store who's attentive, polite and helpful while he or she is trying to get you to agree to stock their products, but what about after that? Like any other category, it's important to stay updated on product launches, market trends and possible changes in legal selling requirements, so find out how they intend to support you.

Brands backed by major tobacco manufacturers such as Nicocigs (Philip Morris) and Blu (Imperial Tobacco) are investing in their sales teams to ensure reps have access

to relevant merchandising advice, tips and PoS material. JTI has also done this, and fully integrated certain aspects of its e-cigarette and tobacco operations together, including its trade website. The JTI Advance website has been developed to include market insight, tips and retailer video clips.

"We have also developed our tobacco sales force to understand the e-cigarettes category so retailers will benefit from regular visits from their JTI rep," says Jeremy Blackburn, head of communications at JTI.



**This extra
branding
support can
help retailers
drive
awareness
and sales
even further**

What training can you provide for me and my staff?

"This market is becoming increasingly technical and complex as it continues to evolve, and we're seeing retailers demand more guidance and education from suppliers," says Mr Blackburn. Any supplier you work with should therefore have a good range of educational materials available.

Retailers should expect a brand's reps to support them on how to help customers find the right product for them, as well as providing knowledge on the latest market trends and launches. "We have invested in a shopper marketing team with a strong understanding of the market and its consumers who are able to offer e-cigarette and e-liquid advice to retailers," says Jennifer Roberts, category and shopper marketing controller from Blu.

Online platforms are also helping suppliers to further educate retailers. Diamond Mist, for example, is in the process of developing educational videos, which will be accessible through its website and YouTube channel. "We want to offer retailers an easy and cost-effective way of training up staff, which is what these videos will provide," says Mr Russell. ●

**Online
tools can
provide
24/7
support**

Get ready for a blu New Year



WINNER E-Cigarette
& E-Liquid Category*

Prepare for all the
e-cig sales coming
your way this
December and
January

Stock blu – the UK's
2nd biggest and
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to stock up with
blu e-cigarettes



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E-Cigarettes
& E-Liquids

HOME BAKING

Do you know your filo pastry from your choux? The growing popularity of baking means many of your customers will and will be looking to your store to stock up on essentials.

Nadia Alexandrou outlines the home bakery must-stocks

Interest still rising

In a category that has experienced phenomenal growth – annual sales climbed to £1.7bn last year – there is good reason why retailers across the industry are paying more attention to home baking. Many credit the UK's favourite baking show, *The Great British Bake-Off*, for the consistent year-on-year growth in sales and Waitrose reported a mighty 881% uplift in sales of baking trays alone in the last week of July 2014 – just one month after the start of the *Bake-Off*'s fifth series.

Similarly, convenience retailers such as Tom Dant, Paul Keys and Serge Khunkhun have expanded this category in the past few years, and see it playing an essential role in the future of their businesses. Here, we give you a toolkit of the essential home baking products to stock for baking enthusiasts.



Whenever local school children have their home-tech classes they will come in hordes



Baking has become a favourite hobby across the generations

Baking essentials

Paul Keys

I started stocking cornflour when I refitted my shop and saw that it was on all the home baking planograms I looked at. It has since proved a worthwhile product to stock.

Cornflour

While it is mostly used for thickening gravy, cornflour is also useful for meringues and as an alternative to standard flour to make lighter biscuits and puddings.



Ready-made cake mixes

Anyone who has committed to baking a batch of cakes with little or no time to prepare will be grateful for a quick fix at their nearest convenience store.

Serge Khunkhun

I stock Happy Shopper Fairy Cake Mix that I sell priced at £1.25, or two for £2.20. I also use Betty Crocker mixes to signpost the category because it's such a recognisable brand, and sell Green's cheesecake mix which is very popular.



MEET THE RETAILERS



Tom Dant

Owner of three Spar stores in Lincolnshire, Tom's village store in Bilsby has the biggest market for homebaking. He has grown the store's reputation there as the go-to store for bakeware products.



Paul Keys

After getting more requests for home baking products from customers, Paul expanded his range last year as part of a refit of his 1,500sq ft Key News & Stores in Sheffield.



Serge Khunkhun

Over the past few years Serge has built up his homebaking range in his shop, Woodcross Stores, in Wolverhampton as his customers continue to show a bigger interest in the category.

Serge Khunkhun

In the past year I've increased my range of sugar to include Muscovado, a soft light brown sugar and a dark brown sugar as the popularity of home baking continues to grow.



Sugar

A core ingredient for any baking recipe, customers will be looking for more than just white sugar for their tea or coffee.

For the filling

Raisins and sultanas

Whether they're used as a healthier alternative to chocolate chips or for a fruit cake, raisins and sultanas are a popular ingredients for many baking recipes.



Paul Keys

Winter is the only time I stock raisins and sultanas because this is when my customers use them in mince pies and Christmas puddings and pick them up as an emergency purchase from my shop.



Glacé cherries

These cherries are a popular ingredient in recipes for any customer looking to indulge in a bit of winter baking. You'll find them in recipes for classics such as Christmas pudding and Rocky Road cakes.



Paul Keys

I started stocking glacé cherries last year after the finals of The Great British Bake Off, and they have been selling consistently ever since.



Cocoa and cooking chocolate

These are must-have ingredients for customers in the mood for anything chocolatey.



Serge Khunkhun

I stock Bournville cocoa powder. As well as an essential for baking I find people are often not happy with using hot chocolate powder and want to make their own.



Lemon juice

An easy item to forget in any recipe, having a long-lasting bottle of lemon juice is a popular choice for many customers who want to make sure they always have this small yet crucial ingredient.



Serge Khunkhun

I used to only sell lemon juice for Shrove Tuesday, but because customers kept asking for it I now stock Jif Lemon all year round.



Serge Khunkhun

Whenever local school children have their home-tech classes they will come in hordes to buy flour, and they always choose the smaller bags of McDougall's. It's the perfect size and a brand they recognise.

1/2kg branded flour

Using a category leader that appears on all the major wholesalers' planograms, such as McDougall's or Homepride, can help to attract browsing shoppers. Smaller packs will also better serve top-up shoppers.



Large bags of own brand flour

Regular bakers might prefer the option of a bigger and less expensive bag of flour that will last several big bakes.

Serge Khunkhun

The large bags of Happy Shopper plain and self-raising flour sell really well in our store thanks to the fact that many of our customers enjoy baking regularly.



Decorations

Ready-made marzipan and icing

Whether it's to cut time or to ensure a professional-looking finish, ready-made icing and marzipan are fail-safe solutions for many shoppers.



Tom Dant

We stock premium-quality icing and marzipan blocks from a bakery wholesaler Bako, which customers will buy if they don't want to make it from scratch.



'Hundreds & Thousands'

Also called sugar strands, these may well be good for customers looking for an easy and fun way to decorate any type of cake or biscuit.

Tom Dant

I have a selection of cake decorations including 'hundreds & thousands' and silver balls, which are often bought on impulse when customers are shopping for cake ingredients.



Baking utensils

Cake Tins

Customers who have just bought everything they think they need for a triple-layered Victoria sponge only to realise they're one cake tin short will be rushing out to their local store for one.



Tom Dant

I began renting out cake tins when a local baking club started a few years ago and came to my store asking for baking utensils. Word soon spread and now many of my regulars rent them out for charity bake sales and classes.



£1 cake cutters

From star and swirl shapes to seasonal Christmas trees and Valentine's Day hearts, a wide array of affordable cake cutters can add a bit of excitement to a day of baking.

Tom Dant

I have a £1 range of Spar's own brand home-baking products, including cake cutters, which sell really well as a last-minute purchase for unprepared bakers.



PREVIEW



Keep tabs on toys

Kerry Foods is giving away 200,000 toy tracking devices under a £3m Christmas marketing campaign for Richmond sausages.

RRP various

Outers various

Contact 01784 430 777



Guinness and cheese

Burt's Chips has expanded its range of Guinness-flavoured crisps with a new flavour, Toasted Cheddar.

RRP not given

Outers not given

Contact 08450 852220



Gift boxed spirits

Diageo has unveiled a number of Christmas gift packs and new bottle sizes for its Reserve spirits range.

RRP £4.50 - £49

Outers various

Contact 0845 7515 101



Swizzels show of love

Swizzels has extended its confectionery range with the launch of a Love Hearts roll.

RRP 10p

Outers not given

Contact 01663 744 144



Pricemarked Smint

Perfetti Van Melle has launched pricemarks on its Smint Mint packs this month.

RRP £1

Outers 12

Contact 01753 442100



Jägermeister on TV

Jägermeister is being promoted with TV ads as part of its £2.7m 'Craft the Moment' campaign.

RRP £13.49 - £21.59

Outers 6

Contact 01283 217703



Player's turns Red

Imperial Tobacco has launched Player's Red Volume tobacco for roll-your-own smokers and cigarette-maker machines.

RRP £2.59 - £16.20

Outers various

Contact 01179 636636



White Christmas

Arla Foods is bringing its limited edition Starbucks White Chocolate Mocha Red Cup back to chillers this Christmas.

RRP £1.59 - £1.99

Outers not given

Contact 0845 762 6434



Spice up your drinks

Mast-Jaegermeister is launching Jägermeister Spice as a permanent addition from this Christmas.

RRP £23.99

Outers 6

Contact 01283 217703



Got it wrapped up

Maxxium UK is introducing Christmas gift packs to a number of its spirit lines, including Courvoisier and The Macallan.

RRP £14.99 - £38.76

Outers various

Contact 01786 430 500



Muppets and crumpets

TV and cinema favourites the Muppets star in a marketing campaign promoting Warburtons' Giant Crumpets.

RRP 69p

Outers not given

Contact 0800 243684



Don't forget them

Mars Petcare has unveiled its Christmas range, which includes festive stockings filled with Pedigree and Whiskas treats.

RRP £1 - £3.99

Outers not given

Contact 01664 411111

THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES

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Bumper bundle

FROZEN SPECIAL IS JAM-PACKED WITH GOODIES

It's the ideal 'extra' gift for fans of the Disney favourite, with gifts, puzzles, stickers, a poster, calendar and prize competitions...

THIS SEASONAL offering of the best-selling Frozen magazine features nine dress-up gifts including a magic wand, trinket box, Elsa hair and clip, Anna hair and clip, golden tiara, bracelet, Frozen necklace and two rings. The magazine itself is full of stories, colouring, and puzzles and features a Frozen graphic novel. There are also 80 stickers to collect and a giant poster, a Frozen calendar and lots of Frozen prize bundles to win. The magazine is packaged in a special card envelope, making it a perfect Christmas gift.



DISNEY FROZEN CHRISTMAS GIFT PACK
On sale 2 December
Frequency monthly moving to three-weekly in 2016
Price £7.99
Distributor Seymour
Display with Lego Friends, Pink, Girl Talk

Round up



HELENA DRAKAKIS
Magazines
reporter

KIDS ON THE NEWS AGENDA

Last week, Dennis Publishing launched a junior edition of The Week. The adult magazine, on which it bases its format, has been running since 1995 and is nothing short of a publishing phenomenon.

With bite-sized round-ups of the week's news, it currently boasts an ABC of 200,096. The junior edition, aimed at readers aged between eight and 14, aims to capitalise on the buoyant children's market. First News, a weekly children's newspaper and the Week Junior's main rival, recorded a circulation of 79,431 in the first half of this year.

We've talked many times about how the young children's magazines market is booming and how retailers can make the most of their displays.

A few weeks ago we even featured a newsagent who allowed children in his shop to look, feel and rifle through his magazine section with the logic that if they discover and play, parents are more likely to be persuaded to buy.

The Week Junior is well-placed because it sits along other educational titles such as How It Works and National Geographic Kids.

The argument goes that because today's children have grown up with multi-media, their sense of discovery is naturally leading them to something undiscovered – the printed magazine.

The particular niche of these titles is that they are magazines designed to make children brainier and they also encourage a rest from the film or television spin-off or the Disney overload. In a nutshell, this sector is already proving a hit with children, but it could be an even bigger hit with parents too.

PERFECT PUZZLE STOCKING FILLERS



THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



DISNEY PRINCESS

This Christmas bumper issue of Disney Princess magazine will feature all the favourite Disney princesses and is full of puzzles, colouring in, new stories and crafts. Also included is a festive colour and craft section. There's also a stationery advent calendar with 12 mystery gifts.



On sale 2 December
Frequency monthly
Price £3.99
Distributor Seymour
Display with Frozen, Sparkle World, Palace Pets



DISNEY STARS PRINCESS ART

This seasonal bumper edition of Disney Stars features winter activities, including things to stick, colour, make and do. It contains more than 100 stickers, as well as five free special surprise presents. The 40-page magazine features a wealth of Christmas crafts and present ideas as part of the festive special. Display in a prominent place in-store next to other children's Christmas titles.



On sale 2 December
Frequency monthly
Price £4.99
Distributor Seymour
Display with Frozen and Tinkerbell



THE GOOD DINOSAUR STICKER COLLECTION

Panini's brand new Good Dinosaur Sticker Collection follows Arlo on his journey and is full of stickers featuring the film's best moments and characters. There are 192 stickers to collect including 24 special stickers and collectors can get the album off to a start with this starter pack which includes an album and 31 stickers.



On sale tbc
Frequency Collectable
Price £2.99
Distributor Marketforce
Display with Other collectables



BBC GARDENERS' WORLD MAGAZINE

BBC Gardeners' World Magazine December issue includes a free 2016 calendar. This month's issue also includes a guide for buying the best Christmas tree, top tips for 12 easy festive makes, including handmade wreaths and decorations, the best new vegetables for 2016 and a guide to winter hanging baskets.



On sale 27 November
Frequency monthly
Price £4.35
Distributor Frontline
Display with Garden's Illustrated, Grow Your Own, Kitchen Garden



SWASHBUCKLE

Swashbuckle, the magazine for three to six-year-olds who want to be pirates, features Gem, Hook, Line and Captain Sinker, all from the hit CBeebies show. This bumper edition features the magazine's first ever covermounted free figurines and comes with eight extra pages to take young readers over the festive season. This edition is on sale for six weeks instead of the usual four.



On sale 25 November
Frequency monthly
Price £4.45
Distributor Frontline
Display with other children's magazines



Bestsellers Men's interest

Title	On sale date	In stock
1 Zoo	01.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 FHM	03.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Men's Health	04.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 GQ	07.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Stuff	02.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 T3	22.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Men's Fitness	16.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Esquire	08.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Wallpaper	10.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Forever Sports	15.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Wired UK	10.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Outdoor Fitness	18.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Men's Health Travel	04.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 Wonderland	08.01	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 The Rake	11.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 Just For Black Men	08.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 Men's Health US	08.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 Smooth	08.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 GQ (US)	18.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 Maxim (US)	03.12	<input type="checkbox"/>

Data from independent stores supplied by

SmithsNews



WALES

OFFICIAL CAMPAIGN STICKER COLLECTION

ON SALE NOW

Starter Pack:
£2.99 RRP

Sticker Pack:
50p RRP





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THE BEANO ANNUAL 2016

Almost as much of an institution as the Beano itself, and consistently one of the bestsellers among the crop of annuals, the 2016 edition of the Beano Annual contains everything devotees of the children's comic would want and more, with publisher DC Thomson proudly proclaiming that this is the best-ever edition of the perennial favourite.



On sale out now
Frequency annual
Price £7.99
Distributor DC Thomson
Display with other children's annuals, The Beano Comic



THE PEOPLE'S FRIEND ANNUAL 2016

Billed as the perfect gift for its loyal army of regular readers, the People's Friend Annual for 2016 comes complete with all the usual features and stories you'd expect from the long-running women's publication. It includes 25 short stories from regular People's Friend contributors, all exclusive to this publication, a raft of specially commissioned watercolour pictures of British beauty spots, a selection of seasonally-themed poems and a wealth of fascinating facts.



On sale out now
Frequency annual
Price £7.99
Distributor DC Thomson
Display with The People's Friend magazine, Woman, The Lady



STAR WARS ABATONS

In case you hadn't noticed, there's a new Star Wars film looming large on the horizon, with The Force Awakens due at cinemas a week or so before Christmas and certain to dominate well into 2016. The latest spin-off to arrive in stores is Panini's Star Wars Abatons, a collectable toy that fans can stack, mix build and swap.



On sale out now
Frequency collectable
Price collector's box £6.99, starter pack £7.99, pack £1
Distributor Panini
Display with Star Wars magazines, collectables



COMMERCIAL MOTOR

Commercial Motor is celebrating another landmark anniversary for this issue as it celebrates its 110th birthday. The special edition looks back over the past 11 decades with events and vehicles that have defined different eras, as well as some of the strangest machines that have been produced during its history.



On sale 26 November
Frequency weekly
Price £2.90
Distributor Marketforce
Display with Auto Trader



TAKE A BREAK'S FICTION FEAST

One of the more recent additions to the Take A Break stable, Fiction Feast marks the Christmas period with a seasonally-themed issue. The latest Fiction Feast has a blend of both stories, 20 in all, as well as a wealth of puzzles, with the chief offerings including a £500 Picture Pointer competition as well as book offers and giveaways. As TAB is keen to point out, Fiction Feast is outperforming the rest of the women's interest category by almost 2.5%.



On sale 3 December
Frequency monthly
Price £1.80
Distributor Frontline
Display with puzzle magazines, Take A Break publications

Retail viewpoint

Alastair Lewis

Brand director Stuff and What Hi-fi?



LADS MAGS ARE DEAD – WE'RE STILL HERE

With the announcement last week that FHM and Zoo will suspend publication in the UK, the era of the 'lads mag' is over.

In the 1990s and early 2000s Stuff was proud to sit alongside those titles, and while our editorial direction has always been focused on tech, our positioning meant we took a good share of that market.

In fact, since breaking into the top 10 men's life-style magazines we have continued to rise. The news last week will place Stuff firmly in the top three paid-for men's magazines in the UK.

Our decision in 2014 to drop girls from the cover (a regular feature since 1996) enabled us to steer away from the dying 'lads mag' sector and bring to the fore the tech and gadgets we have always been about.

The magazine's new look was the culmination of research including cover trials. For Stuff's April, May and June 2014 issues we devoted 20% of the print run to a "non-girl" cover with the usual cover running elsewhere. Consumers were in favour of the "non-girl" covers with sales up 10% in April, 7% in May and 6% in June.

We are really pleased readers reacted positively – a sure sign that while 'lads mags' may have died, there is plenty of life left for magazine brands that have a clear identity, a strong understanding of their audience and the creativity to produce world-leading content.

Top tip

Unite readers in their passion. For us that's for what's coming next in technology - award-winning coverage of the cleverest, most forward-thinking new gadgets and software.



COMING UP IN NEXT WEEK'S RETAIL NEWSAGENT

ROCKY SEHMBI ON HIS NEW BARGAIN BOOZE SELECT CONVENIENCE STORE IN BRISTOL

Plus, forget about Christmas, it's time to start planning for Easter with RN's confectionery feature, and all the coverage from the IAA Gala Dinner



Partworks

Title	No	Pts	£
DeAgostini			
Build the Millennium Falcon	45	100	8.99
Cake Decorating	193	210	2.99
Cake Decorating Relaunch	142	165	2.99
Dinosaurs & Friends	40	60	5.99
Official Star Wars Factfile	96	120	2.99
Zippo Collection	6	60	19.99
Eaglemoss			
3D Create & Print	45	90	6.99
Batman Automobilia	76	80	10.99
Build A Solar System	14	104	6.99
DC Comics Graphic Novel	8	60	9.99
Disney Cakes & Sweets	116	120	4.50
Doctor Who Figurines	59	70	7.99
Marvel Chess Collection	51	64	8.99
Marvel Fact Files	141	150	3.50
Military Watches	47	80	9.99
Star Trek Off. Starships Coll.	60	70	10.99

Hachette

Art of Crochet	11	120	2.99
Art of Knitting	44	90	2.99
Art Therapy	36	100	2.99
Black Pearl	98	120	5.99
Build the Mallard	63	130	7.99
Build the U96	63	150	5.99
Classic Pocketwatches	85	80	8.99
Dr Who Complete History	5	80	9.99
Judge Dredd Mega Collection	23	80	9.99
Marvel's Mightiest Heroes	50	60	9.99
My 3D Globe	47	100	5.99
Your Model Railway Village	105	120	8.99

RBA Collectables

Amazing Dinosaur Discovery	39	80	5.99
My Zoo Animals	12	60	5.99
Precious Rocks, Gems & Minerals	44	100	5.99
Real Life Bugs & Insects	62	85	5.99

Collectables

DeAgostini

Magiki Kittens	2.50
Geckos & Co	1.99

Magic Box

Zomlings Series 4	0.50
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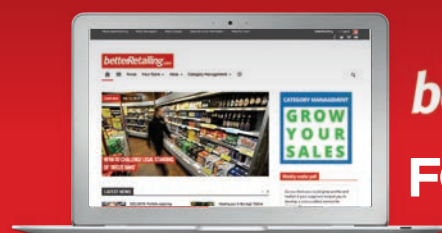
Collectables

Topps

	Disney Frozen Activity Cards Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00		Minions Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	Disney Frozen Fashion Pack Packets £1.00		Minions Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00
	Hero Attax Marvel Avengers Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00		Rugby Attax Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00
	Journey to Star Wars: The Force Awakens Starter £4.99 Stickers £1.00		Shopkins Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	Lego Friends Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		World of Warriors Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00
	Lego Ninjago Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		WWE Slam Attax Then, Now, Forever Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00
	Match Attax 2015/16 Starter £3.99 Cards £1.00		
	Merlin's Official Premier League 2015 Starter £2.00 Stickers £0.50		

Panini

	Descendants Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		Jurassic World Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	Disney Cinderella Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		Inside Out Stickers £0.50
	Disney Frozen My Sister, My Hero Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		Peppa Pig Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	Disney Princess Fabulous Talents Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		Road to UEFA Euro 2016 Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00
	Dragons Starter £2.99 Cards £0.50		Sofia the First Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	England Official Sticker Collection Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		Ultimate Spider-Man Album £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	Fifa 365 Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		
	Fifa 365 Adrenalyn XL Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00		



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FOCUSED ON INDEPENDENT RETAILING



Meet the keynote speaker: KEVIN THRELFALL



In the 1970s Kevin Threlfall built up the chain of Lo-Cost Discount Stores before creating an empire of 1,215 shops in just 25 years.

Trading as brands including One Stop, T&S Stores became the largest specialised convenience store group in Britain, selling to Tesco for £530m.

Kevin will share the lessons that have shaped his life in retail and challenge retailers to be brilliant at one thing.

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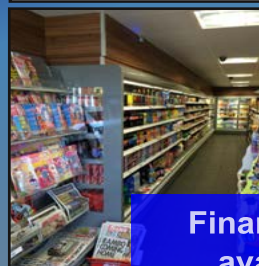
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**News, Con, Tob Surrey, London
Leasehold £120,000 Ref: T32411SY**

Busy road, residential area, WNB £3,500
Lock-up shop in very good condition
Potential to add Off-Licence
Weekly sales £10,000

London 01908 904555



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Rav Garcha, convenience store owner, Broadway

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Back in the day

101

YEARS AGO

28 November 1914

The issue of Hobbies dated 10 December will be issue no. 1,000 and the publisher is marking the event by making the number of special interest and value. It will contain two fretwork designs, one for a full-size chair and the other for a Nelson clock.



50

YEARS AGO

27 November 1965

Newspapers, magazines, periodicals and stationery are among the goods affected by the Irish Republic's recent trade restrictions, aimed at keeping the country's economy steady. Also on the list are school books, pens and pencils and toilet paper.



25

YEARS AGO

1 December 1990

Dosh, the news deliverers' magazine launched with a fanfare of publicity by News International on 18 July, has been abandoned after NI circulation director Brian Horwite criticised the newstrade's "lack of enthusiasm and support" for the initiative.



Exclusive! Tote box abuse evidence revealed by RN

The mystery of missing tote boxes is one that has baffled and irritated retailers and wholesalers for some time now – prompting some (i.e. us) to believe that a



great Tote-Box Fairy is magically making them disappear from the trade.

While we've yet to confirm this, Extra Extra! may have got one step closer to solving this conundrum after an anonymous source sent us this photo.

It appears some bright spark has decided that his or her Menzies tote box has better uses than just storing newspapers and magazines.

Our source could not provide us with many more details, other than the fact the 'post box' was spotted in south east England.

We've all known about the versatil-

ity of tote boxes for some time now – after all, retailers frequently tell RN about their ability to hold gallons of water and tons of rubbish – but this puts a completely different spin on the matter.

Have you seen similar unusual uses for tote boxes in your area? Can you give us more details on this picture? Send us your answers on a totecard – er, we mean postcard.

RN competition

Use the Force...

Topps is launching a range of products around Star Wars: The Force Awakens.

Retailers will be able to pick up the Topps Force Attax trading card game and a sticker collection for fans, which includes scenes and characters from the new movie on sale from 18 December.

RN has teamed up with Topps to offer a stocked Star Wars display unit with Star Wars collectibles worth over £200 at retail.

To have a chance to win, send the correct answer to the following question:



What is the name of the order that uses lightsabers to protect the galaxy and fight the Dark Side?

a) Sith, b) Jedi, or c) Ewoks

Please send your answer along with your name, shop name, address, telephone and whole sale box number to Retail Newsagent/Topps, Newtrade Publishing, 11 Angel Gate, 326 City Road, London EC1V 2SD by 11 December.

VIEW FROM THE COUNTER with Mike Brown



At the moment it feels like Custer's last stand in the trade. We are surrounded by the problems posed by PayPoint, Sunday trading laws, tobacco and alcohol legislation, business rates and auto enrolment pensions, and now a possible sugar tax.

I do hope Jamie Oliver is going to lead by example and give up double cream in favour of natural yoghurt or opt for fromage frais instead of mascarpone cheese.

Thankfully the media circus behind Mr Oliver's tirade has not produced a knee-jerk reaction from the government. Like us, it realises that the problem of childhood obesity cannot be solely levelled at the soft drinks industry.

To safeguard this fantastically innovative and important category we must counter with arguments such as a well-balanced diet, exercise and moderation.

Despite the poor weather there was a large turnout for our local Remembrance Day service and parade. Every year it seems to get better and better and shows the tremendous respect the nation has for its armed forces.

The part of the service I find particularly poignant and upsetting is the reading out of the names of the fallen in the two World Wars because many of the families still exist locally today.

My youngest daughter Emma (the sporty one) and her mum were invited by the mayor of Leeds to attend a reception at Leeds Civic Hall on Monday 16 November. The event was to honour the success of the Yorkshire teams winning the county championships in 2015.

The men, the academy, the women and the girls under-15s and under-13s teams were all invited. They had a memorable day rubbing shoulders with the likes of legendary umpire Dickie Bird and heroes of the modern game such as Andrew Gale and Jonny Bairstow.

No wonder we – Yorkshire – are so good at cricket. Did you know that Yorkshire has 778 cricket clubs – more than in the whole of Australia?

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