

# HOW TO MAKE £9 AN HOUR PAY

C-store experts on living with a higher wage bill

NATIONAL LIVING WAGE

Page 28 >>



Best of both worlds

'I grew grocery sales by £5k but kept my news roots'

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## TOBACCO DISPLAY

# 'We want out of profit-restricting contracts'

- Retailers say Imperial Tobacco rules are 'undermining profitability of category'.
- Gantry space demands mean delisting fast-selling lines, say stores. **Page 5 >>**

## CONVENIENCE

# My Local 130-store launch 'a success'



- New trading director Neil Turton already sourcing great deals, says Mike Greene.
- Further 10 stores to start trading from January. **Page 4 >>**

Colouring magazines on course to draw more profit than craft titles for indies. **Page 7**

## CAMELOT HOTLINE

# Retailers 'unaware' of new 7p lotto line

Confusion over true cost of calls. **Page 5 >>**

Vol 126 No 44  
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# LITTLE SHOPS OF HORROR

Ghoulish gondolas and deathly displays were the order of the day as independent stores looked to scare up extra sales over Halloween. This year's festivities also saw many retailers carving out a niche for themselves by going big on spooky pumpkin decorations.





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SELL 6 FOR £1 FOR 28%



SELL 2 FOR £1.50 FOR 20%

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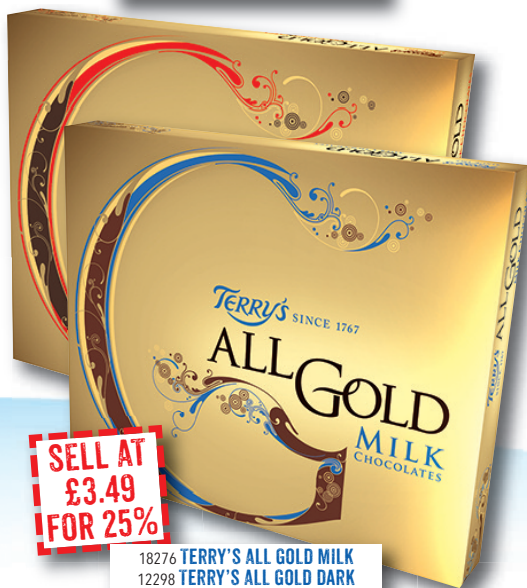
25914 CADBURY SELECTION PACK  
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23433 CADBURY CHOC SNOWMAN  
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18276 TERRY'S ALL GOLD MILK  
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20 CASH AND CARRY DEPOTS NATIONWIDE AND ONLINE TOO!

## LEADER



**Focusing on high margin categories is a theme that runs through this week's special report on mitigating the impact of the National Living Wage**



CHRIS GAMM

Editor

@ChrisGammRN

During one of the Local Shop Summit breakout sessions, a member of the audience said his wage bill would increase by 33% when the National Living Wage increases to £9 in 2020. He asked how the retailers on the panel were planning ahead for such a big change.

Eddie Poole from Moira said he was creating a market theme in one of his SuperValu stores, focusing on higher margin fruit, veg and dairy and less on groceries. His advice was start planning now and test what works, not when your wage bill has already spiked and the pressure is on.

Focusing on high margin categories is a theme that runs through this week's special report on mitigating the impact of the National Living Wage.

What's clear is that the same formula will not work for every store. Chris Shelley's new Horsham c-store will focus on fresh and chilled, while for Sussex-based Peter Lamb it's food and hot drinks to go. This wouldn't work for Kamal Sisodia in Leicestershire, though, who is near a popular Greggs. He is focusing on e-cigarettes and stationery instead.

Craft beer is another growing trend that might not be right for every store. London-based Ash Patel grew alcohol sales by stocking his son's favourite hoppy beers. Derby-based Vip Measuria, meanwhile, didn't think there would be demand in his area, but was proved wrong when he added One Stop's craft beer range.

If you think craft beer could be the answer to making the National Living Wage work for your store, follow our 10-step guide on pages 26-27. But don't be afraid to say no to things that don't work for you because one size doesn't fit all.

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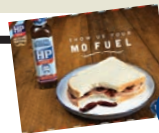
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**HOW CAN THEY HELP YOU?**  
RN looks at the supplier support available to the modern c-store owner



**CHRISTMAS MAGAZINES**  
The final part of RN's festive guide

**WHAT'S THE POINT OF THE EXTRA STRESS ABOUT CASHFLOW, THEFT STAFFING – YOU MIGHT AS WELL GET A JOB**

– RETAILER KAMAL SISODIA SAYS HIS ATTITUDE WILL CHANGE IF THE NATIONAL LIVING WAGE AFFECTS HIS INCOME Page 28 >>



# NEWS

## NLW will lead to 'parallel sourcing'

The incoming National Living Wage will cause an increase in "parallel sourcing" as retailers look to improve their margins, a wholesaler has predicted.

The industry expert, who did not want to be named, said he expects retailers to increasingly look to suppliers of branded stock manufactured elsewhere in the EU in an attempt to get stock at lower prices and protect their profitability.

"If you buy Coca-Cola direct from Coca-Cola in the UK you will pay £2 a case more than if you buy it from a third party. It might have come from Europe or Ireland – but it's still Coca-Cola and customers will still buy it," he said.

The National Living Wage will be introduced in April and stand at £7.20 per hour for employees aged over 25. The rate will rise to more than £9 by 2020.

● *What will the National Living Wage mean to your business? – page 28.*

## New look Singh's Premier concept

Singh's Premier in Sheffield has revealed it will launch a new Premier concept as part of a store revamp at its Manor Road site.

The group, run by brothers Mandeep, Vrinder and Baljeet Singh, announced the news on social media this week, with work already taking place to refit the business.

RN understands that the concept store will focus heavily on bulk buys and non-food lines sourced from Makro.

## 'Regulation could harm c-stores' warning

Leading industry figures have warned that excessive regulation could harm the convenience sector should proposals such as a sugar tax come into force.

A 20% tax on sugary drinks and foods and a reduction in the number of promotions in supermarkets and convenience stores

were two of eight recommendations made by Public Health England in a report released last week.

However, the tobacco industry, which has had to adapt to a raft of regulations, has warned against excessive legislation.

Jeremy Blackburn, JTI head of communications,

said: "UK convenience stores are coming under increasing pressure as the call from health groups for ever more control on core product categories such as tobacco, confectionery and soft drinks escalates."

James Lowman, chief executive of the Association of Convenience Stores,

said: "All these measures can bring challenges. The government is against the sugar tax so we must wait for their response. My biggest concern is an increasing emphasis on local authority regulation, which could dictate where items are sited or limit promotional activity."

**New chain converts 130 stores over three days** 'Great sense of camaraderie and positivity'

## Launch day 'a big success' says My Local boss Greene

by Steven Lambert

My Local chief Mike Greene hailed the launch of his new convenience chain a "success" as work to rebrand the former M Local stores was completed this week.

At the time of going to press, Mr Greene told RN that 32 stores had been converted to My Local on Monday, with a further 98 stores due to be switched over by Wednesday.

He added the group is now focusing on reopening 10 of the closed M Local stores it also bought from Morrisons, with the first of these expected to be trading by January.

"We've had members of our board and staff working all day and night last week to get us up and running," said Mr Greene.

However, the launch was not without its issues. RN's sister title Retail Express reported that My Local stores were hit by product



Lee and Adam from My Local, Harrogate

shortages and bare shelves following a disagreement with former owner Morrisons.

The supermarket was understood to have agreed to only remove its own label products from stores, but instead stripped out aisles full of branded products.

Mr Greene admitted the launch had been a "huge logistical challenge" but said Nisa was now helping to plug stock gaps in stores.

He added that stores were also taking advantage of "great product deals" being sourced by new My Local trading director and ex-Nisa

chief executive Neil Turton, who joined the group last month.

"M Local was almost seen as the poor cousin under Morrisons but, under My Local, there's now a great sense of camaraderie and positivity among staff," said Mr Greene.

## RN poll shows 36% unaffected by display ban

More than a third of retailers who responded to an RN poll last week said their tobacco sales have remained the same six months after the tobacco display ban came into force.

There had been no change, 36% of voters said, while 24% said their sales had increased by between 1% and 10% and another 3% reported increases of more than 10%.

However, 24% said that

sales had decreased by as much as 10% and 6% said sales had fallen by between 11% and 20%.

Mandeep Singh, of Singh's Premier in Sheffield, said he had not seen a significant change.

"My tobacco sales have made up 12-13% of my total sales consistently for a year. I've found that people know what they want to smoke and they don't need to see the display to ask for it."



**Cashflow concerns over 70% gantry occupancy** Delisting over a lack of space 'would be costly'

# Retailers say they'd pay to exit Imperial contracts

by Steven Lambert

Retailers have told RN they are willing to buy themselves out of Imperial Tobacco contracts after claiming the company's gantry space demands undermine the profitability of the category.

Stores owners who signed up to the manufacturer following the introduction of the display ban said they now have serious concerns over tobacco cashflow, after Imperial told them to fill 70% of their display space with its products.

Peter Robinson, owner

of Robinson Retail Ltd in Pembroke, said: "I would love to come out of my Imperial contract and have considered making them an offer to give back points I've earned through their Ignite scheme in order to rip it up.

"Imperial lines account for 50% of sales, but they're asking for 70% of the space. If I have to delist items that sell at a reasonable rate because they don't fit in the 30% of space for non-Imperial lines, I'll lose money."

Richard Drake of Drake's Newsagents in Thackley said having 70% of his

gantry filled with Imperial products affects his cashflow. "I'm looking at my contract very carefully and may have to consider other options," he said.

A senior industry figure told RN that retailers needed to stock best-selling tobacco products to avoid cashflow issues.

"Tobacco isn't about making a percentage margin. It's about fast turnover, regular cash profit and stocking key lines that will drive footfall and associated sales," he said.

It comes as the NFRN told RN it had sought legal

advice against Imperial and is looking into ways to help retailers exit their agreements with the company.

NFRN chief executive Paul Baxter said: "We are seeking to ensure retailers' fears are being addressed and that their gantries reflect their sales."

An Imperial tobacco spokesperson said: "Retailers have and will continue to have the ability to stock both Imperial and competitor products on their display units and we continue to work with the trade to ensure the ongoing success of the category."

## Camelot's pricey new helpline

Retailers are unaware of the true cost of a call to Camelot's new helpline and not enough shopkeepers are aware of the new number, the NFRN has claimed.

In a survey of 500 of its members, retailers reported they were still using Camelot's old 0800 number to contact the organisation before being transferred to a new 0844 number.

Retailers were also largely unaware of the true cost of the call. Calls to Camelot now cost 7p per minute, but added to that is a BT access charge of 10.24p per minute, making the total cost of a call 17.24p per minute.

"This highlights that retailers are not opening their post as they don't know about the new number or the 7p charge," said NFRN head of operations, Margaret McCloskey.

A spokesperson from Camelot said retailers were informed of the number via letter in late September and via a retailer forum in October.

It added that the 7p per minute charge wording is Ofcom-stipulated and that Camelot has no control over the level of access charge.

## Win an RN journalist for a day

RN is offering readers the chance to win a journalist to work in their store for the day.

Anyone who is eager for the chance to show a reporter what life is really like working in a newsagent or convenience store should head straight to facebook.com/retailnewsagent and like the page and competition post to be in with a chance of winning.



### MP discusses Sunday trading risk to 'community heart'

Montgomeryshire retailers Matthew and Huw Jones (left and centre) raised concerns about the impact that longer opening hours for larger stores on Sundays would have on their Spar store with Glyn Davies MP. Mr Davies said: "It is vital that local store owners are supported and their concerns are engaged with, to ensure they remain at the heart of our communities."

## Wholesaler: govt 'illicit' figures too low

Government figures released last week estimating that the illicit tobacco trade makes up 10% of the market could be a significant underestimate according to a leading wholesaler.

Chairman of AG Parfett, Steve Parfett, said he believed the problem was nearer 33% and that retail-

ers themselves, alongside rogue traders, were fuelling the problem.

"In the early days of Britain entering the EU there was a loss to the trade of around 25%, so the 10% the government are now citing should only be seen as the latest additional reduction," he said.

"Unfortunately it's not just people selling cigarettes out of pub car parks anymore but also retailers, perhaps because they see too many others getting away with it."

Mr Parfett said surveys, including one based on discarded packs, had long suggested the illicit trade

accounted for at least 25% of the market, with independents bearing the brunt.

He added: "Should HMRC really get a grip of the problem we could expect to achieve sales half as big again as we are currently doing. We must not understate the seriousness of the matter."

## Morrisons' stores deal

Morrisons is to pilot convenience food stores in five petrol stations owned by Locke's Motor Fuel Group (MFG).

The announcement follows the sale of 140 M Local high street convenience stores to the retail entrepreneur Mike Greene.

The company said the move was part of a plan to consider new opportunities where the "capital commitment" is low.

MFG is the second largest forecourt operator in the UK, with 373 stations.

# NEWS

## BUSINESS



## Asda set to 'slow down' in London

Asda will slow down expansion of smaller store formats in London and will refocus its efforts on developing its larger stores.

The supermarket said it will also scrap plans to develop more standalone petrol sites and will scale proposals to have 1,000 click and collect locations around the UK. It said the move would allow it to reinvest in 95 of its larger stores.

The announcement follows on from Asda announcing a 4.7% dip in like-for-like sales in its second quarter financial results, marking the worst performance recorded by the group in 16 years.

Asda chief executive Andy Clarke said: "We need to simplify what we do by prioritising the first line of our strategy - improving our core business - and pausing activity in other areas so that we are not spread too tightly."

## Discount luxury

Discounters are adding a number of luxury food lines to their ranges in a bid to win over more affluent shoppers this Christmas.

Lidl announced it will launch whole-caught lobsters in its stores this month priced at £4.99, along with six-packs of fresh oysters priced at £2.79 launching on 20 December.

In addition, rival Aldi will launch its own range of lobster tails and whole lobsters on 21 December.

## Bestway expands fresh and chilled

More fresh and chilled deliveries to depots and growing its business development team will form part of Bestway's plans to grow business for its retailers in 2016.

Bestway chief executive Zameer Choudrey said its retailers had remained "resilient" against the growing tide of discounters and multiples on the high street.

He added that the group's Best-one and Xtra Local retail club had grown to more than 4,100 stores this year and is now turning over in excess of £650m.

He also revealed the company will increase the number of business development executives calling on stores from 50 to 75 while fresh and chilled depot del-



iveries will increase from one a week to three times a week.

In addition, Mr Choudrey said Bestway's mobile app, launched last year, had been downloaded more than 12,000 times and was now generating net sales of

around £2m a month.

"No other wholesaler is doing more for their retail customers than us," said Mr Choudrey.

The news came as Bestway announced the winners of its annual Retail Development Awards in

London last week.

Retailers taking home prizes on the night included Tharmalingam Gnanachchandran of The Local Zone in Liverpool (pictured second from right), who scooped the Overall Winner award.

**Growing interest in fascia says boss** New website promotes healthy eating message

## Simply Fresh on target for 80 stores by year end

by Steven Lambert

Simply Fresh said it remained on track to have 80 stores open by the end of the year and expects to break through the 100 store milestone in early 2016.

Speaking to RN, Simply Fresh managing director Kash Khera said growing trends towards healthy eating and more interest in

its Simply Local fascia had boosted the business.

He added: "We were targeting around 80 stores by the end of the year and it looks like we'll be nearer to 90 stores when we get to Christmas. In the first quarter of next year, we'll be on 100 stores, which is a big milestone for us.

"We have a lot of stores in the north looking at the Simply Local brand, while

we've had growing interest for Simply Fresh in the south, especially around central London."

While Mr Khera would not reveal details on the progress of its smaller Simply Fresh stores being developed in London, he said the group would reveal a "different store format" early next year.

At the same time, Simply Fresh has launched a new

website designed to promote the group's healthy eating message to shoppers.

The new site, launched earlier this month, includes a range of recipes, links to local food suppliers, special offers and a store gallery. Mr Khera said future updates will include live blogging features and the ability for retailers to customise the page around their own business.

## First own brand Budgens Christmas range

Budgens has unveiled its first range of own brand Christmas products designed to grow incremental sales for its retailers over winter.

The selection includes a number of festive favourites including six-packs of

mince pies and Christmas puddings, along with other desserts such as Cranberry, Orange & White Chocolate Madeira Cake.

Packaging for the range will feature a purple colour scheme and images of robins, baubles and other

Christmas themes.

Budgens will also offer retailers PoS material to promote the range to shoppers.

Mike Baker, Budgens director, said: "We're delighted to launch our own brand Christmas

range. We've worked hard to develop a delicious range of cakes, puddings and mince pies and we're confident they'll be really popular.

"We've already had a fantastic response from our retail partners."





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## NEWSTRADE

**Indies earn £946,900 from colouring mags since April** Zen Colouring, Relax With Art triumph

# Colouring trumps craft titles with £3.4m sales

by Chris Rolfe

Adult colouring titles have generated £3.4m in retail sales since April and could become more profitable for independents than craft magazines if the trend continues, according to magazine distributor Seymour.

Indexed year-on-year sales data to July showed craft sectors had grown revenue by 8.1% and copy sales by 9.4%, the company said, but with colouring titles removed, these figures fell to -2.9% in revenue and 0.7% in volume sales.

While copy sales of colouring titles such as Zen Colouring and Relax With Art had grown in independent stores, craft sectors such as needlecraft, knitting and machine knitting suffered sales declines of 15%, 9.5% and 18.5% respectively, it added.

The figures showed that independent retailers had generated an estimated £946,900 in sales of colouring titles since April, which would equate to £1.6m for a full year, overtaking the annual £1.4m revenue earned by craft magazines.

Kate Clark, owner of

Sean's News in Upton-Upon-Severn, said she had noticed the trend in her store, with several of her customers switching from buying craft magazines to colouring titles.

"I used to shop save 12 craft titles a week. Now I do five a month. But I've got customers coming in weeks before a colouring title launches to request it, and I'm selling Relax With Art like it's going out of fashion - I get through 40 copies per month," she said.

But the Seymour figures also showed that certain craft sub-sectors

had bucked the decline, with papercraft, quilting, crocheting and sewing titles driving more positive performances, and sales of sewing and knitting titles up by 7.8%.

John Vine, owner of Newsworld in Shropshire, said: "Craft titles have held their own in my shop and have grown in some cases, especially more expensive magazines such as Crochet World and Bead World. The phenomenon this year has been bead making and jewellery making, and anything to do with crochet and knitting."

## News UK £1k win

Wisebuy Variety Store in Halstead has won £1,000 from News UK for generating the highest number of Sun HND orders in the first three weeks of October.

The store sells an average 120 copies of the Sun per day and promoted the publishers' 12 weeks' free delivery offer by inserting leaflets in every newspaper it sold, and prompting customers to take up the deal.

Store manager Louise Sutton said: "I'm an independent and I have to do all I can. If customers sign up for 12 weeks, that's a potential 12 weeks' sales of additional products too."

## Regionals relaunch

Two regional newspapers published by Trinity Mirror have been relaunched, with fewer editions per week and wider patches covered by reporters.

The Bucks Advertiser and Bucks Examiner will now publish just one "comprehensive" edition. The Advertiser will cover Beaconsfield, Gerrards Cross, the Chalfonts and Marlow, while the Examiner will cover Chesham, Amersham, Great Messenden, Little Chalfont and other surrounding areas.

## Johnston closes two

Johnston Press has earmarked a further two weekly newspapers in Scotland for closure.

Proposals to close the East Lothian News and Musselburgh News are under discussion as part of an ongoing review, while the publisher also plans to rebrand the Midlothian Advertiser as a community newspaper. Johnston Press has closed more than 25 papers since 2012.

## Apple's news app signings

Trinity Mirror and Condé Nast were among several publishers to announce partnerships with Apple News as the free newsreader app launched last week.

Trinity Mirror said the Daily Record, Manchester Evening News and Liverpool Echo were among the titles signed up to the service, which gathers news stories together on a single app and is available on Apple devices that are iOS9 compatible.



### Thunderbirds 2 ready for launch

DC Thomson is releasing the second issue of its latest launch, Thunderbirds Are Go, on 11 November. The title, priced at £3.99, will include a Thunderbirds 2 mini-model. But the publisher warned independent retailers against early-returning the magazine after 13% of stores sent the first issue back. Sales of its children's magazines through independent stores grew by 2.4% in the 12 months to July, the publisher said.

## Retailers give a high five to thriving i

Independent retailers praised the i for helping to maintain newspaper readership and grow sales as the paper celebrated its fifth year in print this month.

Matt Clark, owner of Penylan News in Cardiff, said sales of the paper had

doubled since the title rose in price to 40p in February.

"One or two customers have downgraded but I'd rather they do that than buy no paper at all, and I'm happy to promote it now it has a higher price," he said.

Brian Murphy, head of

news at the NFRN, said the paper had "found its place in the market" after an early price war over its initial low 20p cover price.

"It found a gap in the market and it's working. It shows you can enter a tough market and deliver

good sales volumes."

The paper achieved month-on-month sales growth of 0.8% for its Monday to Friday editions and 0.6% for its Saturday issues last month, according to the latest Audit Bureau of Circulations figures.

# NEWS

## PRODUCTS

### ProActiv's healthy revamp

Unilever is revamping its entire Flora ProActiv range to promote the brand's health credentials to shoppers.

The move will see Flora ProActiv spreads, yogurts and skimmed milk redesigned with new on-pack messages, which will promote the range's use of plant sterols to help consumers lower their cholesterol levels.

Unilever is supporting the changes with a £1.5m marketing campaign launched this month, which includes TV ads.

Albane Jeanbin, brand manager for Flora ProActiv, said: "We've redesigned our packaging to make the brand stand out more on shelf among its competitors, making it easier for shoppers to find Flora ProActiv products in store."

### Frijj adds premium milkshake

Dairy Crest will expand its Frijj Supreme premium milkshake range with the launch of a Strawberry Cheesecake flavour later this month.

The new line, which comes in 375ml bottles with an RRP of £1.30, will initially be available in Asda before being rolled out nationally to independent stores.

The launch follows on from Dairy Crest's relaunch of its entire Frijj Supreme range with an improved recipe and revamped pack design in March.



### Foster's tour van hits new heights

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's actually a camper van suspended from a hot air balloon – the latest PR stunt to support Foster's upcoming 'Helluva Tour' TV series. The vehicle, which was spotted 2,000 ft above Shropshire, was used to grow awareness of the beer brand and the show, which will see a group of strangers making a 17,000 driving trip from the UK to Australia.

**New pack formats to tie in with film launch** 'Very large spend' by shoppers anticipated

## The Force is with Chupa Chups' Star Wars promo

by Steven Lambert

Perfetti Van Melle plans to capitalise on the excitement surrounding Star Wars with the launch of new pack formats themed around the film franchise.

The confectioner is targeting fans with Star Wars-branded drinking cups to tie-in with the highly anticipated launch of the latest instalment,

The Force Awakens, which hits cinemas in December. The cups cost £4 and each contain 10 Chupa Chups lollies, with three different designs to collect featuring imagery from the new film.

At the same time, Perfetti is launching a Star Wars edition of its 'Best of' Chupa Chups sharing bag, which will be targeted as a stocking filler for Christmas.

The company claimed sales of Chupa Chups are growing at 20% year on year, while sales of Chupa Chups sharing bags were also up by nearly 17%.

Mark Roberts, trade marketing manager at Perfetti, added that branded Star Wars merchandise launched to mark the last film in the series generated more than \$3bn (£1.9bn) in sales.

Mr Roberts said: "We've chosen two distinctly different products to license, and are confident that both offer our retail partners a chance to tap into what is expected to be a very large spend.

"The film marks the start of a new trilogy, so we expect to see an ongoing interest and increased awareness of Star Wars merchandise."

## Craft-inspired beer launch from Guinness Brewers

Diageo has unveiled its latest launch under its Guinness Brewers Project as it bids to grow further sales from craft beer drinkers.

The firm released Hop House 13 lager in the UK this month following its initial launch in Ireland in February.

The product is described as a double hopped, golden lager brewed using Guinness yeast, Irish barley and hops from Australia and the USA. It will be available through wholesalers in 330ml bottles (RRP £1.79)

It marks the fourth product to be launched under

Diageo's Brewers Project at its St James's Gate brewery in Dublin.

The initiative kicked off last September alongside the launch of two Guinness lines, West Indies Porter and Dublin Porter, which were inspired by recipes dating back to the 1700s.

They were joined by a Guinness Golden Ale in April.

Daffyd Pugh-Williams, senior innovation manager at Diageo, said: "Craft is creating real vibrancy in the category, and it's important to keep customers engaged with new products."

● *Craft beer and cider, p26-27*

### Hot products for your shopping list



The new Star Wars film is being linked with two new Chupa Chups packs





Hop House 13 is the latest launch from Guinness Brewers Project



Flora ProActiv is to get a revamp to promote its health credentials



Those wholesalers who don't  
stock  everything you need 

**The Wrong Way**  
.....



Stocks everything you need   
including butchery\*, fresh, chilled  
and even catering products  
all in one place 



**The Best Way**  
.....



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# NEWS

## PRODUCTS

### Unilever's toiletries Christmas refresh

Unilever is setting up for Christmas by releasing new and revamped toiletries gift packs across a variety of brands.

New additions being added this year include a Lynx Black washbag gift set (RRP £12.50), a Dove Men+Care shower gift pack (£8), a Radox Fresh & Fruity gift set (£6) and a Tresemmé 7 Day Smooth gift set (£20).

James Griffin, Unilever category director, said: "It's important that we continue to provide innovative Christmas offerings that tap into the key consumer trends within beauty, hair and personal care."

### Müller is milking charity campaign

In a joint venture with the Movember Foundation, Müller will be launching its MOOvember campaign across 500ml cartons and one pint bottles of Black & White whole and semi skimmed milk, running until the end of November.

The campaign involves customers taking a drink of Black & White milk then taking a selfie of their milk moustache, uploading the pictures to social media with the hashtag #milkmo.

Customers will also be encouraged to donate £2 to the Movember Foundation as part of a mobile phone campaign.



### Max to the Future

Not even the threat of a time paradox could deter hundreds of Marty McFlys and Doc Browns coming together to attend a special anniversary film screening of Back to the Future II in London's Leicester Square last week. The event, organised by Pepsi Max, also gave competition winners the chance to get their picture taken with the famous DeLorean time-traveling car and visit an 80s-style retro café, where fans could get their own bottle of Pepsi Perfect featured in the movie.

**Increased availability and variety boosts category** Drinkers 'trading up' to premium products

## Indies buck trend with beer and cider sales hike

by Steven Lambert

Independent retailers are bucking the national trend of falling cider and beer sales, with these products growing by 11.5% in value terms in local stores this year according to new research.

An investigation by market analyst EDFM on behalf of RN shows independent retailers growing cider value sales by 19.2% year on year.

The data, composed using EPOS data from more than

3,000 newsagents and convenience stores, also highlighted an 8.8% year-on-year rise in beer value sales for the first 40 weeks of the year.

In addition, cider volume sales grew by 16% over the period, although beer volume sales saw a small dip of 1%.

The results fly in the face of claims made by manufacturers such as Heineken, which has recently renewed its focus on emerging categories such as spirit beers to address falling sales of traditional lager and cider

among young adults.

EDFM data analyst John Eastwood said fruit flavoured ciders continued to grow in popularity in the convenience sector, with brands such as Kopparberg growing their share of the market.

He added: "Cider sales have been boosted by the increasing availability and variety of flavoured ciders. These perries and other fruit ciders now account for almost 20% of total cider purchases by value."

Mr Eastwood's views

were backed by Alpesh Mishra, customer marketing director at Molson Coors, who urged retailers to expand their ranges of craft beer and premium cider for Christmas.

He said: "A trend we expect to see in the market this winter is consumers "premiumising" their choices and treating themselves to premium beers and ciders - most of which command higher price brackets."

● Analysis - page 21.

## Monster Energy answers the Call of Duty

Monster Energy is strengthening its ties with video game franchise Call of Duty with an on-pack promotion targeted at gamers.

The brand has teamed up with publishers Activision to give Call of Duty: Black Ops III players double in-game experience points for

the game's new 'Shadows of Evil' content.

The offer will be available to shoppers buying promotional packs of Monster Energy between 30 October and 31 March.

Codes on single cans will give buyers a guaranteed 15 minutes of double experi-

ence points per day, while multipack cans will offer up to 30 minutes.

It follows a similar promotion launched by Monster to support the launch of Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare last November.

Caroline Cater, operational marketing director at

Monster brand owner Coca-Cola Enterprises (CCE), said: "We recommend that retailers get stocked up to take full advantage."

CCE will back the scheme with updated Monster Energy pack designs and PoS material featuring Black Ops III artwork.

### Hot products for your shopping list



A Lynx Black washbag gift set is part of Unilever's Christmas toiletries



An on-pack promotion gives Monster Energy buyers bonus Call of Duty 'experience' points



Müller is running a MOOvember on-pack promotion



Those wholesalers  that  
only let you shop in-depot 

**The Wrong Way**  
.....



A wholesaler  that lets you  
shop in-depot, online, click & collect  
or delivers straight to your door 

**The Best Way**  
.....



To shop how you want to shop,  
you're better off at **Bestway** and **Batleys**

[www.bestway.co.uk](http://www.bestway.co.uk) [www.batleys.co.uk](http://www.batleys.co.uk)



**BATLEYS**

# NEWS

## REGIONAL

### Multiple armed raid man jailed

A man who committed a series of armed robberies on small supermarkets in London has been jailed for seven and a half years.

Ahmid Dorda was caught on CCTV as he held up one convenience store with a gun and demanded cash from the till. During another attempted robbery the store owner trapped Dorda's hands in the till and threw a 99p bottle of Ribena at him.

Dorda had previously pleaded guilty at Snaresbrook Crown Court to nine other counts of armed robbery and three attempted robberies before his sentencing last week.

Investigating officer detective sergeant Andy McGuire of the Metropolitan Police's flying squad said: "Local shops are the lifeblood of our communities and we will use every available resource at our disposal to bring to justice those who intimidate and subject shop workers to violence."



### Westminster launch for Tobacco Retailers' Alliance campaign

The Tobacco Retailers' Alliance launched its 'Fair Deal for Small Shops' campaign at Westminster. National spokesman for the TRA, Suleman Khonat (fourth from right), was joined by independent retailers from around the country to raise awareness of the initiative among MPs and peers. The campaign addresses four key areas: the illicit trade in tobacco, retailer registration, crime prevention and the impact of regulation.

**'We've won the battle but we haven't won the war'** Council backs no charge for two hours plan

## Town's free parking bid moves one step closer

by Helena Drakakis

A campaign to revive trade in a Somerset town by offering free car parking to shoppers has moved a step forward with the local town council putting its weight behind the proposal.

Chard Town Council passed a resolution last week to "wholeheartedly support" the campaign to introduce a period of two hours free car parking per day in the town of Chard.

The campaign, known as Free Parking for Chard, was started by resident David Laughton, and followed similar calls from retailers for a revision to parking to make Chard a "destination town".

Currently, there are around 500 council-owned and managed car parking spaces, but campaigners claim only 10%-20% of them are ever used.

"This is a step in the right direction. We've won

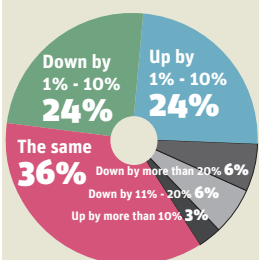
the battle but we haven't yet won the war," said Mr Laughton, who added that he hoped the resolution would help sway South Somerset District Council, which is carrying out a review of parking in Chard and is due to report this autumn.

"In the 21st century we need to look at small towns struggling to regenerate themselves. Parking is one of the issues to redress in Chard. It's not a political

campaign. This is about what is good for the town," he added.

Les Gilbert, owner of Chard c-store Better Buy Local said: "As a retailer, I don't believe that we can continue to look at market towns in the same way. We have to adapt. I am open-minded as to the solution, but this vote is encouraging. Now we need to persuade the town council that looking at the parking issue is a positive step forward."

### RN READER POLL



**Are your tobacco sales up, down or the same same six months into the display ban?**

### NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION

Have you begun to make preparations in-store to offset the cost of the National Living Wage?

**Have your vote now**

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

## Trade drops 70% says sinkhole shop owner

A newsagent who has reopened his shop after the discovery of nearby sinkhole forced it to shut says he "wouldn't wish this struggle on anyone".

Jeet Chopra, owner of the Paper Shop in Northfleet, Kent, had one hour

to vacate his premises in February after the hole caused subsidence and a fractured sewer along the parade of shops where his business is located.

The store reopened last week, but still lacks proper drainage and running water. "It's been extremely

difficult. I'm happy to have reopened but by my estimation I've lost around 70% of my trade in seven and a half months," Mr Chopra said.

He was forced to operate his business from his car before the council provided him with a portable

cabin. However, customers thought he was part of the construction work and stopped using his shop.

"The insurance company have called the sinkhole an 'act of God' and I can't take the financial risk of fighting the case," he added.



**GIVE THEM A  
GREAT NIGHT IN**  
Pages  
34-37

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advice to help you grow your sales

## REGIONAL

# Raj's gourmet food sparks fresh interest

A Leicestershire retailer who moved from Londis to Spar earlier in the year has opened a new store with an emphasis on gourmet food products.

Raj Aggarwal opened the 2,000sq ft outlet in

Market Harborough last Saturday. As well as cutting budget lines, he has increased his offering of fine foods and artisan products as well as locally-sourced items.

"There's a range of high-

end products alongside the everyday. The reaction from customers has been very positive. People are coming in intrigued as to what we are offering and they have said thank you," he said.

As well as the new gourmet Spar, Mr Aggarwal has also opened a 60-seat coffee shop and wine bar, which he says is the first in the UK to serve coffee by the Irish-based Insomnia Coffee Company.

# E-cig shop growth

A report on store openings and closures in the first half of the year has revealed that while convenience stores have seen a decline on the high street, the number of tobacconists and e-cigarette shops have grown.

The research, carried out by the Local Data Company and British Independent Retailers Association (BIRA), revealed that tobacconists and e-cigarette retailers have increased 28% in the first half of 2015.

This bucks the trend of most other independent businesses, which have gone into decline for the first time since 2012.

The number of newsagents has decreased by 3.65%.

**Federation delegates raise crime concerns at SNP conference** Banking charges also discussed

# NFRN calls for Scots to do more to fight retail crime

by Helena Drakakis

The NFRN has warned the Scottish government that retail crime north of the border is spiraling out of control and has called for action to protect more newsagents.

Chief executive Paul Baxter raised the concerns at a fringe event during the SNP party conference in Aberdeen where the NFRN sent a delegation.

Five members, including chief executive Paul Baxter and national president Ralph Patel, attended the conference this month.

Mr Baxter highlighted how policy was needed to protect small shop owners from "intimidation, theft and economic disparity".

He said: "The time has come for politicians to take their heads out of the sand and work with the NFRN. Victims should feel able to come forward and



report crimes in the knowledge that action will be taken both by police and the courts. And anyone attacked should know they will receive high quality support when they need it and in the way they need it."

During the conference, the delegation also met first minister Nicola Sturgeon, former leader Alex Salmond, deputy first minister and secretary for finance John Swinney, health minister

Shona Robinson and justice secretary Alex Neill.

They gave out copies of the NFRN Scottish Agenda, which was launched earlier this year.

The report tackles the challenging trading environment Scottish retailers are operating in, including the issue of crime, rising business rates and increased regulation.

Members also focused on ways to tackle the illicit

market, simplifying access to finance and greater recognition of the impact of minimum wage rates on small businesses.

National president Ralph Patel said: "It was extremely worthwhile. In all our conversations we raised the concerns of independent retailers, from retail crime to banking charges, and asked the SNP to consider micro businesses when formulating policy."

# 'No delay,' govt told

The Association of Convenience Stores has called on the government to introduce the Alcohol Wholesaler Registration Scheme without further delay to reduce the amount of tax lost to illicit alcohol sales.

ACS chief executive James Lowman said that while he was encouraged by the £0.1bn reduction in duty lost through illicit alcohol, more needed to be done.

# Shutters objection

Almost 200 people have signed a petition objecting to new shutters at a convenience store in Spalding, Lincolnshire.

The petition, collected at Balls Newsagents, was handed to South Holland District Council last week in opposition to new, bright orange shutters at the Fantasia store in Bourne Road.

Residents say the shutters had no planning permission and are not in keeping with the local area.

# Bridge closure 'nearly shut us down'

A mother and daughter team who run a store and post office in Dorset have welcomed the reopening of a bridge whose closure threatened to put them out of business.

Charminster Stores & Post Office lost an estimated £4,000 over five months

as work on a nearby Grade 1 listed 16th century bridge cut off a major access road to their shop.

Owner Lindy Christopher, who runs the store with her daughter, said she was "relieved" that work was now complete.

"£4,000 doesn't sound

like a lot, but it's a lot to a small business. We were offered no compensation by the council and the past few months have been a struggle," she said.

Mrs Christopher said that last Saturday, two days after the bridge reopened, she was already £200 up on

the morning's takings.

"It's been quite an eye opener since the bridge has reopened. We've seen customers we haven't seen since the closure. However, others have supported us throughout and made the long drive round to use the shop."

# YOUR REGION

## NFRN DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT KENT 19.10.2015



Tim Murray reports from the NFRN Kent district council meeting

### 'Report illegal market sellers'

Members were reminded that illegal magazine sales from market stalls were still posing a threat to retailers – and they should report any they see.

Membership services manager Nigel Smith said: "It's still very much a big thing. If anyone, anywhere knows of market stalls selling magazines, let us know. We'll make sure it's reported."

Colin Fletcher, visiting from the Southern district, said: "I saw a pallet load of magazines which had Tesco packaging on it, it disgusted me."

### Camelot call charge anger

Camelot's recent move to change its helpline from a Freephone number to a paid-for service was a major talking point.



Ralph Patel

National president Ralph Patel took questions from members about issues they were facing – and Camelot was at the top of the bill.

Members told Mr Patel they had seen a change in attitude from the company since it had changed ownership.

"Camelot was quite surprised by the furore," said North West Kent member Naresh Purohit, who is a member of the Camelot forum.

"No one complained from the general retail trade. We all need to pick up the phone and let them know how unhappy we are."

National vice president Ray Monelle said: "We've



NFRN national president and his wife Urvashi receive a gift from Nick Southern

got to be high profile in this, hopefully embarrass them into meeting us within a couple of days rather than weeks.

Mr Patel added: "We've taken it up with Camelot and they realise they may have made a mistake. Whether they go back on it, I don't know. We've asked for a meeting and we hope to meet them soon."

Nigel Smith reminded delegates to complete Camelot's retailer survey to help make their voices heard.

### Communication 'must improve'

Publishers arriving into wholesale even minutes earlier than they current-



**I saw a pallet of magazines which had Tesco packaging on it. It disgusted me**

**Colin Fletcher**

NFRN Southern district

ly do would solve many late delivery issues, Ralph Patel told the meeting.

He said more communication was needed throughout the supply chain, with some instances where publishers weren't even aware of reruns on their titles.

"Wholesalers blame the publishers and publishers blame the wholesalers," he said.

### 'Look closely at tobacco ranges'

Members were advised to look closely at their tobacco ranges, particularly in light of tobacco manufacturers trying to influence what percentage of their products they should stock.

Ralph Patel said: "A lot of members don't appreciate how much valuable space they have there."

Ray Monelle added: "We knew the manufacturers would hit us hard a year or so after gantries went dark, and now it's started. I'd advise retailers to be wary."



Ray Monelle

### Radical ideas to drive debate

Members again discussed potential changes to the way the NFRN operates, with many, including Ralph Patel, putting forward "radical options", including abolishing branches, to encourage debate.

Naresh Purohit said: "If we don't change now, circumstances will make us change. We need to change now, not tomorrow and not next year."

District president Nick Southern encouraged members to run through further options ahead of the next meeting.

"It's opened up a bit more, we've started the process. We've got to give it a bit more thought."

### Political profile 'never stronger'

After the party conference season, the profile of the NFRN has never been higher, but members need to speak to their local politicians, the meeting was told.

"There are so many big issues facing us," said Ray Monelle.

"Our profile is stronger than it's been for years, and all the MPs we met have said they want contact with our members. We want members to talk to their MPs."

### Authority scheme is working well

Retailers were told the primary authority scheme with London Borough of Islington was progressing well and that they should look into signing up to ensure that they were dealt with fairly and consistently on trading standards-related issues.

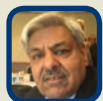
### Your say

Six months after the tobacco display ban came into force, how are sales of tobacco in your store?



Sales are slightly down, but nothing too drastic. People are going for whatever is the cheapest on the gantry. Imperial wants Embassy Number 1 with two facing, but I last sold a pack in June.

**Nick Southern,**  
Southern Newsagents,  
Maidstone



My cigarette sales have dwindled to a quarter of what they were. We've had other problems, but the display ban has had a contributory effect. Customers are still going for pricemarked packs.

**Jeet Chopra,**  
The Paper Shop,  
Northfleet



My cigarette trade has not really been affected by the display ban. I've slowly weeded out pricemarked products and put in non-pricemarked ones. I've done it slowly and gently, but it's helped.

**Naresh Purohit,**  
Marseans,  
Dartford



COMING UP IN

# RETAIL NEWSAGENT

COMING SOON: RN's RETAILER CHOICE AWARDS

Your chance to vote for the industry's best movers and shakers in 2015



27 NOVEMBER: E-CIGARETTES & VAPING

Why your sales will soar in 2016



**SHARE WITH US!**  
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## Get your store winter-ready



20 NOVEMBER: CIGARS

Is your range ready for the winter sales peak?

13 NOVEMBER: NEWSPAPERS

Take advantage of publishers' support and protect your sales



- PLUS**
- This year's IAA winners on how you can win next year
  - Take advantage of Britain's love affair with home baking
  - Forget Christmas, it's time to start planning Easter 2016



# LETTERS

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Camelot has apologised to Manish Mehta for the time it has taken to set up his direct debit

## WHAT AM I PAYING CAMELOT £25 A MONTH FOR? IT'S CERTAINLY NOT FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE...

I am having an issue with Camelot and would like to know if anyone else is having the same problem.

In August, I opened a new bank account with RBS and transferred all my direct debits and standing orders across from my old Barclays account. All except for Camelot's, for which I needed to complete a mandate form. I requested one, filled it out and sent it back to Camelot.

I waited for a month, but didn't

hear back, so in early October emailed and called the credit control department. But every time I tried, I never got to speak to anyone in credit control and was told the department was busy because there were too few staff.

How will they do such a major rollout of new terminals in November and December if there are too few staff to answer the phone?

In the end, I sent in a new

mandate form after waiting a month and half for a response. But what would have happened if I had given up and not chased them? Would they have switched off my terminal or would I have got a bad rating?

I am paying a £25 monthly fee to Camelot and this is going up to £50, but what am I paying for? It certainly isn't customer service.

**Manish Mehta**  
Williams News,  
Streatham

**A Camelot spokesperson responds:** "We apologise for the difficulty Mr Mehta has had in getting his direct debit set up.

"This is certainly not the customer service experience we strive for and one of my colleagues will get in touch with Mr Mehta directly, to follow up and determine what might have gone wrong.

"However, I can reassure him that his direct debit mandate was received last week and the direct debit has now been set up."

## PDRP survey must target newtrade retailers

I would like to endorse everything that Brian Murphy said in his letter to Neil Robinson, chairman of the Press Distribution Review Panel (RN 23 October).

I would also like to mention that the chairman stated on the industry profile page in the 2 October edition of RN

that the PDRP is carrying out a survey asking retailers to share feedback on the complaints process.

It is okay to say you are carrying out a survey, but three weeks later and I have not received any survey from the PDRP and I wonder if any other retailer has.

Sometimes in surveys you get asked to rate something between zero and 10, where zero is terrible and 10 is excellent.

I can safely say that if I was asked that question about any aspect of



**Come on Mr Robinson, start sending out surveys to retailers who really care about the newtrade**

**Gerald Thomas**  
Arcade News, Ammanford

the complaints process, I would rate it with a big fat zero.

So come on Mr Robinson, start sending out surveys to retailers who really care about the newtrade.

Then you will have a true feeling about the complaints process.

I have no doubt that if asked, both Menzies and Smiths would deliver any survey to their customers, or perhaps RN would print it.

**Gerald Thomas**  
Arcade News,  
Ammanford

## PDRP chairman Neil Robinson

**responds:** "The Press Distribution Review Panel survey goes out to all retailers that have used the Press Distribution Charter complaints process and are therefore qualified to comment on it.

"However, if any retailer has constructive points to make about the Charter or its complaints process they should be addressed to the PDRP Administrator and they will be considered by the PDRP.

"I look forward to Mr. Thomas's contribution."





The opinions on this page do not necessarily represent those of the editor

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

## Imperial 'has to compromise' over gantries

Years ago, Wall's used to supply fridges. At the time, it was just Wall's and Lyons Maid and you made your choice which one you went with.

Then the market opened up and Cadbury and Mars and Wall's started to get difficult and tried to get stores to stock only their products.

In the end, they stopped supplying fridges, which was good because now we can stock whichever brands we choose.

It seems that Imperial is now starting to go down the same path.

If it is asking for 70% of space, but its products only represent, say, 40% of the market, then displays will be completely disproportionate to what retailers are selling.

What about Philip Morris, BAT and JTI? No one supplier has 70% of the market.

It could seriously impact what shops are doing.

Our gantry is too small as it is and we already find it difficult to manage, so if Imperial insist we give it 70% of space, it will be impossible. We may have to supply our own gantries in the end.

It has already asked us to do five facings of Lambert & Butler but we couldn't justify it when we only sell one outer a week.

Imperial has to compromise - but will it?

Howard Toms  
Spar Eastney,  
Hampshire

### An Imperial Tobacco

**spokesperson responds:** "As part of Imperial updating over 10,000 units as part of its display ban-compliant solution, we asked retailers to sign new agreements. However, their share of space obligations remained unchanged from previous years.

"While we're unable to comment on individual cases, we are working through our salesforce to ensure this is communicated accurately and managed appropriately.

"We expect the transition phase to finish shortly, and

appreciate the continued cooperation of the independent trade during this process."



## Weighty Mail has my delivery staff in mutiny

I had mutiny in my shop this morning. All 10 boys and girls had to split their rounds into two or three bits as the Mail on Sunday had extra supplements. Each supplement weighed 1.048kgs. Each one has an average of seven copies. I've had to pay them extra today because of how big and heavy each round was. One of the extra supplements weighed 398 grams. I do hope the Mail on Sunday will reimburse me.

Richard Kendrick  
Mace News,  
Rhyl

**A Mail Newspapers spokesman responds:** "As is the agreed industry standard, Mail Newspapers will make a payment towards the cost of delivering this additional weight



**Our gantry is too small as it is and we already find it difficult to manage, so if Imperial insist we give it 70% of space, it will be impossible**

Howard Toms  
Spar Eastney, Hampshire

to all retailers registered on the Third Party Advertisement Inserts (TPAI) scheme.

"Any retailer not on this scheme should register with their wholesaler, telling them how many copies of each title they home deliver."

## Reps leave a lot to be desired

It would be interesting to know what benefits other retailers get from sales reps' visits given my recent experiences.

After numerous problems with availability of scratch-cards and the recent loss of the freephone number from Camelot I had an appointment with my rep and her boss.

They asked for feedback on a number of things and I suggested all retailers ring their rep instead of paying 7p per minute. I also suggested a date button so customers could play on certain dates in advance, for playslips to be more noticeable and for more retailer incentives.

Now, Coca-Cola. Having invested a thousand pounds-plus in my store two years ago, the rep that dealt with the equipment instalment moved on. We had two visits from a new one, then nothing until Monday. But I was at the cash and carry when the new rep came and he didn't leave a business card.

JTI is one company and rep I can praise. I signed up with them for a gantry when going dark and for their reward scheme. They always make regular calls, offer good deals and a reward programme, and our rep James is always a pleasure to see. The same goes for my Mars rep.

Cadbury has been without a rep in my area for three years and, although I initially had to fight to get my reward vouchers, I now get these regularly.

I am still awaiting a visit from my PayPoint rep to assess my store as promised at a forum earlier in the year.

I hope others have a better service overall than we do.

Steve Barker  
S & J News,  
Rochester

# HND HEROES

In association with

News UK

## Top Tips

Tony Parker

Field partner manager, News UK



1  
TOP TIP

### INVEST

**Invest in a good HND computer system.**

This will make managing holiday stops, changes to orders and price changes much easier, as well as keeping all your customer details stored in one place.

2  
TOP TIP

### RUN A BONUS SCHEME

**Run a bonus scheme for delivery staff based on reliability, accuracy and customer service.**

This will improve their performance and loyalty to your store. Advertise for delivery staff and keep a list of employees who could deliver if you need a back-up agent.

3  
TOP TIP

### ADVERTISE

**Advertise and promote your HND service wherever possible, (shop windows, in store, website, social media, and delivery vehicles).**

Also, use your delivery staff to drop HND leaflets to empty letterboxes on rounds.



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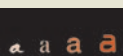
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## YOUR SAY Do customers want contactless payments? Do you offer them and are you considering adding Apple Pay?

### Ranjit Singh

Parans Minimarket, Leeds

I've offered contactless for around six months because customers were asking for it.

It's useful because it does speed up transaction time at the till.

However, I'm a traditional store and although I know we need to move forward, I think mobile phone payments like Apple Pay are probably a step too far for us.

### Carl Pickering

Top Shop News, Preston

I've had contactless for around 18 months, because I had the option with my terminal.

It speeds up time at the till by around 20 seconds per transaction which is great at busy times.

I've even processed a few Apple transactions. I embrace the technology.



Are you offering contactless payment in your store? What about Apple Pay?

As long as the payment is authorised I don't have a problem with it.

### Sam Cupid

Ormsgill Convenience Store, Cumbria

I don't offer contactless and I don't even think I've got that possibility on my terminal.

No customers ask for it. I would offer it if there was a demand, but it hasn't happened yet.

## YOUR STOCK Have you found it harder to manage your tobacco range since the display ban was introduced?

### Rushik Parmar

Kenwins, Herne Bay

I'm with JTI and have not had any problems. Their reps are always on hand, they understand my store, my stock and my customer base. I have nine lines and they ask that five lines are JTI stock, which is fine with me because JTI stock has always gone well here.

### Stephen Hunter

Old Road News, Bradford

I'm with Imperial and it's a real problem. They want 70% of the gantry filled with their stock, so in one case I have four spaces across filled with a brand that I only sell one pack a day of. I told my rep that what he wanted was not possible in my store and I've written to the NFRN.



How are you coping with the tobacco display ban?

### Richard Drake

Drake Newsagents, Thackley

I'm with Imperial and they want seven out of 10 shelves stocked with their products. I've not let it happen in my shop, but I've

heard of reps leaving unsecured stock in cardboard boxes on shop floors because the stock won't fit on the gantry. It's not acceptable. It's an insurance issue and I'm sure it's only a matter of time before a newsagent is prosecuted.



# YOUR ISSUE

**Helena Drakakis**  
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## PAV'S PEEVED OVER PAYPOINT PACKAGE

PayPoint has repeatedly come under fire for commission cap cuts and protests over exclusivity contracts this year, but one RN reader has been in touch claiming he was mis-sold his terminal package – and still hasn't got to the bottom of the problem.

Back in July, Pav Sandhu, of Lichfield Local in Staffordshire, had a site survey of his convenience store completed by a PayPoint representative. Afterwards, he was informed that he had to take a package of three services in order to take on a PayPoint terminal – a payment service, a cash machine and a credit card service – even though he only wanted the payment and credit card service.

Mr Sandhu says he took the package believing he had no other option. “There are several bank ATMs near my shop and I knew I wouldn't meet PayPoint's targets of 800 transactions a month, so I didn't want to take an ATM. But my rep told me it was all or nothing,” he said.

After speaking to other retailers, Mr Sandhu began to question whether he was, after all,

“

**I now believe I have been mis-sold the package. Independent assessors have told me that PayPoint has signed me up for a service that is unachievable**

**Pav Sandhu**

Lichfield Local, Staffordshire



**Pav Sandhu claims PayPoint signed him up to a package deal that was unachievable**

required to take all three services. “I'm a new business owner. This is my first shop and I'm finding my way. I now believe I have been mis-sold the package. Independent assessors have told me that PayPoint has signed me up for a service that is unachievable. I am fuming. What's even worse is that PayPoint will not provide me with the original site survey or any documentation regarding my case so I can understand how they reached their decision.”

Mr Sandhu continued investigating the contract over the summer. On 9 August he wrote to PayPoint asking for clarification as to why he was required to take all three services, but received no reply. He again wrote to PayPoint on 27 September asking for a copy of the site survey. Three days later, he received a phone call with an offer to renegotiate his contract onto more preferential terms, but no offer to show him the site survey or a discussion over whether he could have his ATM removed. Instead, PayPoint suggested he move onto a plan whereby he would start charging customers

to use the ATM which, he says, he did not want to do. He again asked for a copy of the original site survey, but still did not receive it.

Eventually, after threatening to take legal action against the service provider, he was contacted by PayPoint, which told him that each site is assessed case by case. He was also told that there was “no written documentation outlining PayPoint's sign-up criteria”. In the same email, PayPoint said this was its “final stance”. It also stated that if Mr Sandhu was not happy and wanted to have the ATM removed from the store he would need to provide this request in writing and face the possibility of incurring early termination charges.

“I was told by PayPoint that after an assessment is made the information goes to head office to be reassessed. If this is the case then there must be documentation that was sent to head office. I don't understand why the company can't show me the original assessment. I also do not understand why, if all my calls are recorded for “training pur-





poses” the company can't provide me with transcripts of everything that has been discussed over the phone,” he says.

Mr Sandhu has since renegotiated his contract in order to reduce his monthly losses on the ATM terminal, but he now plans to take his case to Trading Standards.

PayPoint confirmed to RN that it told Mr Sandhu that he would need to take all three products “to make the service commercially viable for him and us due to extensive network coverage already in his area”. It reiterated that he did, of course, have the option not to sign up, but that he decided to proceed.

A spokesperson said: “We've spoken to Mr Sandhu a number of times since then, both in person and over the phone, and have recently agreed an adjustment to his ATM commercials reflecting the feedback he has given us and to ensure that our service is viable in his store. Mr Sandhu confirmed to us that he is happy with this resolution and he has received documentation confirming this.”

# INDUSTRY PROFILE

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## Conlumino

With less than six months to go until the National Living Wage is introduced, Neil Saunders, retail analyst and managing director of Conlumino, discusses the challenges the new rate will have on retailers of all shapes and sizes



### RETAIL NEWSAGENT Are wage rises such as those demanded by the National Living Wage realistic for independent retailers?

**NEIL SAUNDERS** With the current state of the grocery market it is hard to see how an upward shift in wages can be easily absorbed by any part of the market.

Sustainable wage increases really need to come from productivity gains and this is the very thing that most grocery players – big and small – are really struggling to deliver at the moment.

As a result, the outcome of higher wages will ultimately be lower profits.

### RN What will be the impact of the NLW on the balance of power between independent and larger stores?

**NS** I think it creates challenges for both, albeit in different ways. Larger stores are almost certainly going to see a big impact on profitability and their costs will rise.

However, they often have deeper pockets and also have more ways in which they can mitigate the costs. This includes eking out productivity gains elsewhere, reviewing staff scheduling and also putting more pressure on suppliers.

By contrast, smaller stores have fewer ways to mitigate the costs but will have fewer staff impacted by the decision.

Overall though, it is hard to manage for all retailers – big or small.

### RN Will the challenges which larger stores face present independent retailers with any opportunities?

**NS** One interesting development

might be that the big stores focus much more on productivity. This could lead to some having shorter opening hours (especially those open 24 hours) as it is deemed to be less profitable to operate them.

Obviously this may well be an advantage for smaller stores.

### RN Many businesses already rely on family members working well below the current minimum wage. Will this present an additional challenge to retailers who don't?

**NS** Yes, certainly it could disadvantage stores that do not use informal family labour – they will be the ones most impacted by the wage increase and it will ultimately show in their bottom lines, which will negatively affect the valuation of the business.

Stores using more informal labour can mitigate and hide some of the cost increase.

### RN What could or should the government do to mitigate the effect of this on other businesses

“

The outcome of higher wages will ultimately be lower profits

### who will pay all their staff the full National Living Wage?

**NS** Obviously the minimum wage does not apply to family members who live in the same home as the business owner and who contribute to the business, and I would assume this exemption will remain for the National Living Wage.

The government could remove this to level the playing field, however to do so would represent a very worrying intrusion of the state into the private arrangements of families, so it is highly unlikely.

It would also be impossible to prosecute as the law prohibits spouses or civil partners from being compelled to testify against their other halves.

### RN So what support should the government give to independent retailers who feel threatened by the impact of the National Living Wage?

**NS** The best support the government could give is not to implement it.

However, this is unlikely to happen.

What government should do is look to reduce the burdens on business elsewhere – which it has done, to some extent, through reductions in corporation tax.

However, it needs to go further, perhaps looking at areas such as business rates, national insurance and so forth – especially for smaller businesses.

\*\* Company CV \*\*  
**Company** Conlumino  
**Managing director** Neil Saunders  
**Company profile** Retail analysts and consultants, the company works with some of the world's biggest retailers across the UK and USA. Its boss, Neil Saunders regularly contributes to business coverage in the print and broadcast media.  
 \*\*





# JOHN EASTWOOD

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fax 020 7689 0700



With volume and value sales in growth, the cider category is flourishing in independent stores. John Eastwood explores the trends driving the category and the products you can't afford to ignore

## Cider: a drink for all seasons

It's been a strong year for cider. In the first 10 months of 2015, value sales have grown by a massive 19.2% and volume sales by 16%.

This growth comes after a relatively static three years for ciders and beers in the convenience sector, with little variation in demand that was mainly attributable to changes in the summer weather.

These two categories together achieved total sales of £892m in 2014, but 2015 has been very different, with total value sales up by 11.5% in the first 40 weeks of the year despite a somewhat indifferent summer. Traditionally, cider has benefited from warm fine weather, but has bucked this trend this year as sales rocketed during a poor summer.

One of the main reasons for this growth is the increasing availability and variety of flavoured ciders. These perries and fruit ciders now account for almost 20% of total cider purchases by value.

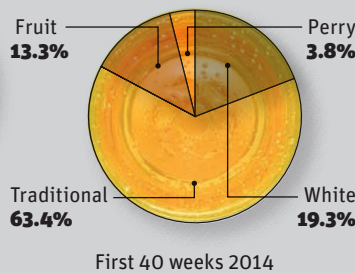
Three years ago that proportion was 17% and this was mainly made up of sales of the more established pear ciders, or perries. This year, other fruit flavours have become more prominent and now outsell perries by over three to one.

The Kopparberg brand is a fine example of the success of fruit flavours. With its popularity among younger drinkers, this brand has grown its market share from 2.8% in 2011 to 4.8% in 2015. This year, its three best-selling lines through convenience stores have been 500ml bottles of Strawberry, Mixed Fruit and Raspberry variants respectively.

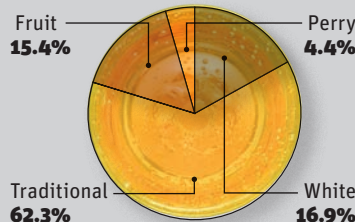
Value sales have grown by **19.2%** this year

### Cider sales in independent stores

#### Cider of sales by type

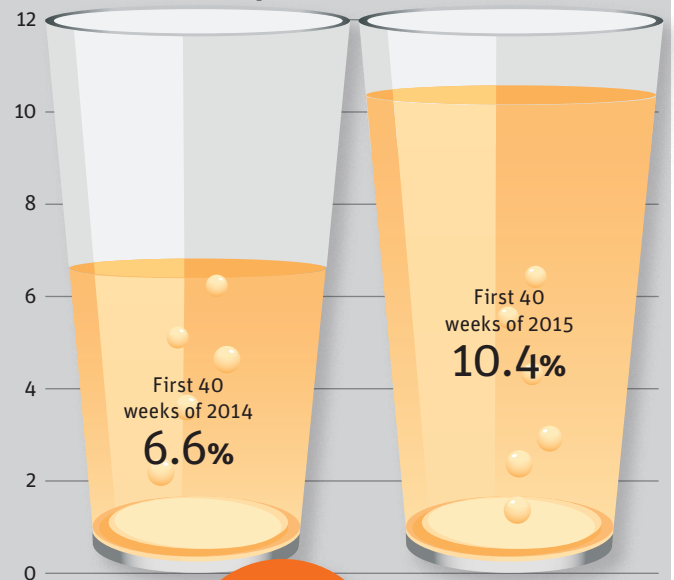


First 40 weeks 2014



First 40 weeks 2015

#### % of cider sales value pricemarked



Volume sales have grown by **16%** this year



**Other fruit flavours have become more prominent and now outsell perries by over three to one**

**10.4%** of sales come from pricemarked packs

Rekorderlig is enjoying similar popularity, particularly with its Strawberry & Lime, Wild Berry and Mango & Raspberry flavours.

Magners, on the other hand, has lost share to other manufacturers' fruit flavours. It has had great success with both traditional apple ciders and perries and invested heavily in advertising, but its success with other fruit flavours has been limited.

As sales of fruit-flavoured ciders have grown, white ciders have been the main losers - more so than traditional apple ciders. White cider now accounts for only 17% of total sales value.

The data suggests, however, that many shops have still to adapt to these trends. In the four weeks ending 3 October there were still 13% of licensed shops on our 3,000-store sample which did not have these fruit flavours in stock, a figure that is only

**20%** of cider sales are perries and fruit ciders

slightly lower than a year ago. These stores are missing out on a growth sector.

Another boost to the cider market in the convenience sector has been the increased use of pricemarking. In the first 40 weeks of 2014, 6.6% of value sales came from pricemarked packs. This figure has grown to 10.4% this year. The Strongbow brand has been at the forefront of this trend with nearly three quarters of its sales coming from pricemarked packs.

Cider is a growth market that is appealing to a growing number of shoppers, but some retailers are yet to take full advantage of it.

With IRI predicting that sales of cider in the convenience sector could be worth more than in the supermarkets by 2020, it's essential that retailers have the best possible range in stock. ●

John Eastwood is a data analyst for EDFM

# PRICEWATCH WHITE WINE

## WHITE WINE PRICES AROUND THE UK

PRODUCT	AVERAGE	RRP	RETAILER 1	RETAILER 2	RETAILER 3	RETAILER 4	RETAILER 5
<b>Echo Falls White</b> 75cl	£4.89	£5.99	£5.96	£5.00 (Offer)	£5.29	£4.99	£5.49
<b>Blossom Hill White</b> 75cl	£5.17	£6.49	£5.50	£5.59	£5.29	£4.99	£5.99
<b>Hardys Bin 161 Chardonnay</b> 75cl	£5.03	£5.00 (PM)	£5.00 (Offer)	£5.00 (PM)	£6.99	-	-
<b>Blossom Hill White Zinfandel</b> 75cl	£6.18	£7.39	£7.99	£6.99	£6.99	£6.99	£6.49
<b>Isla Negra Sauvignon Blanc Reserve</b> 75cl	£5.03	£5.00 (PM)	£5.00 (Offer)	£4.99	£6.00 (Offer)	-	-
<b>Echo Falls White Zinfandel</b> 75cl	£6.00	£6.49	£6.80	£6.49	£6.99	£5.99	-
<b>Hardys VR Chardonnay</b> 75cl	£5.68	£6.99	£5.00 (Offer)	£6.99	£5.00 (Offer)	£5.99	£6.49
<b>Casillero del Diablo Sauvignon Blanc</b> 75cl	£7.14	£7.99	£6.00 (Offer)	£6.00 (Offer)	£6.00 (Offer)	-	£7.99
<b>Echo Falls Unoaked Chardonnay</b> 75cl	£5.91	£6.49	£6.77	£6.49	£6.00 (Offer)	£5.99	-
<b>Echo Falls White Peach &amp; Mango</b> 75cl	£4.98	£5.00	£5.69	£5.99	£4.99	-	-
<b>Yellow Tail Chardonnay</b> 75cl	£6.96	£8.49	£5.50	£6.00 (Offer)	£6.99	£6.99	£6.49
<b>Blossom Hill Pinot Grigio</b> 75cl	£6.37	£7.39	-	£6.99	£6.99	£6.99	£6.49

## Pricing strategies

### RETAILER

# 1



**NAME ED & JAMES WHITE**  
**STORE** White's Calver (Spar)  
**LOCATION** Hope Valley, Derbyshire  
**SIZE** 2,900sq ft  
**TYPE** village supermarket

We've always used Blakemore's RRP's. They suit our store and are what our regular customers from the village are used to. We dedicate 2.4m shelf space to wine and about 1.5m of this is taken up by Spar's own brand, which sells very fast. The rest of the space is for premium wine that we source from an independent supplier John Hattersley, which is just as popular and gives good margins. Our best-selling wine depends what's on offer, and Oxford Landing and Isla Negra sell particularly well on promotion. Spar Pinot Grigio at £5.50 is also quite popular.

### RETAILER

# 2



**NAME DAVID HISCUTT**  
**STORE** Londis  
**LOCATION** Westham Road, Weymouth  
**SIZE** 2,000sq ft  
**TYPE** town centre

We try to stock as many promoted and pricemarked bottles as we can, and otherwise stick to the RRP's set by Londis. If an RRP is significantly higher than the price our local competition is charging, however, we'll lower our price to match it. Londis' RRP for Jacob's Creek, for example, is £8.45, which we lowered to £7.99 to remain competitive. Our best-selling wine tends to be whatever is on promotion, so right now it's Secretary Bird, which is selling half price for £4.99.




## BLOSSOM HILL WHITE ZINFANDEL 75cl 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.



 **Nadia Alexandrou**  
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**RETAILER****3****NAME** VIP MEASURIA**STORE** The Prior Way (One Stop)**LOCATION** Borrowwash, Derby**SIZE** 2,200sq ft**TYPE** village

We set prices according to what nearby stores are charging, and also aim to get a margin of around 17% for wine. Sometimes we have to drop the price, and therefore the margin, if local prices are particularly competitive. We usually group by brand to make it easier for our customers to shop because grouping by grape can be confusing if you don't know a lot about wine. We merchandise white wine on a 2.5m chiller and second-site promoted bottles on a separate bay. This helps draw customers' attention and makes it more likely that they will buy on impulse.

**RETAILER****4****NAME** BAY BASHIR**STORE** Belle Vue Convenience (Lifestyle Express)**LOCATION** Middlesbrough, Cleveland**SIZE** 800sq ft**TYPE** neighbourhood

We adjust RRP to get margins of between 23% and 25% and stock mostly mid-priced wines because they are what our customers seem to prefer. Promotions such as two for £10 work quite well in this category, so I make sure there is always at least one offer running at one time. I group all wine by brands, because most of our customers shop by names they know and like rather than by country or grape. All of our white wine is kept in the chiller so customers can drink it as soon as they get home.

**RETAILER****5****NAME** RISHI MADHANI**STORE** C J Stores (Today's)**LOCATION** Stokenchurch, Buckinghamshire**SIZE** 2,500sq ft**TYPE** neighbourhood

Most of our wines are priced between £5 and £7, because this is what most of our customers seem to be willing to pay. Californian wine is very popular, as well as Chilean wine when it's on promotion. A growing number of customers, however, seem to be switching to old world wines, especially French ones such as Chateauf-neuf-du-Pape. Other premium wines including Casillero Del Diablo, Oyster Bay and Rioja are becoming popular, too. I put most white wines in the chiller, alongside rosés.



**INDEPENDENT**  
 Achievers Academy


**HEINEKEN**

## ACADEMY IN ACTION

Follow up






## Marketing to Customers

Heineken category development manager Richard Campbell visited Alkesh Pankania's Best-one in Sunbury, Middlesex, in June to help energise his marketing to customers. We return to see the progress made.



### Alkesh's action plan

-  Use printed staff t-shirts or in-store signage to promote the shop's Facebook page
-  Get rid of clutter and focus point of sale on food-to-go at the front of the store
-  Incentivise customers to join the loyalty scheme by offering a free coffee on sign-up

### Alkesh says

"Richard's visit was an eye-opener. We made changes in all three areas. Shoppers can now see through our front door. We have professional logos promoting our Facebook page and loyalty card. Membership of both has grown. Our staff upsell more, telling people about our price match on alcohol. Outside we now specifically promote our bakery, that we do food to go and that we have a free to use cash machine. The window posters now market our current offers. Combined with better deals from Bestway, our sales are up."



### Your action plan

Visit [betterRetailing.com/IAA](http://betterRetailing.com/IAA) to find out more about Alkesh's visit from the IAA, to develop your own action plan and see similar results in your store

# RETAILER PROFILE



## Kam's plan to succeed

Kamal Sisodia has had to work hard to create a point of difference against a tide of discounters and supermarkets. Now his distress purchase-led store and extensive magazine range has helped him win over more customers.  
**Steven Lambert reports**

**W**ith his shop located in the busy Belvoir shopping centre in Coalville, Leicestershire-based retailer Kamal Sisodia faces a daily battle to secure a steady stream of footfall and sales against the wealth of supermarkets and discount stores around him.

But the owner of Belvoir News Loco says paying close attention to the pricing and strategies of his competition has enabled him to grow turnover and keep a constant stream of customers coming in.

Kamal says: "We've got a Morrisons close to us, as well as an Asda, Home Bargains and other discounters, so it is a challenge.

"With that in mind, it's important for us to find out what the competition is doing so we can counter this in our store."

Since taking over the 950sq ft business four years ago, Kamal has turned what was formally a traditional CTN into a convenience store focused on top-up shopping. He says the changes have led to weekly turnover growing from £15,000 to £20,000.

"When I started we had a complete refit," says Kamal. "I took out greetings cards and added things like sandwiches, more grocery lines and alcohol.

"I learnt quickly that we weren't going to be big on things like food to go, because we have Greggs and other places on our doorstep. Also, because we're in the shopping centre, many people want to get in and out

quickly. That's why we concentrate on offering emergency purchases at good prices."

Kamal says joining Nisa's Loco fascia has helped him to offer more multiple-beating promotions and show he is offering good value for money.

"We can't beat the supermarkets on price every time, but when we do have a good offer on, such as when we had bags of sugar for 50p, we'll create promotional stacks and add secondary sites around the store.

"Shoppers here are really savvy, especially when it comes to price. But that plays into our hands in some ways because if we can offer them the bargains they're looking for, more often than not they'll pick up a product on impulse."

Big seasonal events such as Easter and Christmas also present further impulse sales opportunities, especially around two of the store's best-selling categories - premium chocolate and alcohol.

Kamal says: "We're quite well known for our premium chocolate, something that the supermarkets aren't as big on.

"We have a good Ferrero and Lindt range, which sell well around Easter and Christmas. We'll promote these at competitive prices and get a 25% margin from them.

"We also have a large range of spirits in fractional sizes and, when we're getting close to Christmas, we always make sure we build up our range of malt whiskies to offer a





**I enjoy reading the retailer profiles in RN and use Pricewatch to compare my prices with other retailers. I also find the product pages useful for finding out about any new lines.”**

**KAMAL SISODIA**



**Coalville retailer Kamal Sisodia focuses on what he can do better than the supermarkets**



**“I learnt quickly that we weren’t going to be big on things like food to go, because we have Greggs and other places on our doorstep”**

point of difference to customers.”

While Kamal has endeavoured to modernise his store, he has also maintained a number of profitable services introduced by the previous owners. This includes an impressive magazine section, which includes more than 900 titles.

Kamal says: “Our bestsellers are TV magazines, women’s weeklies and craft titles such as knitting and cross-stitching.

“We also do well with farming and tractor titles and plane and train magazines. We have around 30 shop saves at the moment and quite a few partwork collectors.”

He adds that he has worked with News UK and the Leicester Mercury to promote national and local newspapers using PoS and merchandising materials, which has helped him to maintain more than 500 customers signed up to his HND service.

With his business going from strength to strength, Kamal says he is now eyeing up new ways to attract even more shoppers.

“We recently had a nearby dry cleaners close so I’ve been thinking about introducing a service in the shop. I also want to expand our grocery range.

“There are still plenty of sales opportunities out there.” ●

#### VISIT MY SHOP

##### Belvoir News Loco

33 New Broadway,  
Coalville,  
Leicestershire  
LE67 3XF



**Want to see more of Kamal's store? Go to [betterretailing.com/kamal-sisodia](http://betterretailing.com/kamal-sisodia)**



# CRAFT BEER & CIDER

Think craft beer and cider is just for bearded young men in Britain's trendy urban areas? Think again. Nadia Alexandrou brings you a step by step guide on taking advantage of this profitable opportunity in your store

## The art of craft

Located within 50 miles of each other in England's south west corner, both Chalbury Food & Wine and the Abbotsbury Road Londis in Weymouth have etched out very similar niches: offering craft beers and ciders to thirsty customers in an area rich with microbreweries and food and wine festivals.

With tourists and locals happy to go out of their way (and pay extra)

for products that offer something unique from the area, it's understandable that the stores' respective owners Luke Mansell and Dave Hiscutt are willing to invest the time and space to build ranges of bottled beers and ciders that number in their hundreds.

It's just one sign of how the craft movement is moving out of the cities and back into the rural locations where many of the beer styles and



### GET INVOLVED YOURSELF

With so many retailers already reaping the rewards of stocking a range of local, special and other craft alcohols, here's a step-by-step guide for any retailer who's yet to take the leap

**1 Talk to someone with a passion for craft beer** Ash Patel's first step when building a craft range was to seek his sons' advice. Like much of his customer base, they are recent graduates and love craft beer. "I was surprised to learn how popular craft beers and ales had become among younger people. They told me a lot of the appeal lay in the novelty of the quirky brands available, and gave me tips like focusing on pale ales," he says.

**2 Check your wholesaler for well-known brands** While the availability of many niche brands is limited to the region they are brewed in, major wholesalers are increasingly likely to stock brands such as Brewdog and Innis & Gunn which can act as good signposts for a range. Even a range of traditional beers such as Hobgoblin, Doom Bar and Old Speckled Hen can have a benefit. Vip Measuria believes his customers were more engaged with his One Stop range of craft beers because they had already seen an existing range of bottled beers in place.

**3 Discover who your local suppliers are** "A big reason why my customers like craft beer so much is because they

**These companies are eager to work with independent retailers**

know it comes from small local suppliers, and the advantage here is that these companies are eager to work with independent retailers," says Luke Mansell. By researching online and attending local beer festivals, he now stocks products from several local microbreweries including Lulworth Skipper, West Milton Cider and Dorset Nectar.

**4 Talk to staff on the shop floor** Rather than booking an appointment to see his wholesaler's manager or waiting for a drinks rep to visit, Ash asks staff on the shop floor at HT Cash & Carry – a specialist London wholesaler – where he sources his beers, what's new and which craft brands are selling well. "It's the staff who give the best advice, because they have no sales incentive and are familiar with what retailers have been buying," he says.

**5 Trial a few lines before growing** When first building his range, Ash gave his sons 2.5m of shelf space (enough for about 20 lines) to see how they sold. It was only when customers began commenting on the layout that he knew the demand was there and felt



Working with his two sons helped Ash Patel build his range





Left and below: Luke Mansell has carved out a niche with local beers and ciders

flavours were first developed centuries ago.

So what's bringing so many retailers into a category that, despite all the excitement around it, only represents 2% of the overall market?

Back in the heartland of the current craft trend, London, retailer Ash Patel is a recent convert. His store, Gerhold Fine Foods & Newsagent in Putney, has sold craft beers and ciders for the past six months after his sons came back from university with a taste for the hoppy beers with ornate labels that mark out craft beer.

Since stocking them, Ash has seen a 25% spike in alcohol sales. "It's people in their 20s and 30s who are driving this market, and since



Putney is filled with young working professionals and graduates, my sons knew what was popular and helped me to understand what they were looking for," he says.

It might not be surprising that high sales like these are convincing more and more retailers to make craft beer and cider a point of difference

within their store. This is particularly where customers have the extra pennies in their pockets to trade up if they find the right product.

Yet the real evidence that this market has well and truly arrived comes from retailer Vip Measuria, whose recently-converted One Stop store lies in the suburban outskirts of Derby. This might not be traditional craft territory but when the franchise group's team started looking at his range they were clear on what was missing: craft beer and cider. "Despite my initial misgivings, I was surprised to see how popular the new range was," Vip says. Like many retailers, he says he's having fun building his range and is already looking to expand.

brand rather than styles prevents the intimidating and 'pot luck' experience often seen with wine," says Adam Worrall, business development director at craft beer importer and distributor James Clay. Positioning Brooklyn Lager's East IPA, Pilsner and Brown Ale all together, for example, encourages customers to explore through brand ranges, he adds.



Londis, Ash is able to design and print his own promotions, and often runs three for £5 multibuy across his craft beers, ales and ciders.

in the often intricately-designed six-pack holders they come in. "After all, who wants to bring one beer to a party?" says Mr Worrall.

**9 Market your product** "Half the popularity of this category is that most of the beers and ciders have an interesting backstory, and it's important to communicate and market this to your customers," says Dave Hiscutt. A key way he does this in his Londis store is by working with

the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), showcasing his products at the local beer festivals it runs.

**10 Keep some lines regularly rotated** "Craft is doing a fantastic job of creating real vibrancy in the category, and it's important to keep customers engaged with new products," says Daffyd Pugh-Williams, senior innovation manager at Diageo. Mr Worrall agrees, and encourages retailers to regularly rotate seasonal and limited edition beers from local breweries so that there's always something new to try when customers come through the door. ●

**7 Promote your range with a multibuy deal** "This is one category where new and regular customers are always on the lookout for new brands," says Ash. Multibuy promotions work really well when introducing a new product. Through

**8 Use the six-pack holders the beers arrives in** As America continues to lead the craft industry and exports more of its beers into the UK, distributors such as James Clay are encouraging retailers to copy US retail best practice and sell them



Dave Hiscutt, right, stocks more than 200 bottles



Ash's range of chilled beers and ciders

confident to expand. Outside of the city things are different and, for Vip, a range of five beers represented a safer amount to trial in his store.

**6 Group by brand, not beer styles** Arriving at a fixture filled with unfamiliar brands names and beer types can be off-putting for customers. "Grouping by



# NATIONAL LIVING WAGE

**It is likely to present the greatest challenge many small businesses have ever faced, but how exactly will the National Living Wage affect independent retailers and what are stores already doing to mitigate its impact. Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski reports**

## Can you pay the price?



**W**hen chancellor of the exchequer George Osborne stood up on 8 July and announced a new National Living Wage there was a palpable sense of shock in the industry.

For Kamal Sisodia, who owns Belvoir Loco convenience store in Coalville, Leicestershire, the initial rise to £7.20 - to be felt next April when his wage bill rises by over £3,000 - can be absorbed by the business. It is the point when, in 2020, the rate hits £9 per hour, and his wage bill soars by over £15,000, that he is most concerned about.

Across the UK successful business owners like Kamal are currently looking at their business models and asking if such a huge change is workable.

Many store owners, however, can barely pay themselves the current minimum wage. The Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) estimates that nearly half of shop owners work more than 50 hours per week, with one in five taking no holiday at all. Add to this the fact that 55% of these entrepreneurs say that they themselves earn less than the National Minimum Wage and it becomes

clear why independent retailers did not share the delight at George Osborne's plan.

RN spoke to one such retailer who showed us figures from his business. His is a store that runs with a husband and wife team who currently both work over 90 hours per week and earn £6.43 per hour, well below the National Minimum Wage of £6.70, never mind the National Living Wage.

Their health is affected and they "barely get any time to spend with their kids". The new legislation has just made taking on another member of staff that bit more difficult.

If Kamal reached a similar point in his own business he says he doubts that he would continue trading. "What's the point of the extra stress about cashflow, theft, staffing - you might as well get a job," he says.

It's not surprising that the chief executive of the Association of Convenience Stores, James Lowman, predicts the new wage will be "devastating" for the sector, with 80,000 jobs and 24,000 business at risk. The 50p rise next spring will represent the largest ever rise in the legal minimum hourly rate for adult



**What's the point of the extra stress about cashflow, theft, staffing - you might as well get a job**



workers - the closest having been the hike from £3.70 to £4.10 in January 2001.

The new rate also changes the idea of what a minimum wage is for. In April 1999 the new National Minimum Wage was set at £3.60 per





**George Osborne's National Living Wage plan surprised all sides**

PA Photos



**I'm looking at social media to advertise Bestway's promotions more and to promote the store**

**GLOSSARY**

**£6.70**



**National Minimum Wage**

Introduced in April 1999 the National Minimum Wage has been agreed by the independent Low Pay Commission in consultation with business groups including the ACS. It is currently £6.70 per hour for workers aged 21 and over.

**£7.20**



**National Living Wage**

Announced in the post-election budget by George Osborne, the new minimum legal wage for those over 25. To be introduced in April, it will stand at £7.20 with that figure rising to above £9 per hour by 2020.

**£7.85**



**The Living Wage**

Calculated by the Living Wage Foundation, this is a figure based on what is needed for a reasonable standard of living. It currently stands at £7.85 for those outside of London and discounter Lidl has recently announced it will soon pay the figure.



**High-margin categories such as bakery look set to grow**

hour for those over the age of 21. It represented a figure of under 47% of the median hourly rate for a UK worker, then £7.70. Yet by the time of the next general election in 2020, the government's plan is to have a minimum wage (the National Liv-

**NLW & ME**

**David Ramsey**

Best-one  
Byram Park,  
Knottingley,  
Yorkshire



**The effect**

I have four part-time workers and my granddaughters do hours in the store too. In total, we have 70 hours of help per week meaning the first rise is going to cost us £35 per week.

**My plan**

We're going to look at the store again and delist slow-selling lines, but, on top of that I'm looking at social media to advertise Bestway's promotions more and to promote the store, letting customers know about things like us making the IAA Top 100 stores.

ing Wage) for workers aged over 25 set at over 60% of median earnings. It's a huge cultural change and represents a challenge to employers of all kinds.

Yet, for many, the independent retail trade is on the wrong side of this debate. The example of the German discount chain Lidl (which last month announced it will be paying the higher Living Wage rate to all its staff) is commonly used to highlight how businesses can easily pay a higher wage.

"It's a very smart move from Lidl," agrees David Gilroy, former operations director at Bestway and now retail convenience lead at W2 Commercial. "It just cranks the pressure up massively. It's a really fabulous piece of strategy."

Indeed, it does beg the question: if a German discounter known for its tight margins and low prices can up its wages so dramatically why can't independent retailers too?

The answer is simple: its business model is dramatically different to the average convenience retailer and even the major multiples.

In the USA, a similar debate has raged over why the discount chain Costco is able to pay a cashier over >>>



# NATIONAL LIVING WAGE



\$40,000 per year (and in some cases nearly \$50,000) while the average wage paid to cashiers at Walmart – by far the world’s biggest retailer – is closer to half that amount.

Back in 2013, Bloomberg View writer Megan McArdle explained why comparing the two employers was unhelpful:

“Costco has a tiny number of SKUs in a huge store and consequently has half as many employees per square foot of store. Their model is less labour intensive, which is to say it has higher labour productivity. It makes it unsurprising that they pay their employees more.”

Swap Costco for Lidl, and Walmart for employers such as supermarkets and convenience stores, and the challenge becomes clear. For an industry that has relied on offering large ranges and taking low margins is there really any extra give? Is paying any more than the current rate feasible?

“With the current state of the grocery market it is hard to see how an upward shift in wages can easily be absorbed by any part of the market,” says retail analyst and managing director of Conlumino Neil Saunders. “Sustainable wage increases really need to come from productivity gains and this is the very thing that most grocery players – big and small – are really struggling to deliver.”

Higher wages, he believes will therefore inevitably lead to lower profits for independent retailers.

So is all lost? Firstly, it’s worth



**With the current state of the grocery market it is hard to see how an upward shift in wages can easily be absorbed by any part of the market**

remembering that we’ve been here before: many – including the Conservative Party and the Economist – initially believed the National Minimum Wage would have a negative effect on British business and jobs and they have both been forced to change their minds.

Look also at current trends in independent retail and moves towards higher margin categories might offer

opportunities to boost profitability and make a higher wage bill possible.

A great example of this shift in practice comes in the form of Chris and Phil Shelley, retailers who are currently in the process of transforming their business from a traditional CTN – Shelley’s News – into a new Budgens store, focusing on higher margin areas such as fresh and chilled.

## COSTCO WHOLESALE

Number of US stores	447
Average square footage	145,000
Approximate total square footage	66m
Number of US employees	107,000
Annual profit	\$1.7bn
Profit per employee	\$10,625

Source  
Bloomberg View 2013

## WAL\*MART

Number of US stores	4,400
Average square footage	107,000
Approximate total square footage	470m
Number of US employees	1.4m
Annual profit	\$15.6bn
Profit per employee	\$7,428

Source  
Bloomberg View 2013

## NLW & ME

### Kamal Sisodia

Belvoir Loco,  
Coalville,  
Leicestershire



### The effect

I pay staff for around 130 hours per week, which means from April I’ll see my wage bill rise by £3,380. We can absorb this cost, but I’m more concerned about what happens when the figure rises to £9 per hour. That would represent an extra £15,548 in wages compared to today.

### My plan

It’s been interesting to talk to retailers about their moves into high margin categories. We don’t have an in-store bakery or food to go but I see e-cigarettes and stationery which offer margins of 50 to 60% as a better alternative to promoted alcohol and snacks. High volume, low margin categories take a lot of work hours to run.



**NLW & ME**

**Ramesh Shingadia**

Londis,  
Southwater,  
West Sussex



**The effect**

We've just had the 20p rise in the minimum wage and that cost the business £1,000. We've not worked out the numbers yet but paying the National Living Wage is going to take out an even larger chunk of our profitability.

**My plan**

If we can boost our turnover by 1% or 2% then we should be able to absorb the costs. We're also going to look at efficiencies in other overheads such as energy, but ultimately it will be investing in the categories such as food to go and fresh which than offer the best margins which will help us most.



**Peter Lamb makes £26,000 profit from coffee sales each year**

Although they aren't supportive of the National Minimum Wage they believe "without a doubt" that the store will be in a better shape to survive its impact once the transformation is complete.

For other retailers the National Living Wage would never have caused a problem. Peter Lamb, who own and runs Lamb's Larder in rural Sussex, has paid his two part-time and one full-time members of staff £10 per hour ever since he opened up six years ago. "It's something we factored into our business plan," he says.

As with the Shelleys, certain categories help him to achieve enough profitability to make this wage pay. The store sells 26,000 cups of coffee per year at £1.40 per cup, on which a full £1 is gross profit. Most of his coffee-buying customers pick up a cake or flapjack too, all of which give margins above 50%.

Yet, even retailers who are unable to make the investment needed to change their business models have reason for cautious optimism too.

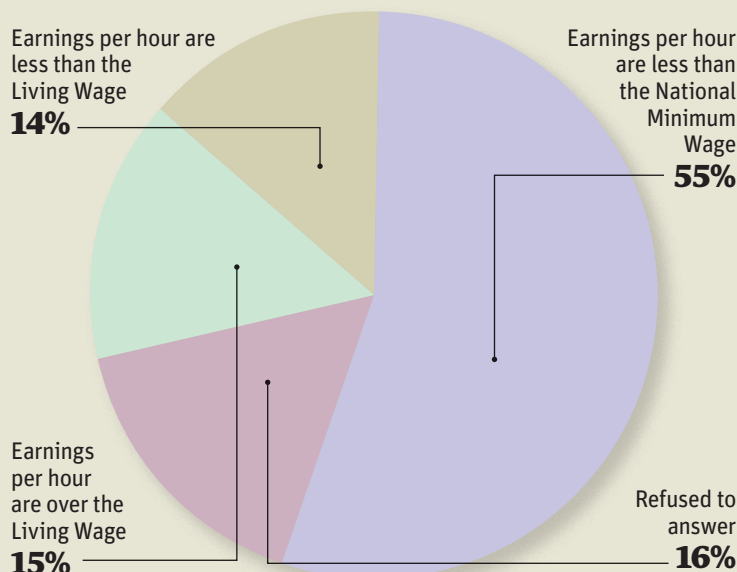
One industry expert, who did not want to be named, believes that ➔



**Paying £10 per hour is something we calculated into our business plan**

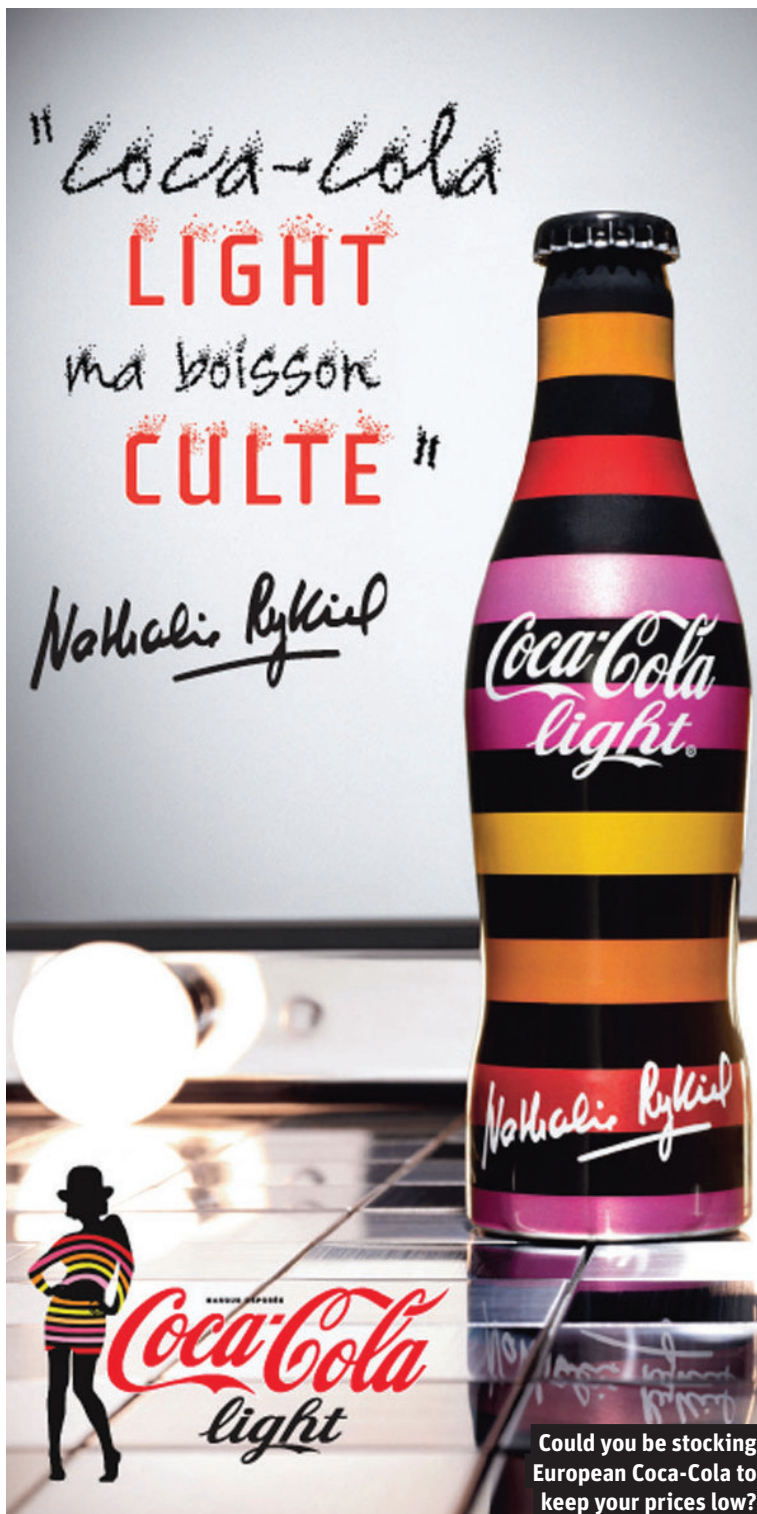
**ACS ASKS MEMBERS WHAT THEY PAY THEMSELVES**

Thinking about your own earnings from the business as compared to the amount of hours you work, do you estimate that...?



Source: ACS submission Low Pay Commission review 2014

# NATIONAL LIVING WAGE



Could you be stocking European Coca-Cola to keep your prices low?

any effects will cause a rise in “parallel sourcing” in the market as independent retailers look for cheaper ways to buy stock, thus protecting their profitability.

“If you buy Coca-Cola direct from Coca-Cola in the UK you will pay £2 a case more than if you buy it from a third party. The third party stock might have come from Europe, Ireland – but it’s still Coca-Cola and customers still buy it. I think we’ll see a lot more of this.”

With technology enabling retailers to go to greater numbers of sources for their stock, could it be wholesalers, not retailers, who bear the brunt of the National Living Wage’s impact?

Even among the traditional supply chain, experts are optimistic that times will be tough but not life-threatening. “There’s always a better deal to be had,” says David Gilroy, who nonetheless accepts that this is the most competitive he’s seen the

## “

### It could disadvantage stores that do not use informal family labour

market during his career.

Much has also been made of the fact that the National Living Wage applies to workers aged 25 and over and Mr Gilroy is one of many experts who predicts employers will be looking to employ greater numbers of younger workers.

So there are ways in which retailers can adapt their business models, find greater efficiencies in their operations and squeeze suppliers for even more competitive prices. Yet the risk is that other retailers find ways around the new legislation.

A spokesman for the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills told RN that the government is “committed to cracking down on employers who break the National Minimum Wage law” and points to the 2,204 investigations it carried out last year.

But family businesses represent a model which will allow owners to pay relatives below the National Living Wage without censure.

“It could disadvantage stores that do not use informal family labour – obviously they will be the ones most impacted by the wage increase and it will ultimately show in their bottom lines, says Mr Saunders.

But, he says, the prospect of any help to businesses to overcome this imbalance is close to nil. “The government could remove this exemption to level the playing field, but to do so would represent a very worrying intrusion of the state into the private arrangements of families, so it is highly unlikely. It would also be impossible to prosecute, at least on a criminal level,” Mr Saunders adds.

Ultimately, what will stop this model taking over is the sentiments expressed by Kamal and others – that a work life that relies on so much sacrifice, punishing hours and little profit will not be worth it to the store owner.

It is enlightening that the retailer who already works over 90 hours per week for less than the current National Minimum Wage, says they are giving the business another 12 months and will convert the store to flats if there’s no upturn in trade.

Yet, as we have seen, for other retailers there are a number of reasons for optimism. The government may have taken a great risk by bring in the new National Living Wage but, once again, the tenacity, passion and quick thinking of independent retailers promises to ensure that many retailers continue to succeed and remain crucial employers in many thousands of communities. ●

## NLW & ME

**Alkesh Pankhania**

Best-one,  
Sunbury-on-Thames,  
Greater London



### The effect

We’ve got five staff members, three of whom work full time. It’s going to have an impact but if we can make the changes to the business I want to do I think we should be able to deal with it.

### My plan

We’re looking to do a full £80,000 refit in the store just before the £7.20 wage comes in. We’ll be adding four new chillers and adding to our alcohol range and I expect it to immediately boost sales by £10,000 growing hopefully to closer to £15,000. This will easily pay back the loan and the rise in wages the National Living Wage will bring.



# STOCK<sup>THE</sup> NO.1s

## THIS CHRISTMAS



CASILLERO DEL DIABLO  
NO.1 CABERNET SAUVIGNON



ISLA NEGRA SAUVIGNON BLANC  
NO.1 CHILEAN WINE.  
A BOTTLE SOLD EVERY  
OTHER SECOND



**STOCK BEST SELLING BRANDED WINES TO SELL  
TO YOUR SHOPPERS OVER THE CHRISTMAS PERIOD**

Source: IRI Value Sales 52w Jun 2015

[www.CYT-UK.com](http://www.CYT-UK.com)

# FAMILY NIGHT IN



In every customer's living room there's a wealth of opportunities for retailers to profit – particularly on a family night in. Nadia Alexandrou takes a closer look at a typical domestic scene to prove the point

## Make it special

**W**e're working harder than ever and we have less free time than ever, but ask the average person if they feel better off and you'll be given short shrift.

In this context, is it any wonder that family nights in, with loved ones gathered on the sofa, have become an ever-more valuable time in millions of people's weeks?

Representing a cheaper and easier alternative to a trip out, shoppers will be happy to indulge themselves on a night in and suppliers are waking up to the opportunity that this presents to retailers who are

prepared to offer the right range.

According to Coca-Cola's trade communications manager Amy Burgess, this time of year, with the clocks turned back and television schedules filled to bursting, is the perfect time to ensure your range is right. "There's a huge opportunity to cater to families socialising at home in autumn when big TV events such as Saturday night talent shows and televised football shows are popular," she says.

So this week, we take a look at a typical family scene and the products that you can offer to make their night complete. >>



**There's a huge opportunity to cater to families socialising at home**

### FAMILY NIGHTS FOR THE DIARY

**31 October**  
Rugby World Cup Final

Halloween

**5 November**  
Bonfire Night

**13 December**  
X Factor Final

**20 December**  
Strictly Come Dancing Final





Cadbury  
Dairy Milk

**New!**

PRESENTS...  
**MARVELLOUS  
ICE CREAMS**

The hugely successful Cadbury Dairy Milk Marvellous Creations is now available in ice cream.



Perfect for a  
**Big Night In!**

© Mondelez International 2015



# FAMILY NIGHT IN

## For the basket

**Phileas Fogg American-Style Bubble Chips** 90g (KP Snacks) pricemarked £1

**Tabasco Sweet Chilli BBQ popcorn** 90g (Empire Bespoke Foods) RRP £1.59

**Walkers MixUps Cheese & Onion** 120g (PepsiCo) RRP £1.99

**Jacob's Cracker Crisps Sea Salt & Malt Vinegar** 150g (United Biscuits) RRP £2.09



## Snacks

For a whole family to go to the cinema it can be an expensive treat, but suppliers are increasingly looking to help recreate the experience for consumers at home. "People tend to opt for large bags of popcorn and crisps during cinema trips," says

Matt Collins, trading controller of convenience, wholesale and foodservice at KP Snacks. He recommends retailers stay fully stocked up on larger formats, with pricemarked versions driving sales among those looking for value.

## For the basket

**Chicago Town Deep Dish Pizzas** two-pack 320g (Dr. Oetker) pricemarked £2

**Rustlers Pepperoni Panini** 124g (Kepak) Pricemarked £1.99

**Cup a Soup Southern Style Pulled Pork** 98g (Premier Foods) RRP £1.49

**Heritage Meat Feast Pizza** 350g (Nisa) RRP £3.29



## Meal options

A night on the sofa to watch a film or catch up with a favourite show would not be complete for many families without a TV dinner and, in keeping with consumers' wider demand for less expensive choices, suppliers such as Dr. Oetker are presenting their portfolios as offering the same experience for less. "Our Chicago Town Takeaway and Ristorante ranges offer consumers real value in comparison to the high street," says the company's head of marketing Jan McKee. Once customers are picking up their dinner in-store there are opportunities to increase their basket spend even further, she says: "Putting related products such as dough balls, soft drinks and desserts next to your pizzas encourages impulse purchases."

## Soft drinks & wine

As with other categories, sharing formats fit perfectly within the needs of a family. "If it's a family night in, retailers should be thinking about stocking brands which appeal to children and young adults such as Vimto, Panda and Levi Roots," says Emma Hunt, marketing controller at Vimto. For parents looking to unwind, a glass of red wine is a popular choice and Casillero del Diablo is sponsoring Halloween films on Sky Movies this weekend. Meanwhile, Amy Burgess, trade communications manager at CCE, says the fact that one in five adults don't drink alcohol means "lighter options and premium drinks are appealing" too.





## Confectionery

While crisps and snacks might be a popular choice for all the family, those with a sweet tooth will also need something to munch on and according to suppliers the £3.5bn chocolate market remains the top choice for many families. The growth of larger formats such as slabs and bags is proof of how important sharing has become to this category and, accompanied by a pricemark, lets people feel they're getting a good deal on their money saving night in.

### For the basket

**Skittles Wild Berry** 125g (Wrigley) pricemarked £1

**Maynards Red 'n Black Wine Gums** 165g (Mondelez) RRP £1.52

**Cadbury Dairy Milk Marvellous Smashables Rocky Mallow Road** 180g (Mondelez) RRP £2.49

**Kinder Snack Bars** 8 100g (Ferrero) pricemarked £1



## TIDY UP YOUR SALES WITH THESE THREE SUPPLIERS' TIPS

### Position pizzas 'face' on

We have seen and typically expect sales uplifts of 10% when pizzas are front-faced rather than 'penny stacked' on the shelf.

#### Jan McKee

Head of marketing, Dr. Oetker

### Be creative with the space you have

Even if you don't have space for a dedicated big night in display area, consider featuring a temporary display such as free-standing dump bins or a counter display unit.

#### Emma Hunt

Marketing controller, Vimto.



### Display products in the right place

Bestsellers should be placed between 1m and 1.4m high.

#### Susan Nash

Trade communications manager, Mondelez International



### For the basket

**Vimto Fizzy** 2l (Vimto) pricemarked £1.59

**Levi Roots Tropical Punch** 2l (Vimto) pricemarked £1.59

**Coca-Cola Life** 2l (CCE) RRP 85p

**Shloer Celebration Pink Fizz** 75cl (SHS Drinks) £2.99



### For the basket

**Daim ice cream** 480ml (R&R) pricemarked £3

**Kelly's Clotted Cream Ice Cream** 1l (R&R) £3.99

**Ben & Jerry's Limited Edition Pumpkin Cheesecake** (Unilever) RRP: £4.99

**Oreo Sandwich** 135ml (R&R) RRP £1.60



## Desserts

They've snacked, dined and drunk the night away but many families will still be looking for something sweet to finish off their evening and ice cream manufacturers in particular are looking to take advantage of this trend. R&R ice cream has brought popular biscuit brand Oreo to the ice cream market and its sandwich format has seen 77% growth in the past 12 months, the company says. Added to this are tubs, pricemarked at £3, of Daim, Flake and Oreo-branded ice creams. For more traditional tastes, R&R recommends Kelly's ice cream for customers "looking to indulge on a cold winter's night" and head of marketing Charlotte Hambling says placing tubs next to a dessert such as an apple pie can encourage impulse sales. ●



# PREVIEW



## Have a saucy Movember

Heinz is supporting Movember with a competition to give away 50 personalised HP Sauce bottles.

**RRP** not given  
**Outers** not given  
**Contact** 020 8573 7757

## Still Stolichnaya, but...

Stolichnaya vodka is getting a pack redesign for the first time in 77 years.

**RRP** £20.99  
**Outers** 6  
**Contact** 01786 430500

## Christmas Comfort

Unilever is adding a Christmas fragrance to its Comfort Creations range - Mistletoe and Crocus.

**RRP** £3  
**Outers** not given  
**Contact** 01293 648 000



## Welcome, comrades

Russian Standard Vodka will now be distributed in the UK by William Grant & Sons under a new consolidation deal.

**RRP** £4.99 - £16.49  
**Outers** various  
**Contact** 02380 312000

## Seasonal Surf

Surf is getting a new fragrance - Winter Violets & Mistletoe - just in time for Christmas.

**RRP** £5  
**Outers** not given  
**Contact** 01293 648 000

## Giant crumpets

Warburtons is launching Giant Crumpets targeted at families and workers looking for quick, convenient meals.

**RRP** 69p  
**Outers** not given  
**Contact** 0800 243684





### Nederburg's new look

Nederburg wines have been given a fresh look with new slanted labels and a more prominent logo.

**RRP** not given

**Outers** not given

**Contact** 0208 6142720



### Chivas modernised

Chivas Regal has unveiled a modernised pack design for its 12 Year Old whisky.

**RRP** £33.79

**Outers** 6

**Contact** 0208 5384484



### Pampers' Unicef birthday

Pampers has launched a campaign celebrating 10 years of supporting Unicef featuring brand ambassador Emma Bunton.

**RRP** not given

**Outers** not given

**Contact** 0800 597 3388



### Festive teacakes

Lees of Scotland has introduced festive packaging to its Snowballs and Teacakes 10-packs.

**RRP** not given

**Outers** not given

**Contact** 01236 441600



### Shampoo updated

Procter & Gamble has unveiled an updated look for its Head & Shoulders Female range.

**RRP** various

**Outers** various

**Contact** 0800 597 3388



### Hoorah for pies

Holland's Pies is celebrating its Lancashire roots in its latest TV marketing campaign.

**RRP** various

**Outers** various

**Contact** 01706 213591



Recognising the best of  
UK independent retailers

## IAA Gala Dinner

Grand Connaught Rooms, London

To book your place visit  
**[betterRetailing.com/IAA](http://betterRetailing.com/IAA)**

 [@iaacademy](https://twitter.com/iaacademy)





# THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES

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@NicolaStewartRN



## Comic hero

# GREEN ARROW SET TO BE RIGHT ON SALES TARGET

The official magazine about the DC Comics' superhero looks likely to be a must-have for enthusiasts of the legendary title

**LAUNCHED IN 2012**, Arrow is a hit television show based on DC Comics' superhero Green Arrow. Shown on Sky 1 in the UK, the fourth series has just premiered, and Titan Publishing is capitalising on its popularity with the launch of an official Green Arrow magazine. A billionaire industrialist by day, Oliver Queen becomes the Green Arrow by night, fighting crime and cleaning up the streets of Star City. Featuring content and storylines from across the character's 74-year history, the title should appeal to both comic book enthusiasts and fans of the TV show. Retailers should display Green Arrow prominently with other comic books and any additional display space.



**GREEN ARROW**  
On sale 29 October  
Frequency six per year  
Price £3.99  
Distributor Comag  
Display with  
Astonishing Spider-Man, Batman: Brave & the Bold, 2000 AD

## Round up



**NICOLA STEWART**  
Magazines  
reporter

## BUILD ON LEGO IN YOUR STORE

Considering the success of its first feature film and a multitude of other brand tie-ins, it comes as no surprise that Lego is now the world's largest toy company by sales.

So much so that the Danish firm announced last week that it may not be able to produce enough bricks to meet demand this Christmas.

It manufactured 60 billion bricks in 2014, and in the first six months of this year, sales grew by 18% to £1.36bn.

The good news for independent retailers is that, on the back of this sales boom, children's publishers are taking advantage of the brand's rising popularity.

Immediate Media has launched a trio of Lego-themed titles in the past two years, with Lego Legends of Chima and Lego Ninjago both in the top six primary boys' titles sold in independent stores, based on sales revenue. Its third title, Lego Friends, is also consistently among the top 20 for primary girls.

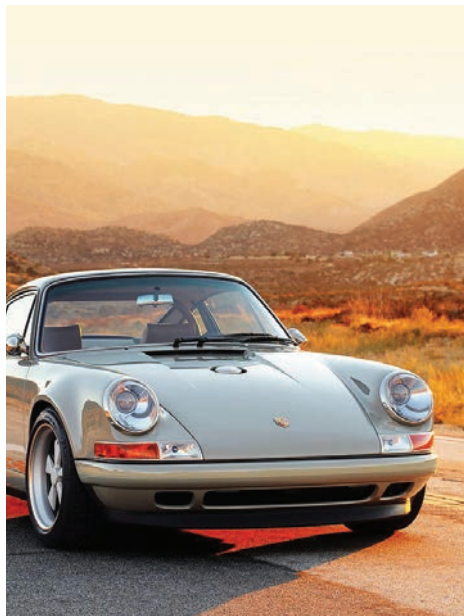
In July, Egmont Publishing combined Lego and another of the biggest brands of all time to launch Lego Star Wars magazine. Like the Immediate titles, the magazine is regularly covered mounted with official Lego toys.

Collectables have also taken on the Lego brand, with Topps launching an official Lego Ninjago sticker collection in September.

So, with demand for Lego-related products high and looking set to increase in the lead up to Christmas, and with a range of Lego magazines available on the newsstand, it could be worth creating a Lego section at the front of fixture, or adding Lego titles to any Christmas gift areas.



# THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



## Bestsellers Motoring

Title	On sale date	In stock
1 MCN	04.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Autocar	04.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Classic Car Weekly	04.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Speedway Star	05.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Autosport	05.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Auto Express	04.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Motorsport News	04.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 What Car?	12.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 BBC Top Gear	04.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 TMX News	05.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Classic & Sports Car	05.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Classic Bike	25.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Practical Classics	25.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 Commercial Motor	05.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Classic Cars	25.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 Land Rover Owner	25.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 Truck & Driver	10.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 Practical Sportsbikes	18.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 Classic MotorCycle	06.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 Car	18.11	<input type="checkbox"/>

Data from independent stores supplied by



## PERIOD LIVING

The December issue of Period Living is a Christmas special filled with Christmas homes, vintage-inspired shopping ideas and a free 2016 calendar. Marketforce has forecast a sales increase of 30% for the issue, compared to previous issues. Retailers can highlight the added value by displaying the issue full facing alongside other home interest titles and Christmas specials.



**On sale 29 October**  
**Frequency** monthly  
**Price** £3.99  
**Distributor** Marketforce  
**Display with** Country Homes & Interiors, Country Living



## COUNTRY HOMES & INTERIORS

The December issue of Country Homes & Interiors comes with a free 2016 calendar dedicated to 'A Year of Country Flowers'. It also offers readers 20% off fabric from textile designer Margo Selby. Content-wise, the issue is filled with inspiration to create a festive country home for Christmas, with ideas ranging from personalised gifts and seasonal cakes and cookies, to modern traditions.



**On sale 29 October**  
**Frequency** monthly  
**Price** £4.10  
**Distributor** Marketforce  
**Display with** 25 Beautiful Homes, Homes & Gardens, Ideal Home, Country Living



## BURDA STYLE SPECIAL

Compiled from the Burda Style archives, the latest issue of Burda Style Special is dedicated to vintage fashion from the 1960s, but with a modern twist. The corresponding issue from last year, which was based on designs from the 1950s, was the best-selling issue the magazine has had in the UK. This issue features 12 original patterns, and retailers are advised to display it prominently alongside other sewing titles.



**On sale 30 October**  
**Frequency** five per year  
**Price** £5.80  
**Distributor** Comag  
**Display with** Burda, Sew, Sewing World



## OTTOBRE DESIGN

Ottobre Design magazine, the Finnish title based on the designer children's clothing brand Ottobre, celebrates its 15th anniversary in this issue. Aimed at sewers of all experience levels, the title comes with patterns, templates, and easy-to-follow instructions and guidance. This anniversary issue features two covers and a selection of designs for the Christmas season. Priced at £10, the premium title offers high revenue potential to retailers.



**On sale 28 October**  
**Frequency** six per year  
**Price** £10  
**Distributor** Comag  
**Display with** Burda, Sew, Sewing World



## TOP MODEL

This issue of Top Model comes with 125 free vivid stickers, along with design ideas and date stickers for creating Christmas advent calendars. Based on the online Top Model community, the title features news about fashion and the fictional Top Model world, along with drawing and crafting ideas. Retailers are asked to display it alongside similar titles.

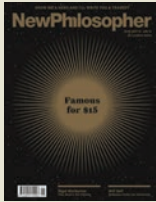


**On sale 30 October**  
**Frequency** monthly  
**Price** £2.99  
**Distributor** Comag  
**Display with** Girl Talk Art, Pink, Go Girl

## OUR COLLECTION OF PUZZLE CRACKERS

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## NEW PHILOSOPHER

Following successful launches in Australia and the US, philosophy title New Philosopher is coming to the UK. Aimed at the general public, the title is devoted to exploring philosophical ideas from past and present thinkers on ways to live a more fulfilling life. It features a great line-up of British writers, including author and TV personality Will Self, Booker Prize winner DBC Pierre and The Guardian's Oliver Burkeman.



**On sale 29 October**  
**Frequency quarterly**  
**Price £5.99**  
**Distributor Comag**  
**Display with Philosophy Now, New Internationalist, Spectator, Time**



## TES

From its 6 November issue, TES is relaunching as a glossy, perfect-bound magazine incorporating both classifieds and editorial for the educational sector. Content will cover all the latest educational news, features and professional development, as well as leadership and teaching jobs. Its price is also increasing to £2.90 and additional copies are being sent out for this issue, which comes with a supplement on 'aspiring leaders' in education.



**On sale 6 November**  
**Frequency weekly**  
**Price £2.90**  
**Distributor Seymour**  
**Display with newspapers**



## WOMAN & HOME

The December issue of Woman & Home is a premium Christmas special filled with inspiration for the Christmas season, including 365 ideas for wreaths, trees, tables and baubles. It features Dawn French on the cover, with an exclusive interview inside on her show, new book and recent life changes. Other interviews include Twiggy, Gareth Malone and the stars of Strictly Come Dancing. Retailers are advised to display it alongside other Christmas specials.



**On sale 29 September**  
**Frequency monthly**  
**Price £4.10**  
**Distributor Marketforce**  
**Display with Good Housekeeping, Prima, Red**



## FHM

The December issue of FHM features its first and only male cover star of 2015 - Real Madrid star Cristiano Ronaldo. Inside, it has an exclusive interview with the footballer, along with a look at how gamers can be paid up to £1m a year to play Call of Duty. Retailers are advised to display FHM alongside other men's lifestyle titles and to give it full facings to capitalise on strong cover content.



**On sale 5 November**  
**Frequency monthly**  
**Price £3.99**  
**Distributor Frontline**  
**Display with GQ, Stuff, T3**



## BBC GOOD FOOD

BBC Good Food, the best-selling cookery and kitchen title sold in independent stores, has a Christmas special on sale for a full six weeks. Packed with 101 festive recipes and an exclusive recipe and interview with Nigella Lawson, it is expected to sell twice as many as a normal issue. It also comes polybagged with a free 2016 calendar and should be displayed front of fixture for the full on-sale period.



**On sale 30 October**  
**Frequency monthly**  
**Price £4.25**  
**Distributor Frontline**  
**Display with Good Housekeeping, Delicious, Olive**

## Industry viewpoint

**Simon Carrington**

Publishing director,  
 BBC Good Food magazine



## CASH IN ON THEIR FESTIVE FEASTING

The first things most people think of when conjuring up images of Christmas are food-related.

We know that BBC Good Food influences around half of the nation's Christmas Day meals, with traffic to the website, combined with the readership of the magazine, higher than for any other magazine brand.

It may seem odd to be thinking about it this far ahead, but food magazines traditionally publish at least a month ahead of schedule for this issue.

Research from Good Food found the country is equally divided between planners and last-minute panickers when it comes to the big day.

This year, Good Food's bumper Christmas issue will be on sale for six weeks to maximise the opportunity for retailers. On sale on 30 October, the issue comes with a free calendar and provides a huge revenue opportunity for retailers as we are forecast to double our normal sales.

The Great British Bake Off has been a television phenomenon and reflecting the increasing interest, we have a gingerbread cake on the cover. We always see a good uplift when we feature baking and are confident of a high return this time.

We have sent point of sale material to thousands of retailers throughout the country and we would urge them to display the enclosed poster in their shop windows as this will help drive sales from impulse purchasers.

It presents a golden opportunity. BBC Good Food generates over £4.15m per year at retail. It also sells three times as many copies as the nearest competitor in the cookery and kitchen market.

**Top tip**  
 Food magazines traditionally publish early for Christmas. Make sure you display them prominently to maximise sales

## COMING UP IN NEXT WEEK'S RETAIL NEWSAGENT



## NEVILLE RHODES ON WHY MARGINS ARE KEY TO SURVIVING THE NATIONAL LIVING WAGE

Plus, the final part of RN's guide to Christmas with how to take advantage of the coming festive magazines bonanza, and in-store supplier initiatives in the spotlight



# THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES

## Partworks

Title	No	Pts	£
<b>Amermedia</b>			
Military Vehicles	48	48	5.99
<b>DeAgostini</b>			
Build the Millennium Falcon	43	100	8.99
Cake Decorating	189	210	2.99
Cake Decorating Relaunch	138	165	2.99
Dinosaurs & Friends	36	60	5.99
Official Star Wars Factfile	92	120	2.99
Zippo Collection	4	60	19.99
<b>Eagle Moss</b>			
3D Create & Print	41	90	6.99
Batman Automobilia	74	80	10.99
Build A Solar System	10	104	6.99
DC Comics Graphic Novel	6	60	9.99
Disney Cakes & Sweets	112	120	4.50
Doctor Who Figurines	57	70	7.99
Marvel Chess Collection	49	64	8.99
Marvel Fact Files	137	150	3.50
Military Watches	45	80	9.99
Star Trek Off. Starships Coll.	58	70	10.99

## Hachette

Art of Crochet	9	120	2.99
Art of Knitting	40	90	2.99
Art Therapy	32	100	2.99
Black Pearl	94	120	5.99
Build the Mallard	61	130	7.99
Build the U96	61	150	5.99
Classic Pocketwatches	83	80	8.99
Dr Who Complete History	4	80	9.99
Judge Dredd Mega Collection	21	80	9.99
Marvel's Mightiest Heroes	48	60	9.99
My 3D Globe	43	100	5.99
Your Model Railway Village	101	120	8.99

## RBA Collectables

Amazing Dinosaur Discovery	35	80	5.99
My Zoo Animals	8	60	5.99
Precious Rocks, Gems & Minerals	40	100	5.99
Real Life Bugs & Insects	58	85	5.99

## Collectables

### DeAgostini


Magiki Kittens	2.50
Geckos & Co	1.99

### Magic Box

Zomlings Series 4	0.50
-------------------	------

## Collectables

### Topps

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

### Panini

	<b>Avengers 2: Age of Ultron</b> Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		<b>England Official Sticker Collection</b> Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	<b>Descendants</b> Starter £2.99 Stickers 50p		<b>Fifa 365 Adrenalyn XL</b> Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00
	<b>Disney Cinderella</b> Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		<b>Jurassic World</b> Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	<b>Disney Frozen My Sister, My Hero</b> Starter £2.99 Cards £0.50		<b>Inside Out</b> Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	<b>Disney Frozen Photocards</b> Starter £3.99 Cards £1.50		<b>Peppa Pig</b> Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	<b>Disney Frozen Winter Magic</b> Starter £4.99 Cards £0.75		<b>Road to UEFA Euro 2016</b> Starter £4.99 Stickers £1.00
	<b>Disney Princess Fabulous Talents</b> Starter £2.99 Cards £0.50		<b>Sofia the First</b> Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	<b>Dragons</b> Starter £2.99 Cards £0.50		<b>Ultimate Spider-Man</b> Album £2.99 Stickers £0.50



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J Walsh Newsagents  
High Wycombe



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## Back in the day

# 101

YEARS AGO

**31 October 1914**

With Christmas around the corner the Ladies' Journal is offering readers "tip top value" with 16 pages in colour, six free patterns, children's fashion and a free transfer design. It also includes a "beautiful photogravure" of The Peacemaker – a plate of English artist Marcus Stone's famous picture.



# 50

YEARS AGO

**30 October 1965**

Three Sheffield newsagents were fined for employing children under the age of 14 to deliver newspapers. One was fined £2 for employing two 13-year-olds and two others were both fined £1 for employing boys aged 13 and 10 respectively.



# 25

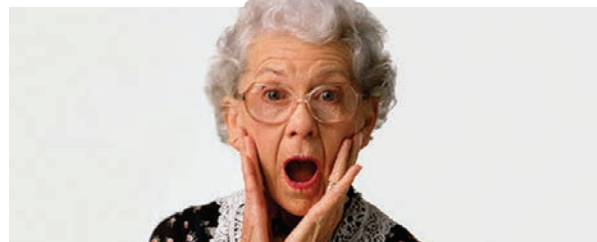
YEARS AGO

**3 November 1990**

Spar chief John Irish predicted that by the end of the century the convenience store sector would be worth £20bn with 20,000 convenience stores nationwide. The announcement came as Spar prepared to celebrate its tenth birthday in 1991. Mr Irish also urged independents to make more space for fresh and chilled.



## Shocked shoppers flee as XXX couple hits the Target



Four in 10 women say that shopping is better than sex, but customers in a supermarket in California were left horrified when the two leisure activities conjoined in a most unlikely union.

Shoppers at a Target store in Silicon Valley threw their purchases down and stomped out, while others yelled at employees, as the sounds of a man reaching climax broadcast over the store's intercom system.

It was around 10.30am when, at first, shoppers heard a woman moaning, breath-

ing heavily and talking dirty. As the noises escalated, employees desperately tried to switch off the intercom but not before shoppers were forced to endure 15 minutes of X-rated action.

"Parents were covering their kids' ears and offering to help me cover my twins' ears," customer Gina Young said. "I can never look at Target the same way again."

The surprising stunt may have missed the mark for many but, for the protagonists, it clearly hit the spot.

## Pumpkin news – feast or famine?

Trick or treaters are in danger of having their hopes squashed, as this year's pumpkin harvest has yielded disappointing results.

Due to unusually heavy rain and wet soil the rot has set in on hundreds of thousands of pumpkins with fears that stores will see shortages in the run up to 31 October.

The warning was issued by one of the UK's largest pumpkin suppliers, Barfoots, who announced that August's heavy rain would lead

to a lack o' lanterns – half the usual supply.

But just in case you thought all the fun had been scooped out of Halloween, Budgens and Londis announced last week that they were receiving more than 40,000 homegrown pumpkins to meet customer demand. An estimated 10 million pumpkins are grown in the UK every year with the bulk of sales happening in the week leading up to Halloween.

## VIEW FROM THE COUNTER with Mike Brown



For the past two Fridays I have sold out of the Racing Post by 7.30am. On both days there were local race meetings at York and Redcar. From Hexham and Newcastle in the north to Wetherby and Doncaster in the south, there are a dozen racecourses that are local to me. Why, when it is a local meeting, don't they send me enough copies? Every year I sort out my own allocation for the Cheltenham festival and Aintree (Grand National) but short of a racing calendar, I can't be expected to know when every local meeting takes place.

One accusation is that we are starved of copy so that agents on the racecourse can sell copies there. Whether this is true or not I don't know, but customers tell me returns are very high – I could have done with those copies.

On 14 October my wife and I were invited to a private party at Stokesley Town Hall. It was to say "thank you" to the many residents who contributed to the successful refurbishment and reawakening of the hall. My wife has made good use of the improved facilities and runs a bingo session for pensioners on a voluntary basis on a Tuesday evening. My forays to the town hall follow a more hedonistic pattern of comedy evenings, film nights and beer festivals. Our host for the evening was a local resident and customer George Carter. George was the main driving force behind the refurbishment and in the New Year's honours list he was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to the town.

My middle daughter Mary has just turned 17 and I am teaching her how to drive. Having been through it with my eldest daughter I had forgotten how terrifying and nerve-wracking an experience it is. My whiplash injuries from multiple kangaroo starts and multiple braking are improving. She passed her theory test last week and I feel she will be ready to take her test at the end of November. This means my days as a chauffeur are numbered.

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