

RETAIL NEWSAGENT

PERFECT START

Five products to make every customer's morning

BREAKFAST
Page 38 >>



Our own post service
'We aim to deliver 10,000 letters this Christmas'

Page 28 >>

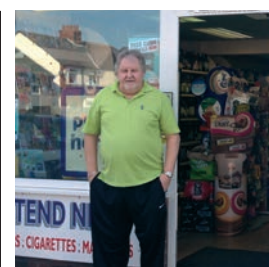
NEWS • CONVENIENCE • PROFIT

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Star wars as stores lose 46% of margin



- 20p Star grows sales by 8% on day one, but terms cut slashes retailer takings by almost half.
- Dozens tell RN they have delisted title, while others maintain original price in protest. Page 5 >>



PROPERTY

'Don't get caught in shop scam like me'

Retailer warns of rogue business transfer agents.

Pages 5 & 30 >>

NATIONAL LOTTERY

Majority to take on full Lotto upgrade

Less than 100 scratchcard stores opt out as deadline looms. Page 4 >>

NEWSPAPERS

Sun HND on the box

TV ad first as News UK pushes Deliver My Sun. Page 8 >>



Prime time for retailers' issues NFRN national president Ralph Patel and the chairman of the NFRN's public affairs committee Mike Mitchelson talked with prime minister David Cameron at the Conservative Party Conference about the issues small businesses face and how they contribute to the economy. During the conference the NFRN delegation met a range of ministers to discuss members' concerns over the carrier bag levy, Sunday trading, business rates, access to finance and retail crime. Page 4 >>

CARRIER BAGS

Shoppers back 5p voluntary charge

Indies report positive response after matching supermarket levy.

Page 14 >>

Amazon Prime
Now customers in Birmingham first to be offered chilled and frozen products.
Page 16 >>

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LEADER



NEWS • CONVENIENCE • PROFIT

Coupled with carriage charge increases, falling sales and shrinking margins, retailers will be putting their news bill earnings under the microscope



CHRIS GAMM

Editor

@ChrisGammRN

In his latest Observer column, former Guardian editor Peter Preston states the Star halving its cover price “might just work” in winning new value-conscious readers from the Mirror and The Sun and sending shock waves to publishers about the importance of price to consumers.

However, I believe he is off the mark for two reasons. First is his assumption that newsagents will “wail” about their margin cut but then accept their lot, as has historically been the case.

However, this was pre-PayPoint Pay Fair, whose campaign showed that, by working together, retailers can instigate change in even the most powerful boardroom.

PayPoint’s terms may not have changed, but I have little doubt that having a supply chain in revolt, coupled with Yodel being re-crowned Britain’s worst parcel service, was a major factor in Amazon taking its Collect+ contract elsewhere.

Similarly, I have heard from dozens of retailers in the past few days who, by delisting the Star, are showing that they won’t simply sit back and watch their news profits disappear.

Second is Mr Preston’s out-of-hand dismissal that the impact will simply be a small readership switch. While this may be good news for Richard Desmond, it is terrible news for retailers, who could face a collective £14.7m hit to their profits, or £294 per store per year (see page 5).

But more worrying is the long-term damage it could cause to the trade. Coupled with carriage charge increases, falling sales, shrinking margins and pressure from other categories, retailers will be putting their news bill earnings under the microscope.

They need to be sent a strong message from the industry that the category is still worth investing in. If the sums stop adding up, the risk is that retailers will walk away all together. This message from the Star isn’t it.

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COME SHOP WITH ME
All the lessons and scores from this year’s roadshow



CHRISTMAS ALCOHOL
Another 21 tips from RN’s festive retailer panel

I WANT TO RETIRE AND I WANT TO KNOW WHAT MONEY I’LL HAVE AVAILABLE

- RETAILER JOHN CRELLIN ON THE FINANCIAL INSTABILITY CAUSED BY ROGUE BUSINESS TRANSFER AGENTS Page 30 >>

NEWS

Surcharge on sugar slammed

A scheme introduced by Brighton and Hove Council that asks retailers to impose a voluntary surcharge on sugary drinks to combat obesity has been dismissed as “ineffectual”.

The initiative, called Sugar Smart City, asks retailers to charge 10p extra for sugary drinks and donate the money to a children’s health and education trust.

The scheme also includes filling vending machines in local authority and healthcare buildings with healthy snacks and increasing education for children on the dangers of sugar.

Brighton newsagent John Hannah, of Smoke-mart, said he would not be imposing the tax. “Most of my drinks are now price-marked.

“I can’t add an extra charge because customers will think they are being conned.

“It will be ineffectual and I don’t believe it will make any difference.”

Focus on victims

The wider impact that shop theft has on victims is to be taken into consideration when sentencing offenders, according to new guidelines issued by the Sentencing Council.

Emotional distress, property damage and the effect on business will now be considered by judges.

While the move has been welcomed by trade bodies including the Association of Convenience Stores, the organisation said it is disappointed that no distinction had been made between first-time and repeat offenders.



NFRN takes bag levy concerns to the top

NFRN chief executive Paul Baxter (left) and Mike Mitchelson (right) met with junior DEFRA minister Rory Stewart MP (middle) at the Conservative Party Conference to discuss confusion surrounding the newly-introduced plastic bag tax, which exempts smaller shops. “The NFRN canvassed support from the ACS, the British Independent Retailers Association and the Federation of Small Businesses that all shops should be included. The minister was very sympathetic and has promised to put forward our views in the review of the implementation of the new law,” said Mr Mitchelson.

Incremental growth expected for new stores Meanwhile, hotline charge sparks anger

Less than 100 scratchcard stores opt out of upgrade

by Gurpreet Samrai

Less than 100 Camelot retailers with standalone scratchcard terminals have so far opted out of an offer to sell draw-based games in their stores.

The company has given 9,000 stores until 23 October to opt out of upgrading to sell Lotto and EuroMillions tickets from early next year, for a monthly fee of £50.

Camelot’s new head of retail channel James Pearson told RN there has been

a “fantastic” response.

“It has been phenomenal,” he said. “And only a tiny number have said it’s not for them.

“They have until 23 October to opt out, but before then each would have received an information pack and a phone call, plus a visit from us and a call from the installer if they decide to go ahead.”

Retailers have previously raised fears that Camelot’s offer could dilute the market, however Mr Pearson said the company expects

to see “a good degree of incremental growth”. He admitted when 8,000 additional full terminals were rolled out in 2012 existing stores’ sales were watered down. However, he added that Camelot also saw incremental growth.

Meanwhile, Camelot has come under fire this week for replacing its free hotline with a new number which costs 7p per minute to call plus the service provider’s access charges.

Steve Barker, of S & J News in Rochester, said:

“I’m absolutely disgusted with it.”

A Camelot spokesman said the charge would help it invest in a new retailer website and interactive voice response system. He added: “We believe the new website in particular will make it much easier for retailers to self-serve – including accessing sales history, checking scratchcard inventory and carrying out terminal troubleshooting – and significantly reduce the need for them to contact us by telephone.”

Indies fear business rates will rise

Councils under financial pressure may raise business rates, it has been claimed, following the announcement that the setting and collection of rates would be devolved to local authorities.

Chancellor George Osborne’s policy decision at the Conservative Party Conference on Monday comes as a large-scale

review of the business rates system is already underway.

While some organisations in the convenience sector tentatively welcomed the plans, there were widespread calls for clarity.

“Independent retailers are saying ‘give us more detail’. We also want assurance that the government will continue to press

ahead with its promised overhaul of the business rates system,” said NFRN chief executive Paul Baxter.

The Association of Convenience Store’s chief executive James Lowman asked for “urgent details of the chancellor’s plans”.

“We need reassurance that local shops and other businesses will not see higher rates bills as a result

of this policy,” he said.

Andrew Hill of Hills News Londis, County Durham, an area that could be negatively impacted by the changes, said: “I would prefer that business rates stayed with central government.

“Anything that gets devolved to local council becomes over complicated and the charges go up.”

Newsagent's business transfer rip-off warning

Hundreds of thousands of retailers are at risk of being ripped-off by the unregulated business transfer market, RN has learned.

Convenience stores and newsagents are being targeted alongside other independent retail outlets by agents who leave properties languishing on websites

behind passwords, after taking a sky-high fee based on inflated valuations.

Barry Frost, managing director of Commercial Plus, has helped around 30 businesses who have had issues with business transfer agents. He told RN: "The agent charges an upfront fee and the fee is based on a

percentage of the sale price. This arrangement encourages agents to price far higher than is realistic."

John Crellin, a retiring newsagent from Fleetwood in Lancashire, is one retailer to have suffered at the hands of an unscrupulous agent. He was originally told that his business, with

the freehold and goodwill, should be put on the market for £215,000, but an NFRN-approved agent has since valued it at £150,000.

Having already paid a high fee, Mr Crellin, has also faced a £5,000 cancellation fee to release him from the contract.

● *News analysis - page 30*

Daily Post Sunday edition

The Daily Post is publishing a one-off Sunday edition for the first time this week to celebrate Wales' achievements in the Rugby World Cup and European Championships.

Sales reps have been visiting stores this week to set up counter promotions supported by giveaways and posters.

Trinity Mirror said sales of the Post had already "substantially increased" following the success of the Welsh teams.

The special will be on sale for £1 until Saturday 17 October and any unsold copies can be returned on that day.

20p title grows just 8% on day one 'This is a disgraceful decision'

Retailer backlash as Star cut wipes 46% off margin

by Nicola Stewart

Independent retailers are taking action to protect their profit margins as a price cut by the Daily Star threatens to cut millions of pounds from the trade.

The daily has halved its cover price to 20p on weekdays, 30p on Saturday and 50p on Sunday, with retailers' profit per copy cut to 4.84p, 7.26p and 11.05p respectively.

One publisher told RN sales of the Star increased by 32,000 copies on Monday, a rise of between 7.5 and 8%, resulting in a 46% or £18,440 drop in total retail margin.

The Sun was up by 50,000 copies, likely to be driven by its Tesco fuel promotion, while sales of the Mirror, Mail and Express were "broadly flat".

The publisher said: "Just because the Star didn't steal share from any other titles on day one, it doesn't mean



it's not going to happen."

RN has calculated that if the Star maintains existing sales, while also taking 5% of both the Sun's and Mirror's sales, the average loss per store per week would be £4.39 - an annual loss of £11.4m in total retail margin.

If it maintains sales and also takes 10% from the Sun and Mirror, the loss would be £5.66 per store per week - or £14.7m in retail margin per year.

RN has heard from dozens of retailers this week who have delisted the title, others who are returning

any allocated copies in protest, and some who are continuing to sell it at its former price.

Yorkshire retailer Martyn Brown has taken the title off his shelf and is encouraging HND customers to switch to The Sun.

"This is a disgraceful decision by the publisher," he said. "If it needs to increase sales, reducing the price and retailers' income isn't the answer."

News UK independents sales manager Greg Deacon said retailers should be aware of the potential for conversion from the Sun,



Mirror and Mail, while Mirror general manager Neil Jagger encouraged retailers to focus on higher-earning titles.

Star publisher Northern & Shell declined to comment.

Licensing objection

The Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) has opposed proposals by the Institute of Licensing that could see blanket licensing conditions placed on retailers.

The lobby group said conditions must be "tailored to each premises". "This is likely to result in blanket conditions that are not relevant to local shops," said ACS chief executive James Lowman.

Morrisons ups wages

Morrisons has followed Lidl in offering staff a pay rise in excess of the government's national minimum wage. From March 2016 the supermarket will increase its hourly rate from £6.83 to £8.20.

Meanwhile, the NFRN is reminding members to update their systems to accommodate the national minimum wage increase, introduced on 1 October.

Just the ticket as Payzone launches bus pass deal

"We want to disrupt the market and we can do that by bringing out new services PayPoint doesn't have, by being aggressive with pricing and offers, and by actually putting the merchant first."

That was the bold state-

ment made by Payzone's commercial director Simon Newton as he told RN the company's new Smart Ticketing contract with Arriva Bus is the first of a number of new deals in the pipeline.

Ten Payzone retailers in

Milton Keynes are offering the Arriva ticketing service as part of a pilot before it is rolled out to more stores in the area and further cities. Retailers receive 0.5% of the value of a ticket sold with the average season ticket priced £30-40, which

equates to 15-20p commission per transaction.

Mr Newton told RN the company is in talks with the four other big UK bus companies as well as rail companies, giving it a "clear lead" in the area compared to its competition.

NEWS

BUSINESS

One Stop 'the voice of rural retailers'

One Stop has joined the trade association the Rural Shops Alliance as a partner to help act as a voice for rural retailers.

The franchise made the move because, as it expands, it has seen a more diverse base of retailers including rurally-located stores, it says.

Andrew King, One Stop franchise director, said: "It's important we recognise the different needs of rural stores and the vital service they provide in their communities."

Trevor West, chairman of the Rural Shops Alliance, said: "One Stop's voice will undoubtedly strengthen our voice in putting the interests of rural retailers forward to government and making sure their interests are properly taken into account when deciding policy."

One Stop is a subsidiary of Tesco and has more than 770 community stores across the UK.

Sainsbury's bucks trend

Sainsbury's has bucked the trend in the embattled supermarket sector by revising its full-year profit forecast, showing more promising results in the year's second quarter.

Total sales excluding fuel were up 0.3% in the 16 weeks to 26 September which was an improvement on the first quarter fall of 0.6%. First half sales overall came in at -0.1%.

Sainsbury's chief executive Mike Coupe said: "During the quarter we saw an improvement in our key trading metrics. While the market is clearly challenging we are making good progress."



Spar's fab five make awards shortlist

Five Spar own label products have made it to the shortlist of the 36th Quality Food and Drink Awards. The awards, which take place on 5 November, celebrate the UK's food and drink producers with supermarkets, convenience and artisans competing. Two wines, Fern Hills Sauvignon Blanc and Valpolicella Ripasso, made the list as well as Spar orange crush, mixed olives with chilli and Bresaola beef pizza.

C-stores 'must embrace shopper power' to thrive Top-up shopping trend set to continue

Study shows how stores of the future will look

by Helena Drakakis

Changes in store layout and the introduction of grocery collection services that help customers pick-up smaller weekly shops could separate the winners from the losers in the convenience sector, research has claimed.

The study, carried out by retail analysts IGD, warns the industry that it must keep pace with changing consumer habits that are fuelling a growing trend in more frequent shops for

food and groceries rather than customers doing a larger weekly shop.

Among the ideas highlighted in the research are reducing complexity in store, operating aisles dedicated to regular top-up shops and click and collect services that allow shoppers to order online and pick-up groceries in store.

"In the future, we're also likely to see the layout of stores, the merchandising of displays and planning of promotions all rethought with healthy eating

brought to the fore," said IGD chief executive Joanne Denney-Finch.

The research has been welcomed by retailers, who say they are seeing a definite shift in shopping habits.

Linda Williams, of Broadway Convenience Store in Edinburgh, said: "Customers are calling the tune and we've seen a rise in people shopping by meal rather than doing larger shops. In response, we've rationalised our grocery section, put in bays featuring Booker's

Mega Deals, and paid particular attention to our fresh and chilled with an emphasis on our meat and fresh grocery offering."

Mrs Williams added that the store is increasing its presence on Facebook and Twitter to build an "online critical mass" which could see it offer collect services in the future.

"The winners will be those that embrace shopper power, reset standards and redefine concepts putting shoppers first," added Ms Denney-Finch.

C-stores' cider sales set to outstrip supermarkets

Sales of cider in the convenience sector could be worth more than in supermarkets by 2020, according to analysts.

Research carried out by analysts IRI found convenience sales of cider are currently worth 48% with

an increase predicted during the next five years. In particular, fruit ciders are seen as a key growth area for convenience.

The predictions come as cider overall has seen a 3.2% slump in sales during the last year, with traditional apple

ciders performing the worst.

"Our data shows that cider in the convenience sector has been steadily growing. Value and mainstream ciders do well in that sector, but we see more opportunity for premium and niche cider manufacturers," said

analyst Toby Magill.

Faisal Naseem of Party Time, in Arbroath, said: "We haven't had a bad year for cider, and in particular our fruit ciders have done really well. Good in-store promotions have been a key factor."

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NEWS

NEWSTRADE

Relaunch for Brum Mail

Trinity Mirror is aiming to boost circulation of the Birmingham Mail, as it relaunches the title and delivers sample copies to thousands of homes.

The fresh-look daily has a stronger focus on entertainment in a bid to target “aspirational, confident and younger” readers, along with a more modern layout and redesigned masthead.

It also introduces a ‘guide to the city’, offering 48-hour entertainment listings, and a pull-out guide each Thursday called ‘Wow Brum’.

The publisher said: “There will be a full series of new daily platforms which mark a deliberate move to provide interesting and relevant content for the aspirational, confident and younger audience that makes up Birmingham’s expanding middle market.”

Samples of the new-look Mail will be put through the door of 2,500 homes a week.

Award for Pass My Parcel

Smiths News’ click and collect service Pass My Parcel has won Supply Chain Innovation Project of the Year at the Hermes Retail Week Supply Chain Awards.

The award was presented to the wholesaler, along with Amazon and IT solution providers NetDespatch and Blackbay, in recognition of its innovative approach in using its existing distribution network to launch the service.

Smiths News commercial director Louise Ryan said: “Our network is continuing to expand across the UK and we now have more than 3,000 independent retailers offering Pass My Parcel.”



News UK boasts of unrivalled investment in indies Initiative rolled out to Times titles

Campaign for Sun HND ‘surpasses expectations’

by Nicola Stewart

Independents are set to benefit from an uplift in Sun HND customers following the launch of a national TV campaign for its 12-weeks free delivery promotion, Deliver My Sun.

The campaign went live on 1 October, the same day the Star said it was cutting its cover price to 20p.

News UK independents sales manager Greg Deacon

said it was too early to give details on the number of new registrations, but added the response so far had “surpassed all expectations”.

He told RN: “Our investment into the independent channel and HND remains unrivalled by any other publisher. HND is so central to the future success of the trade and we are committed to working with anyone who wants to grow

their business.”

The publisher has now mapped 90% of the country’s population to one of 6,500 stores that offer home news delivery, and there are plans to extend the network into Northern Ireland by Christmas, said Mr Deacon.

The percentage of customers who continue to have The Sun delivered after the free period is 90%, he said.

“In terms of profitability, you’re looking at a longer-term retention rather than a short-term tactical promotion.”

The offer is also being advertised on radio and appeared on the front page of The Sun and in a double page spread on 1 October.

It has also been extended to include The Times and Sunday Times, with a dedicated Deliver My Times site now live.

Transformers magazine unveiled

Signature Publishing is launching a monthly children’s title based on the new animated series Transformers: Robots in Disguise.

Showing on Cartoon Network, the series is aimed at four to eight-year-olds and is accompanied by an extensive toy range and significant marketing activity.

The Transformers: Robots

in Disguise magazine, on sale 16 October under licence from Hasbro, will follow the theme of the show.

Each issue will come with a branded Transformers toy, exclusive links to content on the Transformers brand app, and a 20-page comic strip story.

Signature managing director Danny Morris said:

“As with all of Hasbro’s brands, the quality of the assets and storytelling is amazing, while the highly successful animated series and extensive toy marketing campaign will ensure the magazine is a success.”

The first issue, priced £3.49, comes with a Bumblebee disc-shooter, as well as a free comic.



Trinity on track for £20m cost savings in 2015

Trinity Mirror has announced it is on track to deliver £20m of cost savings by the end of the year.

In a third quarter trading update, the publisher

revealed it had seen some improvement in revenue trends, with revenue falling by 9% in the 13 weeks to September, compared to 13% in the previous quarter.

On an underlying basis, publishing revenue fell by 6%, with print declining by 8% and digital growing by 24%.

In a statement the pub-

lisher said: “We continue to make good progress and the business remains on track to deliver structural cost savings of £20m for the year.”

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All three brands will be backed by a £6M consumer marketing campaign throughout winter. For some really hot porridge sales stock up now.

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NEWS

PRODUCTS

Ethical rebrand for Wyke cheeses

Somerset-based Wyke Farms has updated its product range with newly-designed branding and packaging to emphasise its ethical credentials across its range of cheese.

Wyke Farms mature, extra mature and vintage cheddar will now be presented in parchment-like packaging with a resealable zip and new logos across all products. They will be available in stores from the middle of this month.

Rich Clothier, managing director at Wyke Farms, said: "We needed an identity that works to communicate the strength of our brand. We are here to stay and to shout about our credentials."

'Tis the season to stock up on Lockets

Wrigley is reminding retailers as the cold and flu season approaches to stock up on Lockets - sales of which rise 120% during the winter months, according to the company.

New PoS material is now available to promote the menthol sweets, which are available in three flavours: Honey & Lemon, Extra Strong, and Cranberry & Blueberry.

Brand manager Amy Baillie said: "Retailers need to be ready for when winter comes to maximise on impulse sales."



Teatime puts families in the TV spotlight

McCain is championing family teatimes with two autumn TV ads and renewed sponsorship of the long-running ITV soap Emmerdale. The multi-million pound Nation's Teatime campaign will see real families turn into teatime stars when they share their mealtime video clips on the McCain website. The clips will then be edited into a 'Teatime Today' advert and aired in an ad break at 8.45pm every night.

Good Inside range offers sandwich alternatives £5m multimedia marketing campaign

Healthier Hovis thins to include added Omega 3

by Helena Drakakis

Hovis has added to its range of healthier bread products with the launch of two "sandwich alternatives" containing the Omega 3 fatty acids normally found in fish.

The Good Inside range now includes sandwich thins and flatbreads, which follow the launch of the bread manufacturer's Good Inside Bread Loaves,

introduced last month. The range is available in Soft White, Best of Both and Wholemeal.

Bread manufacturers Kingsmill and Warburtons already have a range of sandwich thins, however Hovis is the first to include Omega 3.

The launch of the range of loaves, flatbreads and thins is being supported by a £5m marketing campaign to include TV advertising,

radio, digital and in-store media.

Sophie Lyons, Hovis marketing manager, said: "We recommend that Hovis Good Inside Sandwich Thins and Flatbreads are merchandised alongside similar branded sandwich alternative products. Retailers are also encouraged to use Hovis's bespoke PoS."

Good Inside Sandwich Thins will carry an RRP of £1.29 while the flatbreads

will have an RRP of £1.59.

Hovis said it is responding to the declining consumption of bread because of perceived health concerns and the increasing emphasis on regulating diet through a healthier choice.

Ms Lyons added: "Sandwich thins have become a key alternative to bread and are the fastest growing sandwich segment, with growth of 54%."

KP brands get £1 pricemark to boost indie sales

KP Snacks wants to build on convenience store sales with the launch of £1 pricemarked packs across two of its crisp brands, McCoy's and Space Raiders.

The offer is available in larger 70g sharing bags of

McCoy's Cheddar & Onion and 95g packs of Space Raiders Pickled Onion.

The introduction of the pricemarked Space Raiders follows the brand's £1 beef-flavoured grab bag. KP said Space Raiders is the fastest-

selling brand, worth more than £9m in sales value.

Matt Collins, trading controller convenience at KP Snacks, said: "Pricemarked sharing packs have a larger value share than

standard sharing packs and are particularly popular within convenience where shoppers are looking for the best impulse deals.

"We are confident that these bigger, great value packs will be a massive hit."

Hot products for your shopping list



McCoy's and Space Raiders are to benefit from a £1 pricemark



Retailers are being advised to stock up on Lockets as winter approaches



Hovis has added two "sandwich alternatives" which contain Omega 3



LOCAL SHOP SUMMIT

How to differentiate from supermarkets and win in seasonal

Seasonal has long been an area where convenience stores lose out to supermarkets. Learn how setting yourself apart helps encourage customers to come to you for special occasions.

Seasonal activities help drive your incremental sales throughout the year. Supermarkets are capitalising on these and they support them with dedicated in-store theatre, promotions and online activity. Your challenge is to give your shoppers clear reasons why you should be their first choice. What is the right mix of brands – from big to local to premium – and the right time to best meet your customers' seasonal needs?

Whether you want help assessing your advantage over your competition, or to understand the next steps you need to take to get shoppers to choose you over the multiples, this session led by United Biscuits at the **Local Shop Summit, held at Lord's Cricket Ground on Wednesday 14 October** will help you find out how.

“Seasonal moments are a great opportunity for convenience stores to drive incremental sales. Understanding your customers' needs, coupled with knowing your competition, will allow you to build a truly amazing bespoke event plan to draw in new shoppers. We are looking forward to sharing ideas and advice with you about Christmas, our biggest event of the year, at the Local Shop Summit,” says **Hena Chandarana, trade communications controller, United Biscuits.**

Understand how to differentiate your business from the supermarkets and build your plan to win in seasonal by attending United Biscuits' interactive Local Shop Summit session.

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NEWS

Kids' snacking brand in Star Wars tie-in Each Cheestring will look like lightsaber

The force is strong in these Cheestrings

by Helena Drakakis

Kids' cheese snacking brand Cheestrings has teamed up with Star Wars to offer consumers lightsaber-themed snacks and Topps collectable cards ahead of the franchise's latest film release in December.

Star Wars character imagery will feature across the whole of the Cheestrings range, including Twisted, Spaghetti and Strong, with the aim of attracting mums looking for healthy snacks for kid's lunch boxes and after school.

Kerry Foods will be supporting the promotion with a £1.5m campaign, including TV advertising and PoS material for four weeks

from 23 November. The latest film, Episode VII The Force Awakens, will be in cinemas from 18 December, with some commentators already predicting that the latest offering will smash box office records.

Each individually packed Cheestring will be designed to look like a lightsaber.

Also included in each pack will be two collectable Topps cards featuring characters from the film, with 130 to collect in total. Individual Cheestrings will be available priced at 39p with four, eight and 12-packs featuring different characters from the film on the outer wrapping, for example Darth Vader and Yoda.

Tom Willock, Kerry Foods kids' dairy

snacks manager, said: "We are aiming to add excitement for mums to the kid's dairy snacking category which will, in turn, help to drive incremental sales for retailers this winter."

He added: "We believe this campaign will not only give our existing consumers lots of reasons to buy Cheestrings more frequently, but that it will also have the power to attract new fans of the brand."



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Classic cocktails? Absolut-ely!

Absolut Vodka has refreshed its bottle design and launched a campaign to inspire consumers to buy the brand's flavoured vodka range for use in classic cocktails.

The updated bottle features a new two-line logo, new script, a redesigned medallion and a reduced glass weight.

To promote Absolut's relationship with the cocktail trend the

brand has created its "Taste Perfection" which will include social media activity and how-to videos brought to life during key periods such as the run-up to Christmas.

Meanwhile, Italian fashion designer Roberto Cavalli has redesigned a limited edition bottle of Disaronno.



The design has been influenced by an undersea world and safari locations.

Part of the proceeds will be donated to the Fashion 4 Development charitable project in Africa.





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Foster's unleashes flavoured lagers

Heineken has launched its "Rum Unleashed" campaign to promote Foster's two new flavoured lagers – Spiced Rum and Classic Rum. The £2m marketing push includes outdoor advertising in key sites in London, Manchester, Nottingham, Liverpool and Birmingham, with 300,000 samples being distributed in city centres. The inspiration behind the campaign is the 19th century rum traders who weathered storms to keep the supply of rum flowing to Australia.

Mars first UK firm to join new Fairtrade program Move is 'important milestone'

Mars' Fairtrade move will support farmers

by Helena Drakakis

Mars has released its first chocolate bar made with Fairtrade-certified cocoa.

The company, which introduced Fairtrade Maltesers in 2012, has become the first UK business to commit to Fairtrade's new Cocoa Sourcing Program.

The program involves working in partnership with Fairtrade cocoa co-operatives on the ground in Cote d'Ivoire who are building farmer-led projects to improve long-term cocoa yields. Alongside paying Fairtrade premiums

to farmers' organisations, the program also trains farmers in fertilisers and planting techniques to ensure they maintain a high yield and disease-resistant crops.

The company says the introduction is a great opportunity for independent retailers and has come about in response to an increasing demand for Fairtrade-certified products.

Blas Maquivar, president of Mars Chocolate UK, said: "This is an important milestone in the Mars Bar's 83-year history. We're proud to make one of the nation's

favourite chocolate brands and now we're even prouder that the Fairtrade-certified cocoa we source for it is helping farmers to make their crops, and ultimately their livelihoods, even more sustainable."

Michael Gidney, chief executive of the Fairtrade Foundation, said the partnership would help put farmers in control of improving their own livelihoods and cocoa production. He said: "We're delighted that this will benefit some of the most vulnerable small-scale farming communities in Cote d'Ivoire."

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NEWS REGIONAL



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Tobacco smuggling gang jailed

Four men who smuggled 2.7 million cigarettes and more than 774kg of tobacco into the UK, most of which was hidden in a covered load of frozen chickens, have been sentenced.

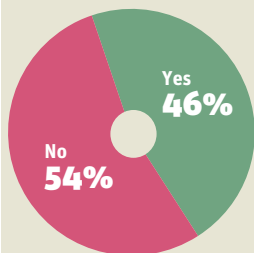
HMRC stopped a refrigerated lorry at business premises in Croydon in May 2013, which contained illegal cigarettes worth an estimated £288,240 in lost revenue.

Miroslaw Rogalski was sentenced to four years and nine months in prison on Thursday last week.

Mariusz Dudek got three years and six months. Amjad Jassim was sentenced to two years in prison, suspended for two years and ordered to carry out 100 hours unpaid work. Alban Beqiri was fined £150.

David Margree, assistant director, Fraud Investigation Service, HMRC, said: "This plot was designed to steal money from the public and undermine honest shopkeepers."

RN READER POLL



Is preparing for the National Living Wage stopping you from investing in your store?

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION

Have you introduced a charge for carrier bags in your store?



Have your vote now

Go to betterretailing.com/retail-newsagent



Cambridge retailer's big Lotto win

Cambridge retailer Ugur Adis has been named the first Lotto £5k winner after his daughter, who works for him part-time, signed up his store, Essentialz. There are four more chances for retailers to hit the jackpot in the Win Big Together draw, which celebrates the launch of the new-look Lotto, by visiting the website and answering three questions.

Indies report positive reaction to carrier bag charge 'It will be the norm in a few weeks'

Customers respond well to voluntary 5p bag levy

by Gurpreet Samrai

Independent retailers who have voluntarily adopted the 5p carrier bag levy introduced in England this week say it has been welcomed by a majority of their customers.

The charge came into effect on Monday for businesses employing 250 or more staff, however a number of small stores voluntarily began charging for single-use carrier

bags last week.

Amit Patel, of Belvedere News, Food & Wine in Kent, said that on the first day 40% of shoppers decided to carry their shopping home after being asked to pay for a bag. An estimated 30% of these had only purchased a single item.

"We've had a mixed reaction so far, but 90% plus are quite happy we have implemented the charge," he said. "The negative

comments have been directed at the government for introducing a charge."

Vas Vekaria, of Lever Edge Convenience Store in Bolton, said he is still giving out carrier bags for heavy items, but is charging when they are requested for small or single items. He said he has had a positive response from 75% of customers, with many now starting to bring in their own bags.

"It is already getting

easier after a week," he said. "Give it a few weeks and it will be the norm."

However, some independent stores have decided against adopting the scheme to give them an edge over the supermarkets.

The NFRN and Association of Convenience Stores campaigned for all businesses to be included in the levy to prevent consumer and retailer confusion.

NFRN welcomes proxy purchase rules

New proxy purchasing rules which came into force in England on 1 October have been welcomed by the NFRN.

The regulations mean it is now illegal for an adult to purchase tobacco and nicotine products including e-cigarettes on behalf of a minor.

An age restriction on

the purchase of e-cigarettes and related products was also introduced meaning it is now a legal requirement for retailers to ensure customers are over 18-years-old, and those caught breaking the law could be penalised with an on-the-spot fine of £50.

NFRN national

president Ralph Patel said: "It has always been immensely frustrating for responsible retailers to refuse to sell tobacco or nicotine products to someone they believe to be under 18, only for an adult to come in and purchase the product on the youngster's behalf.

"We have campaigned

long and hard for proxy purchasing to be made illegal and are pleased to welcome in these new regulations."

The NFRN has raised concerns over an age restriction exemption for e-cigarettes licensed as medicines, stating it could cause confusion for retailers.



LOCAL SHOP SUMMIT

What your customers really want and why you need to know

Think you understand what your customers want because of what they buy from you? What about the customers that walk out without purchasing? Knowing what your shoppers are actually looking to buy from you could be the key to increasing basket spend.

How do you find out what your shoppers want that you're not giving them? Have you considered the science behind shopping? Do you know your key shopper missions? These questions and others will be answered in this session led by Mars at the **Local Shop Summit, held at Lord's Cricket Ground on Wednesday 14 October.**

Along with a panel of knowledgeable retailers, Mars will explore how effective merchandising, perfecting your store layout to improve the shopper journey and tailoring customer service to your demographic can improve customer retention and grow sales in your store.

"Understanding why your customers visit your store, stocking the right range to meet their needs and providing it for them in an easy to shop way, can really drive incremental sales. Join our head of category management and leading retailers to explore ideas that are easy to execute and help make a difference to the sales in your store," says **Bep Dhaliwal, trade communications manager, Mars Chocolate UK.**

Learn how to secure the potential spend you don't yet know you're missing out on, understand how to capitalise on footfall drivers you're not aware of and discuss how to market your business to new shoppers by coming to Mars' interactive Local Shop Summit session.

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NEWS

REGIONAL

'Winning' lottery seller's sales up

A Northern Irish newsagent who sold a £300,000 winning Lottery scratchcard has reported an upturn in sales in the month following the win.

Judith Mercer, of Hamilton News in Belfast, sold the winning card to cleaner Maureen Wilkinson in early September when she visited the store on her way to work. When news of the win spread, Mrs Mercer was inundated with scratchcard buyers.

"For a month afterwards, our scratchcard sales doubled," she said. "It's eased off now, but if we were selling 500 scratchcards a day, it would easily have gone up to 1,000."

Mrs Mercer said the win "couldn't have happened to a better person" and, despite her new found wealth, Mrs Wilkinson still buys her scratchcards and picks up her groceries at the shop.

Ferrari to host NFRN awards

The 2015 NFRN Awards, which will take place next Tuesday (13 October) at the Park Plaza Riverside Hotel in London, will be hosted by radio presenter Nick Ferrari.

The award-winning presenter of the Nick Ferrari at Breakfast programme on LBC also regularly appears on television, and previously worked for the Sun and Daily Mirror.

NFRN national president Ralph Patel said: "The NFRN awards are one of the most important dates in the news industry's calendar and we are thrilled to have Nick Ferrari hosting this year's proceedings. Given his background in national newspaper journalism and broadcasting, he is the natural choice."



Display ban and retail crime top reception agenda

Retail crime and the tobacco display ban were at the top of the agenda for Scottish retailers who attended the Scottish Business Resilience Centre Parliamentary reception last week. Aleem Farooqi highlighted concerns about older customers falling for PPI scams, while other retailers discussed the tobacco display ban with Trading Standards Scotland, highlighting the support the NFRN provides to members. Mo Razzaq investigated the possibility of a police constable writing articles for the NFRN's Scottish bulletin which could help retailers run their businesses safely.

Online giant offers Birmingham deliveries Is full UK rollout on the cards?

Amazon takes first steps into the grocery market

by Gurpreet Samrai

Amazon customers in Birmingham have become the first to be offered chilled and frozen products as speculation grows that the internet giant is gearing up for a full grocery launch in the UK.

Amazon's Prime Now customers in the UK's second city are being offered a range of 50-60 products delivered within an hour with the service to be extended

to London in the coming weeks.

Some of the products included are Ben & Jerry's ice creams, Birds Eye fish fingers and Cathedral City Cheddar, adding to around 10,000 products already available.

Kay Patel, of Global Food & Wine, in Stratford and Wanstead, said: "If it can't offer the whole package it's not really going to work. There will be a delivery charge as well so I don't

think it will be too much of an issue unless it starts offering the full range of groceries, but it probably will do that soon."

Amazon told RN it plans to roll out the service to more cities throughout the rest of the year as well as expanding the products available. The move has led to speculation that the company is gearing up for the rollout of Amazon Fresh next year. The IGD has said Amazon's launch of chilled

and frozen products is a "big step" towards the challenge it will face marketing itself as a grocery specialist.

Rav Garcha, of Nisa Local Hockley, Birmingham, said: "It's too new and too innovative for anyone to have an idea of how it will impact business. As with any competition, it's cause for concern, but the question is whether it will be taking a share of the online market or will it take a share out of bricks and mortar?"

Underage tobacco tests get a cool reception

Retailers in the east of England have given a mixed response to the roll-out of a programme that involves mystery shoppers putting underage tobacco sales to the test in more than 400 shops.

During the next three months, 18-19-year-olds will test the 'No ID, No

Sale' policy, which retailers should adopt when dealing with purchasers who are only just of legal age to buy tobacco.

The scheme, jointly funded by tobacco manufacturers JTI, Philip Morris and Imperial Tobacco, was piloted in the north west last year, where the propor-

tion of retailers identified as at risk of non-compliance fell from 52% to 45%.

Mike Rivers, of Dersingham News, Dersingham, said: "If you want to stop underage people buying cigarettes then money should go into educating young people not to smoke.

Most newsagents want to be responsible, but it is inevitable that you will make a mistake."

Meanwhile, Nigel Kendall of Meadow Stores, King's Lynn, said: "At the end of the day we all have to abide by the law. It doesn't bother me to have test purchasers in at all."

YOUR REGION

NFRN DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT KENT 28.09.2015



Tim Murray reports from the NFRN Kent district council meeting

Offer something better, Menzies

Ongoing problems with Menzies and the rise in carriage charges from the wholesaler dominated proceedings at the Kent district council meeting.

Members vowed to take a lead in getting Menzies to improve its level of service to retailers around the country.

Mid Kent member Steve Barker said: "The carriage charge increase is an absolute disgrace."

Problems were further exacerbated when members went to meet with Menzies' staff, with most feeling the staff were not senior enough to deal with the main issues worrying retailers.



Steve Barker

Gravesend member Harry Goraya suggested retailers start a campaign similar to the one instigated against PayPoint.

Mr Barker agreed: "It's about time something was actually done." He suggested the district also starts campaigning for Menzies to change other practices, such as making its phone number free.

Mr Goraya said members should put together a 'top 10' list of things NFRN members should do to battle against wholesalers.

It was agreed a sub-committee would be set up to look at methods to deal with wholesale problems that would then report to the district council before "hopefully going on to a national level".

Problems are still stacking up

Operation Stack, the mammoth police procedure in Kent to park lorries on the M20 motorway,



Members raised concerns about the effects of Camelot's terminal rollout

continues to loom over retailers in the west of the district.

It has been in place for almost 20 years, but problems at Calais, with both the influx of migrants and striking workers, led to Operation Stack running at "unprecedented levels" during summer.

East Kent member David Ford said the situation could worsen, outlining proposed new stages, the fourth and most severe of which could see lorries parked in rows at Manston airport.

Mr Ford said: "If we ever reach stage four, it will cause real problems for newsagents. It will be a shambles. Menzies should be on the ball with this."



New terminals will only dilute the business. I don't want to see a rollout of more

Hitesh Pandya

Ramsgate retailer, on Camelot rollout

East Kent member Hitesh Pandya added: "We need to make sure what happened this year doesn't happen again. Going to stage four is a big thing."



David Ford

Camelot rollout concerns raised

The rollout of more Camelot terminals was discussed, with members questioning whether it would result in profits being spread more thinly between retailers.

Hitesh Pandya said: "As soon as something good happens, there's always someone else who wants it. New terminals will only dilute the business. I don't want to see a roll out of more terminals."

Dartford member Ron Rushbrook said he would support new terminals in any NFRN members' stores. "As a member, if we could get the lottery into any members where they aren't, I would fight for that."



Ron Rushbrook

Availability of scratch-cards was also an issue for some retailers.

Reorganisation on the agenda

With Kent branches having started the long road to reorganising, the district has taken a keen interest in discussions over future branches, districts and the whole organisation of the NFRN.

Members heard the recently reinvigorated Ashford, Canterbury & Folkestone branch held a warmly received curry evening, a social event that enabled networking and debate.

Branch member Hemanshu Patel was praised for his role in it and many viewed it as a potential route forwards for branches.

Potential changes and ideas were discussed, with assorted delegates agreeing to come back to the next meeting with potential solutions.

Mid Kent member Christine Southern said: "This has come



Christine Southern

from the members. They are saying that something's got to change, something's got to happen."

Mr Patel added: "We need to reconnect with the retailers, the man at the bottom has to talk to the man at the top."

Roll of honour for long servers

Two long-serving members, Diana Rushbrook and Christine Southern, were voted on to the roll of honour board after unanimous votes from those present.

Your say

Has the sale of illicit tobacco in your area had any impact on sales in your store?



I'm not sure if illicit tobacco is having an effect.

The only change we've seen is people going for cheaper ones. People are buying pricemarked. We hear about illicit tobacco, but we don't know where they are.

Hemanshu Patel

Saltwood General Stores, Hythe



You notice a lot more people smoking

brands you've never seen before. You try to get people to buy something else and they'll tell you they got them cheap elsewhere. I've reported a few retailers, one got done, but it takes time.

Hitesh Pandya

Toni's News, Ramsgate



Something is affecting my tobacco business.

Since putting the doors on I can see there is a difference, I used to buy 50 outers a week, it's now gone down to 35. I do need to be more vigilant going forward.

Rajan Patel

Nisa Local, Dartford

YOUR REGION

NFRN DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT SOUTHERN 29.09.2015



Tim Murray reports from the NFRN Southern district council meeting

'Don't forget sub-retailing'

With Menzies Distribution's carriage charges rising – a move that was blasted by Southern district council – members were told to remind their branches about the possibility of sub-retailing.

"In real terms, carriage charges should have been frozen or gone down," said Southampton member Jon Dudley.

Portsmouth & Chichester member Linda Sood said: "If it's not working, maybe retailers should start sub-retailing."

Meanwhile, the wholesaler came under further fire for late deliveries and for putting stickers directly onto newspapers.



Linda Sood

"We had stock stickers on the Daily Telegraph, a £1.40 product," said Portsmouth & Chichester member Nigel Swan, holding a copy of the newspaper with a sticker emblazoned across its front page (pictured).

"And Menzies is now charging me £56 a week for the privilege."

Wholesaler meetings had helped with some of the problems, said Mr Swan, especially when it came to credits.

'Devious' claim over TSO action

Trading standards have long been a thorn in the side for many retailers in the Southern district, especially when it comes to selling super-strength alcohol.

After trying to force retailers into pledging not to sell strong booze,



members alleged trading standards were now using more "devious" methods of persuasion.

Officers were said to be increasing visits to stores to try and find anything they could to trip up retailers.

Any contraventions would then be ignored – as long as retailers agreed to stop selling super-strength alcohol.

Portsmouth & Chichester member Pradip Amin said: "I've changed my licence to accept this as a condition, but it's unfair."

"Trading standards is trying to get as many fines as possible."



Trading standards is trying to get as many fines as possible

Pradip Amin

Retailer, Portsmouth & Chichester



Pradip Amin

Restructuring a hot topic

The restructuring of branches and potential improvement of the organisation of the NFRN was a major topic of discussion.

Linda Sood said: "We need to look at the whole restructuring and need to take back ideas to national council. What are councils looking for?"

Mrs Sood discussed some proposed points, such as the consolidation of smaller branches within the districts.

Some members were pushing for more radical thinking, with Jon Dudley telling the meeting: "Amalgamation of branches is just fiddling around the edges. Change needs to be done radically. We need to change the whole federation."

Pradip Amin agreed: "We need to come up with a clear plan and structure."

And while tribute was paid to the old guard (life-long members who no longer own stores), fresh blood was needed in the NFRN. "If new people come in, we don't want to waste their time," said district president Bhavesh Patel. "We can work as a federation, but we need something different, something that works smoothly and something that doesn't have too many meetings."

In keeping with other districts, the idea of more networking-led meetings was floated, while members promised to look at both local branch structure in the Southern district as well as the bigger picture for the NFRN, with a motion for the former being considered for the next district council meeting.

Subs snub

The Zippo Collection partwork may have been one of the most welcome recent launches, but members were warned to keep an eye out for subscription forms contained within its pages.

Linda Sood held up a copy of one that offered a number of subscriber gifts that could lead customers away from independent retailers and into the arms of partwork subscription departments.

Politically aware

Members at the council meeting arrived fresh from a Labour Party fringe meeting at the political organisation's annual conference. "We want to let the political parties know what we're feeling, to make them aware about retail crime," said district president Bhavesh Patel.

Your say

What changes do you make to your store's range as the colder months set in?



I've stopped selling charcoal and started selling coal and logs for fires. I'm with Premier and they change their promotions to suit, swapping soft drinks for cans of soup. We increase our range of cold remedies and solutions.

Nigel Swan
Clapps News,
Hayling Island, Hampshire



We've got Halloween coming up, so we'll take space for that from some of the summer product. I've got another unit, so I'm opening up a Christmas shop for the next 12 weeks, selling chocolates, paper and cards.

Linda Sood
Falcon News,
Portsmouth, Hampshire



You may not consciously do it, but it kind of evolves as you go along. You might lose ice cream and summer toys, and we do gifts in our store, so we'll be stocking more of those. We'll start selling more cough sweets too.

Jon Dudley
Boyatt News,
Eastleigh, Hampshire

YOUR REGION

NFRN DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT SOUTH WALES 28.09.2015



Jenny Sims reports from the NFRN South Wales district council meeting

Government 'must do more'

District president Matthew Clark gave a report on a recent NFRN meeting with Welsh government members to discuss their concerns over the proposed tobacco retailers' register (as outlined in the Public Health Wales Bill), including the £30 fee to register. He pointed out that Scotland, which already has such a register, does not charge a fee.

He added: "We would like to see the Welsh government do more to combat illicit tobacco traders, rather than making life financially harder for the good guys - the legitimate independent retailers, who are an easy target for trading standards officers."

The Welsh government says the scheme aims to protect young people from accessing tobacco and nicotine products and aid tobacco legislation enforcement.

Now you can tweet helpline

Members were once again urged to use the NFRN helpline to report any problems with wholesalers or publishers.

Swansea member Dev Aswani said the "miniscule" number of complaints recorded did not reflect the true scale of problems within the supply chain. According to the NFRN's latest statistics, in the week ending 19 September, only six complaints had been received from the district's 572 members.

Merthyr Tydfil member Rob Holdaway said he was a frequent user and he encouraged other



South Wales NFRN district members want more Welsh government action on illicit tobacco

members to make use of the service. "I take the time to make the call and always ask that it's logged. It works, but it's up to members to make the effort," he said.

Membership services manager Chris Appleton reminded members it was free to call. "We are there to help, but we can't if people don't tell us about their problems - what, when and where."

He stressed the federation needed people to call every time they had a complaint, not only to be helped individually but also to help the organisation



Chris Appleton
Membership services manager



We are there to help, but we can't if people don't tell us about their problems

Chris Appleton

Membership services manager

collect accurate data to help them in their dealings with publishers and wholesalers.

He also reminded members they could now complain directly to publishers and wholesales on Twitter, using the hashtag #NewsComplaints - and urged them to use it, as the open forum often got immediate responses. But people should also still inform the NFRN about issues, he said.

Matthew Clark summed up: "We need to encourage members to get into the habit of making the helpline call."

Free event gives pensions advice

Members were urged to attend a free event on the government's legislation relating to workplace pensions. The auto-enrolment pension scheme requires all employers to provide a qualifying pension scheme, and all employees must be enrolled.

"This is an issue of real worry and concern to retailers," said Rob

Holdaway. The event was to be hosted by the South Wales district on 5 October, with Roger Eylvyn-Buften of Now Pensions making a presentation.

Sunday laws

Chris Appleton reported on the NFRN's opposition to government plans to relax Sunday trading laws, and asked members to contact their MPs for support.

Dev Aswani said: "There should be a campaign against this. We are being asked to work longer and longer just to stand still."

Congratulations

Several South Wales members were congratulated for a variety of achievements.

District vice president Mark Dudden has been selected as a finalist for the NFRN Magazine Retailer of the Year Award, while Peter Robinson and Gerald Thomas have made it into the Top 100 of the Independent Achievers Academy.

Jon Powell was also praised for his hard work with the Newport Traders Association.

Special congratulations were passed on to Rob Holdaway's daughter, light-flyweight boxing champion, Lynsey Holdaway. Back after more than 18 months out with injury, she has recently won a raft of medals and titles. In June, she claimed Wales' first gold medal of the GB Elite Tri Nation Championships in Sheffield, making her the first ever female 48kg British (tri nation) champion.



Jon Powell

Your say

What types of promotions help to attract sales of newspapers and magazines in your store?



Gifts and giveaways work - free CDs, topical items like Rugby World Cup wallcharts, and money-off coupons. In particular, the Independent and i newspapers are excellent.

Matthew Clark
Penylan News
Cardiff



Gifts and promotions work. I would like to see a level playing field for all outlets for all the promotions in the newspapers though, instead of offers only being available at Tesco or WH Smith.

Rob Holdaway
The News Kiosk
Merthyr, Tydfil



Free giveaways directly to customers are very popular. Also, the Sun £9.50 Holidays promotion (discount holiday promotion run in The Sun every summer) always make a difference to our sales.

Clive Birkby
C & J Birkby,
Cwm Rhymini

OPINION

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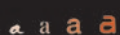
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YOUR SAY Are click and collect parcel services a valuable addition for independent stores?

Liz Entwistle

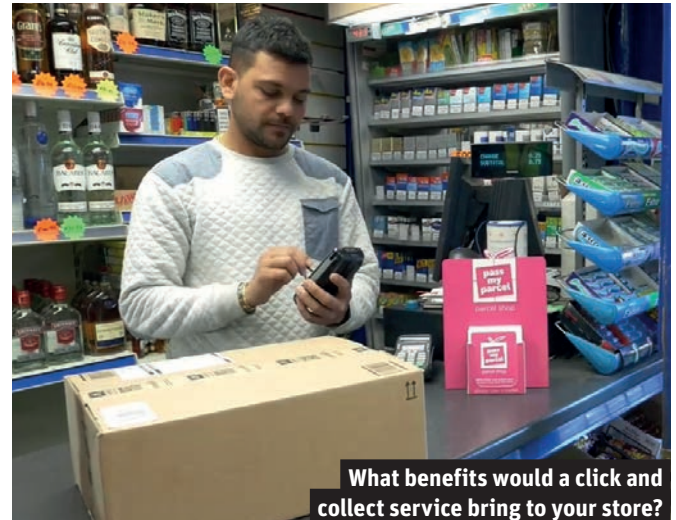
St Michael's Post Office & Stores, Tenterden, Kent

I extended the hours of my Post Office because it makes sense that when people come in at 7pm they can post a parcel. My click and collect service is the same. I've found that if people come in to pick up a parcel at that time, or any time, they often take a bottle of wine or something else too. It gets people through the door.

Wendy Boyatt

Premier Morfa Stores, Harlech, Gwynedd

We've had a click and collect parcel service in-store for 12 months. I couldn't say exactly what my upturn in sales is from offering the service, but I've seen people who live a few miles away who I wouldn't normally see in my store. It's definitely widened my customer base and when people



What benefits would a click and collect service bring to your store?

come in to collect a parcel they also pick up bread or milk or other items too.

Haresh Karia

Best-one Harvil Road Post Office, Harefield, Middlesex

I don't offer a click and collect service because although people

can send parcels from my shop nobody has really asked whether I do a pick-up service. I see the value in it, with lots of shopping moving online, but I have a reasonable amount of footfall here. It's something I may consider in the future, but not at the moment.

YOUR STOCK When do you start promoting Christmas deals in your store?

Harj Dhasee

The Village Stores, Gloucestershire

We have Christmas stock out already, but we aren't doing deals yet. The last week of November is when we look to have all the promos set up and running. After Halloween we dedicate a bay at the back of the store which has mince pies, confectionery and things

like that. But we're fully into Christmas by the first week of December.

Trudy Davies

Woosnam & Davies News, Powys, Wales

From now on really, the stock is starting to come in so we are putting together some promotions. We have ongoing

promotions and also different ones every week. For example I might do a special offer on Christmas cards one week and wrapping paper the next so it keeps people coming in. We also do a scheme, like a Christmas club, where people pay in £5 a week to us and get 10% off when they spend it. It means we have them coming in every week to pay in and they buy everyday things at the same time.



When's the right time to set out your Christmas promotions?

Julia Bywater

Bywater News, Upper Gornal, Dudley

We always used to say that on 1 December we'll get everything out, but over the years it's gradually got earlier. Last year we put the fireworks and Christmas stuff out simultaneously and we'll hopefully do the same this year. I'm also hoping to run a colouring competition for kids this year and we will have deals and special offers in the run-up to Christmas.

BINTESH AMIN

COLUMNIST

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Ringling the changes

Locally-sourced meat and winter vegetables are just two of the ideas bintesh has up his sleeve to drive pre-Christmas sales



Bintesh is hoping to stock more locally-sourced meat

This week I'm meeting a potential new meat supplier to talk about launching a range of locally-sourced products in my store.

At the moment, I have a basic range that includes diced mince, steak and poultry. It sells well, but the dates are too short and I want to find a supplier which packages its products differently so they have a longer shelf life.

The prices I will charge for the new range, which I hope will also include items such as burgers, will be similar to those on my existing products. But I hope that working with a new supplier will help to grow sales and reduce wastage. It will also help with margins. At the moment they are around 25-30%, but with this new supplier they should be more like 40-45%.

Once I have everything set up I'm planning to hold a tasting event to launch the range and win back a few customers who have stopped buying their meat from me. These new products will be good quality, so I hope that if customers like them I can encourage more people to pick up jars of sauce, vegetables or other things to go with them.

I'm also planning to adjust my fruit and vegetable range for the winter too. This has been a particularly successful category for me this year because I changed my range a few months ago and now sell a lot more loose products instead of pre-packed lines. Before, I was selling £40-£50 a week of fruit and veg. Now, that's more like £400-£500.

My customers know this range,

which is mostly sourced locally, is good quality and they buy a little and often from me rather than bulk-buying from the supermarkets and throwing things away.

I'm not the cheapest store, but I do offer great quality, value for money and availability, which gives people a reason to come here.

I need to remerchandise my vegetables to make room for the new meat range, so at the same time I'm going to create space to add some winter vegetables like swedes, sprouts and chestnuts. I want to mimic the supermarkets because they know what their customers are buying. I will be able to use these new products to suggest winter meal ideas too.

I've also been thinking ahead to next year and am considering an in-store bakery. I've got Cuisine de France already but I want to concentrate more on fresh and food to go. I



I hope that working with a new supplier will help to grow sales and reduce wastage

want to work with local suppliers to offer croissants, pies, pastries and add a few more lines. Some of my customers are local bakers so I'll talk to them about it.

I'm also thinking about how to build sales of frozen food. I've noticed that a lot more people are buying frozen meals from me and more premium versions of these too, so I want to make the most of that. It's interesting that One Stop has introduced meal deals on frozen meals but I'm not convinced this is the right thing to do in my store, because my customers are buying these products anyway and the margins are good. Instead, I think giving them a better position to make them more prominent will help sales.

I usually move some sections around in January to make customers take a fresh look at my store, and some of the changes I made earlier in the year have worked well, so I'm now planning some moves for this January. I've grown sales of food to go, snacks, drinks, alcohol and cakes and biscuits. To build on this, I can make space by reducing displays of household cleaning and personal care products, which customers only buy here in an emergency, and put in products which stand out instead.

Once I've decided on my plans I need to communicate them to my staff. I want to develop them and get them involved in my plans for the new year. I'm confident they will be able to make them a success.

Bintesh Amin runs a Londis store in Kent

★ Politicians' priorities

✚ **When it comes** to small business policies – whether we're talking about Jeremy Corbyn working his out or about the government that's already in place – I think the best thing politicians could do for independent retailers is remove the barriers that obstruct our businesses and leave us to get on with running them. It's hard to start out in this industry because there are so many different laws and regulations to get your head around and comply with. Business rates have gone up and, although I've made no claim on my insurance recently my premium has gone up too, which shows my business is not being valued for what it actually is. These rules and situations kill off a lot of entrepreneurship. Politicians need to address this.

LETTERS

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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

Price cut not way to get my support on Star sales

Here we go again.

Paul Goddard, deputy group circulation director at Northern & Shell, effectively said (I'm sure with a cheeky grin): 'Your support will be greatly appreciated, but we are cutting the price of the Star by 50%, and in doing so your wage for handling the paper will be cut by 50%.'

Sorry Paul, but if I've now got to sell twice as many copies to earn my 9.68p, my support and the Star's prime spot on my newsstand will disappear.

On another note, I feel I must congratulate publishers on their ability to plunge my business into total chaos.

On a Sunday morning, our papers were an hour and a half late.

I was stood around twiddling my thumbs from 5am till 6.30am.

It has got to be the longest, most unproductive waste of time.

Thank you so much from my customers: signalman Jez on his way to a 12 hour shift, Terry who is on the wrong side of 80 and cycles half a mile to collect his two papers at 6am prompt, and Pat on her way to a gruelling 10 hour shift in a nursing home, who takes eight papers in for residents.

And all because you lot wanted to get the last grunt from the rugby.

The industry needs all the readers I can get and this isn't the way to do it.

Graham Doubleday
Newsmarket,
Mossley,
Ashton under Lyne

Northern & Shell did not respond to RN's request for a reply to this letter

'I WILL NOT PROMOTE STAR WHILE MY TERMS ARE CUT'

Open letter to Paul Goddard, deputy group circulation director, Northern & Shell:

This morning I received your notification of the permanent cover price change to the Daily Star and Daily Star Sunday, with effect from Monday 5 October.

Sir, I am appalled at your attitude towards the retailers who promote and sell your publications.

As you have in effect cut my remuneration in half, I have a direct question to you and the staff of the Star collective.

Have you all accepted to only take half of your current agreed remuneration package during this period of price reduction? I suspect not. Nor will I expect any bonuses, overtime payments or gratuities to be declined.

Yes, you are spending on "extensive TV advertising", but it is the newsagent who is face to face with the customer and who will promote and encourage sale of your publications - or dismiss it.

I, for one, will not be displaying your publication, nor promoting it until you



Pop Ellie: My heart test fear
Hit & run fiend kills hero cop
REET TREAT

CHED RAPE APPEAL: SHOCKING NEW TWIST
Key evidence as Prem ace fights

at least reinstate retailers/roundsmen with the original full price terms.

I suspect I am not the only newsagent who will feel this way.

Stuart McClymont
Mac's,
Mansfield

Northern & Shell did not respond to RN's request for a reply to this letter

'Star's price is good news for customers but not for me'

Star price halved! Good for customers, bad for newsagents.

Half the profit for the same amount of work.

Prices are going in the wrong direction. It's about time there was a real reversal and we got a worthwhile reward for our efforts.

All publications need to be at a price to cover carriage charges.

Dave Forbes
Forbes Newsagents,
Dundee

Northern & Shell did not respond to RN's request for a reply to this letter



If I've now got to sell twice as many copies to earn my 9.68p, my support and the Star's prime spot on my newsstand will disappear

Graham Doubleday

On the Daily Star's decision to cut its price to 20p

Give us joined up thinking, publishers

Sunday 20 September 2015 - Times, Telegraph and Sun miss inbound into wholesale by 15 minutes resulting in a rerun arriving at our shop at 8am.

All delivery rounds had long since gone, as each takes approximately three hours.

The previous Sunday we had the 45-minute extension to cut off and our rounds were still successfully completed, albeit somewhat late.

Loss of profit to us for 70 Times, 62 Telegraph and 45 Sun, including delivery charge and inserts, is £147.72. Guess who pays?

We had 177 very unhappy customers and

our phone was ringing off the hook on Monday morning.

Are publishers/wholesalers really serious about HND? Could there please be some joined up thinking?

Roy Crawford
Crawford Newsagents,
Torrington

Menzies' new carriage costs 'unjustifiable'

How can Menzies justify increasing its carriage service charges compared to last year, when the fuel price has dropped this year?

Why is there no commensurate reduction in our carriage charges?

What is the NFRN response to all this?

Menzies Distribution is yet again abusing its monopoly position to fleece us newsagents.

These carriage service charges are unsustainable as our businesses are declining and a referral to the CMA is long overdue.

At this rate, our business won't survive for long.

Waqar Chaudry
Milton Stores,
Glasgow

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

Anyone else in the same boat?

While I am on constraint (regarding not receiving unwanted magazines from my wholesaler Menzies), I still receive copies of some titles I haven't ordered, such as National Geographic and some new partworks.

But I do not receive all partwork launches, such as the Zippo Collection.

Perhaps others are in the same boat?

Steve Barker
S & J News,
Rochester,
Kent

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YOUR ISSUE



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PAYPOINT IN FIRING LINE OVER 'EXCLUSIVITY'

PayPoint has faced heavy criticism and a wave of protests from disgruntled independent retailers since its latest commission cap cuts. Following the row, the payment service provider has made attempts to address retailer concerns with a new programme of retail service improvements.

However, the company has this week come under further fire, this time from Bolton retailer Bhavesh Ashani who is contesting the accusation that he has breached his 'exclusivity obligations' with PayPoint. The NFRN is also challenging the company over its requirement for dual PayPoint/Payzone retailers to terminate their agreement with Payzone.

The owner of Shree News told RN he received a letter from the company last month stating he has 14 days to provide proof he is not offering services offered by PayPoint through any other service provider, namely Payzone, and failure to do so could result in the removal of his terminal.

Mr Ashani says he has never covered up the fact he has both terminals in his store, and disputes he has breached the terms of his agreement because he only uses Payzone for services that are not provided by PayPoint. However, PayPoint says it disagrees with Mr Ashani's position and at the time of signing up, he agreed to remove his Payzone terminal.

Mr Ashani told RN: "We have had Payzone since we bought the business around eight years ago. And PayPoint only signed us up two years ago. When PayPoint came in to sign us up the rep knew we had Payzone as well."

"We are not breaching any terms as we use them both for different things. PayPoint don't do United Utilities so we use Payzone for that and the rest is PayPoint. We only use the Payzone terminal for the services PayPoint don't do."

He says his store takes around £3,500 in PayPoint transactions a week and £1,500 in Payzone transactions.

"It's not like we're making



Bhavesh Ashani says he has never covered up the fact he has both PayPoint and Payzone terminals in his store

money from these terminals," he says. "We're just providing a service for the local community. If they terminate our contract they're just going to take the service away from our customers."

"I'm going to fight to keep both terminals."

Mr Ashani turned to the NFRN for help fighting his case after chief executive Paul Baxter, speaking at a national council meeting last month, said any threat by PayPoint to remove a terminal that enabled a retailer to offer a service that PayPoint itself does not provide would be illegal,

“

If they terminate our contract they're just going to take the service away from our customers

Bhavesh Ashani

Shree News, Bolton

and the NFRN would report it immediately to the payment services regulator, as reported in RN.

However, Steve O'Neill, group marketing director at PayPoint, says: "Mr Ashani began offering PayPoint in November 2013. At the time of sign up, he agreed to remove his Payzone terminal and confirmed that he had served notice on this service."

"In June this year, we spoke to Mr Ashani about his general business with PayPoint and he confirmed again that he had no Payzone terminal in his store. It was disappointing for us to discover that, in spite of his assurances, there was still a Payzone terminal in his store."

"I'm afraid we disagree with Mr Ashani's position - he has breached the terms of his contract with us and we have, of course, given him the opportunity to put this right and do what he had originally agreed to back in 2013. We have worked with the NFRN to review this case and they are fully aware of our position."

He adds: "As we have stated before, we know that not all of our retailers understand the need for exclusivity."

"We do ask for it, underpinned by our substantial technology investment, so we can maintain the integrity of our network to attract the best clients and the most customers for them."

"We believe the needs of consumers, retailers and bill issuers are better served through this model."

"Without this, there is a high likelihood that retailers would see further erosion in the value that our service brings to their business, both in terms of commission and footfall, as the market becomes more fragmented. We're certain that our retailers would not support this."

Margaret McCloskey, head of operations at the NFRN, told RN the federation is preparing to make a submission to the Payment Systems Regulator.





She says: "We are very concerned that PayPoint is requiring dual PayPoint/Payzone retailers to terminate their agreements with Payzone as a condition of renewing their PayPoint contracts and what that will mean in terms of financial loss to those retailers as well as detriment and loss of services to consumers."

"We are, therefore, in the preparatory stage of a submission to the Payment Systems Regulator to call for an investigation and we are keen to hear from any dual PayPoint/Payzone retailers who are being forced into giving up one terminal or the other and are willing to supply us with information for our submission."



PayPoint says Mr Ashani agreed to remove his Payzone terminal when he signed up with them in 2013

INDUSTRY PROFILE

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Wrigley

With Halloween representing a massive sales opportunity for confectionery, Wrigley's Tony Lorman is confident new Skittles Darkside and Starburst 'Trick or Treat' will create more growth in the category in the coming weeks, with increased field sales activity driving it

RETAIL NEWSAGENT What opportunities does Halloween offer retailers?

TONY LORMAN Halloween is the biggest opportunity for confectionery sales, and is worth £220m during this time – that's 7.8% up from last year.

With the total fruit confectionery category worth £43m (Wrigley makes up over £5m of this), retailers have huge potential to grow their market share at Halloween.

Our two latest launches – Skittles Darkside and Starburst 'Trick or Treat' – will help retailers achieve this. We're also adding Skittles Fruit Funsized to our range as a permanent addition, which will be available in multipacks of 11 x 18g bags, with an RRP of £1.39 – perfect for trick-or-treaters.

RN Why did you decide on these particular products?

TL We initially piloted these products in Tesco stores last year and saw very positive results.

During the Halloween period, Starburst 'Trick or Treat' was the third best-selling pouch in confectionery, and 70% of this spend was from new customers.

Once we saw how popular the products were, we decided to bring them to the impulse channel.

RN How are you helping retailers to boost sales of these products and make the most of Halloween more generally?

TL We've equipped our field sales team with themed PoS including Halloween counter tops and shelf wobblers, as well as with market insight to help retailers with merchandising and ranging.

In an increasingly competitive marketplace, it is important

retailers take full advantage of these resources.

RN What is driving this competition, and how is it affecting confectionery?

TL The continued growth of grocers and discounters, along with a rise in the number of customers looking for better value for money, means that competition is getting tougher.

Although this is not the sole reason, this contributed to the 7% decline in the impulse confectionery market.

The overall market is still worth a huge amount – £621m in total – and is in good health, but has also remained at a relatively flat growth rate of 0.6%.

RN How can retailers remain competitive?

TL Focusing on seasonal and cultural events is a crucial part to staying competitive, and is why we have invested in our Halloween ranges and increased our support to retailers.




The overall market is still worth a huge amount – £621m in total – and is in good health

Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, big nights in and sports events all present a huge opportunity for independent retailers.

Stores can grow their sales easily for these events with tailored displays, by putting bestsellers in high footfall areas and with linked promotions.

Value and convenience are also key trends, which is why we invested in six pricemarked packs this July across our Starburst and Skittles brands, and introduced a re-sealable Skittles bottle.

RN How have you been affected by some supermarkets' choice to remove sweets from their aisles?

TL It's hard to say how sales have been affected in grocery stores. There's only one barcode for our sweets, regardless of where they're put – so it's hard to track sales by location.

Our merchandising advice to independent retailers, however, has not changed: Put bestsellers in high footfall areas where they can benefit as many consumers as possible.

RN What's the plan for the coming months?

TL Skittles is already the fourth-biggest confectionery brand, and Starburst has a really loyal customer base, so our aim is to continue to drive confectionery sales by focusing on big nights in and key seasonal events. We already have lots of investment planned for the rest of this year and 2016.

** Company CV **

Company Wrigley

European confections business unit director Tony Lorman

Profile Part of Mars, Wrigley owns nearly 34 mint and sweet brands in total, including Starburst, Wrigley Spearmint, Skittles, Doublemint and Juicy Fruit.

Latest news Wrigley has launched Halloween editions for its Skittles and Starburst brands, including Skittles Darkside and Starburst 'Trick or Treat'. Skittles Darkside is available in both a 174g pouch (£1.29 RRP) and a single pack format (RRP 51p). Starburst 'Trick or Treat' is available as a 165g sharing bag (£1.29 RRP).

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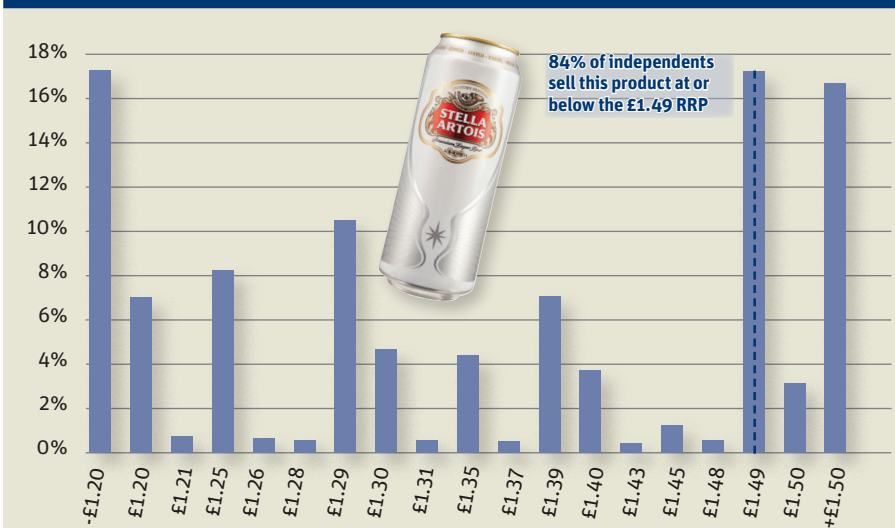
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PRICEWATCH LAGER

LAGER PRICES AROUND THE UK

PRODUCT	AVERAGE	RRP	RETAILER 1	RETAILER 2	RETAILER 3	RETAILER 4	RETAILER 5
Carling 15-pack 440ml	£13.34	£12.99	£10.00 (Offer)	£12.00 (12-pack)	£10.00 (Offer)	-	-
Stella Artois 4-pack 500ml	£5.49	£5.49 (PM)	-	£5.00 (Offer)	£5.49 (PM)	£5.49 (PM)	£5.00
Foster's 4-pack 500ml	£4.39	£4.39 (PM)	£5.00	£4.39 (PM)	£5.65 (PM - 568ml)	£4.39	£4.25
Carlsberg 15-pack 440ml	£13.13	£14.49	£10.00	£7.00 (8-pack)	£10.00 (Offer)	£8.00 (8-pack)	-
Carlsberg 4-pack 500ml	£4.39	£4.39	-	£4.39 (PM)	£3.99	£4.39 (PM)	£4.25
Stella Artois 500ml	£1.36	£1.49	£1.55	£1.65	-	£1.00 (440ml)	£1.30
Foster's Pint Can 4-pack 568ml	£5.65	£5.65 (PM)	£5.00	£5.29 (Offer)	-	-	£5.50
Budweiser 4-pack 500ml	£5.35	£5.49 (PM)	-	£4.39	£5.49 (PM)	£5.49 (PM)	£5.00
Coors Light 4-pack 500ml	£4.81	£4.99 (PM)	£5.00 (Offer 6-pack)	£4.99 (PM)	£5.00 (Offer 6-pack)	-	£4.49 (Offer)
Kronenbourg 1664 500ml	£1.29	£1.59	-	£1.60	-	£1.52	£5.00 (8-pack)
Carlsberg Special Brew 500ml	£2.01	£2.99	-	£2.59	£2.49	-	£2.50
Carling Can 500ml	£1.14	£1.49	£1.49	£1.31	-	-	£1.30

STELLA ARTOIS 500ml Price distribution %



Average selling prices and best-selling products rankings are sourced by EDFM Ltd from EPOS data from over 2,000 independent retailers throughout the UK. The prices given on this page are the prices at point of purchase.

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

Pricing strategies

RETAILER

1



NAME WENDY BOYATT

STORE Premier Morfa Stores

LOCATION Gwynedd, Wales

SIZE 3,000sq ft

TYPE village

I put beers in the chiller and try to stick to RRP's, although a lot of the time we go for pricemarked and promoted packs of lager. Our best-selling promotion right now is Carling 15-packs at £10. I find that 500ml formats sell faster than pints, so for this reason I'll only get pints when they're on promotion. Multipacks are selling particularly well with the rugby on. My customers are really price-sensitive and respond really well to any promotions in this category, so it doesn't help that the supermarkets set their prices exceptionally low.

RETAILER

2



NAME YOGI TATLA

STORE Crown Wood Londis

LOCATION Bracknell, Berkshire

SIZE 1,500sq ft

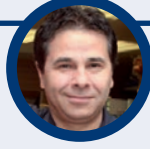
TYPE secondary road

We normally stick to the RRP's set by Londis, otherwise we will check what margins we're getting and the rate of sale of the product and adjust prices accordingly. Promotions and pricemarked packs work particularly well for lager, which is selling really fast at the moment thanks to the various sports events taking place. We put all our beers in a corner chiller situated near the till. This makes it easy for customers to locate them and also pick something up on impulse on their way to the checkout. Large multipacks don't fit in there, though, so we put them on the floor.

➔ **Nadia Alexandrou**
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 ☎ 020 7689 3350

RETAILER**3****NAME SERGE NOTAY****STORE** Notay Stores**LOCATION** Batley, West Yorkshire**SIZE** 1,600sq ft**TYPE** main road

The majority of our lagers are either pricemarked or on promotion. It's quite easy to source good promotions, which I either get from my local cash and carry or Booker and pass on to my customers. Pricemarking is important in this area, as people like to see the price clearly displayed when they're browsing. Whenever a 15-pack is on promotion at £10, like Carling 440ml is right now, it always sells well. Four-packs of Budweiser pricemarked at £5.49 are very popular, too. Like with most other chilled alcohol, beer always sells better when the weather's hot.

RETAILER**4****NAME UGAR ADIS****STORE** Mace Essentialz**LOCATION** Cambridge**SIZE** 1,300sq ft**TYPE** main road

I almost exclusively stick to pricemarked packs, as they inspire confidence in my customers that I'm giving them a fair price. I can usually get quite good margins, too, as P&H and Booker often run good deals on lager. I chill all my beers, which is important here because I have a lot of student customers who drink quite a bit. The run up to Christmas is normally the busiest time for me, and alcohol will fly off the shelf up until December when everyone goes home for the holidays. The £1 Stella cans are our bestsellers.

RETAILER**5****NAME SANDEEP BAINS****STORE** Simply Fresh**LOCATION** Faversham, Kent**SIZE** 1,800sq ft**TYPE** residential/main road

We get most of our lagers from our local cash and carry and set our prices according to our competition and margin. Lager is one of our top-performing categories, along with wine. We don't really look at what price other retailers around the country are setting, as every area is different. We just concern ourselves with what the shops in our area are doing. I'm aware of the number of retailers who are buying non-duty alcohol, which makes it quite hard to compete when you're sticking to the rules. We merchandise all our lagers in the chiller, and find that pricemarked cans sell particularly well.

 **INDEPENDENT**
Achievers Academy

News UK

ACADEMY IN ACTION

Follow up



Digital Engagement

In April, News UK's Tony Parker visited Susan Connolly in her Spar store in Wiltshire to discuss digital engagement. We caught up with Susan to see how she and her team have been getting on.

Susan's action plan

- Investigate the possibility of installing digital screens in-store
- Run a prize draw on Facebook to encourage customer feedback
- Make store managers admins on Facebook and start making regular posts

Susan says

"Since we received the window PoS from News UK our sales have gone up by 3%. Hopefully this will increase further when the digital screens are set up. Our store manager Lucy is keen to learn, but I'm mainly still running the accounts at the moment. We're posting more offers and competitions on Facebook now. Our next competition is for Halloween, which we're excited about. There's still more impact we can make and the advice we got from News UK is really helping us do that."

Your action plan

Visit betterRetailing.com/IAA to find out more about Susan's visit from the IAA, to develop your own action plan and see similar results in your store



RETAILER PROFILE



Ideas deliver success

By starting up their own local postal service, Lorraine and Trish Lettley have found an innovative way to drive their business forward as well as solving their community's issues with stamp prices. **Tom Hogarth reports**

After realising that sales of cards were decreasing due to customer complaints about the cost of stamps, mum and daughter team Lorraine and Trish Lettley decided to come up with their own solution at their 800 sq ft stores, E J Teare Newsagents.

The result was the Welly Post, a local post service that delivers to roughly 12,000 homes around Wellington, Somerset.

Trish says: "We launched Welly Post in December 2013 and by Christmas we'd done over 4,000 letters."

Since then, volumes have increased to 6,000 items delivered over Christmas 2014 and now Trish forecasts that they'll reach 10,000 over Christmas 2015. This is alongside 24 paper rounds and an average of 400 letters delivered weekly during the rest of the year.

Trish's father, Richard, handles a majority of the letter deliveries alone, on a bicycle. If demand gets too high, help comes in the form of a couple of retired gentlemen from the local community.

In addition, Welly Post's price per item has remained at 30p since its inception at the end of 2013. There are plans to review the price following Christmas 2015 but for now, customers of E J Teare can secure the service for less than half the cost of a first class stamp.

Trish believes this is a great way to appeal to her local community and her

customers, of whom she estimates 40% are over 50-years-old.

News delivery is also very popular, with more than 900 account customers signed up at the store.

E J Teare falls within the catchment area of three large schools and a large portion of this customer base comes from teenagers and families, according to Trish.

Trish explains that magazine sales are another large part of the store's £10,000 weekly turnover and, while they try to provide a range of titles, their focus is on being partwork specialists.

"A lot of shops in the area are moving away from partworks, because they can be hassle, but we encourage people," says Trish. "We have a very simple deposit system; people have to pay a two-issue deposit. We probably do about 50 different partworks a week."

Trish has also noted an increase in greeting card sales contributing to their weekly turnover.

She says: "The majority of our cards are under £1, but they're quality cards so people know they can come and get something really nice for a decent price."

"Of course, that goes hand in hand with the Welly Post, which we'll cross-sell against."

The pair are now trying to push their business further through social media.

“We use RN to keep up to date with industry news. We get ideas of what other retailers are doing to bring back to our business, so we read it cover to cover every week.”

TRISH LETTLEY



Lorraine and Trish Lettley's Welly Post has proven popular with the residents of Wellington, Somerset



“Our main focus with our staff is interaction with customers. We pride ourselves on our customer service and friendliness”

Trish says: “We are expanding our social media presence, including lots of special offers and giveaways.

“We did a Back to School promotion at the end of August, offering up to 20% off various stationary items. We also regularly do scratchcard giveaways.”

Alongside Welly Post, Trish and Lorraine pride themselves on providing excellent customer service and having a good team to back them up.

“Our staff have been with us for years,” says Trish. “They are all local people with retail experience who are well known within the town.”

“Our main focus with our staff is interaction with customers. We pride ourselves on our customer service and friendliness.”

The newsagent has been a part of Wellington for over 100 years but now the Lettley family are injecting fresh ideas and cementing themselves within the business' history.

Trish says: “My mum had worked at the shop for nearly 30 years when the owners put it on the market.

“I've got a business degree, so I turned around and said, ‘why don't we buy it?’ Nine years later, here we are.” ●

VISIT MY SHOP

E J Teare Newsagents

3 South Street,
Wellington,
Somerset
TA21 8NR

📍 @tearesnews



Want to see more of Lorraine and Trish's store? Go to betterretailing.com/lorraine-lettley

PROPERTY

“I’ve not had a viewer in but when I said they said I c

The unregulated business transfer market is leaving hundreds of retailers at risk of being ripped off. Retiring CTN owner John Crellin is just one such victim and Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski went along to visit his store with two property experts to learn more about some transfer agents’ outrageous behaviour

After more than 25 years of operating a successful newsagents in Fleetwood, Lancashire, John Crellin wants to retire. Yet, like hundreds of businesses across the UK what should be a modest ambition has turned into a nightmare.

Last month we asked readers to get in touch with details of any problems they were having in their business, from struggling to boost sales in a key category to finding out how to take on an apprentice. Mr Crellin’s letter detailed the difficulties he’d had over the past four years in selling his store, with agents taking sky-high fees while doing little to actively sell his business. When we put him in touch with property expert Barry Frost, managing director of Commercial Plus, it became clear that this experience was not unique and that there are potentially hundreds of retailers at risk of losing many thousands of pounds thanks to unscrupulous agents.

Having discussed the issues in depth, John and Mr Frost decided to work together to make sure the sale of the store now goes through smoothly. An agent, Keith Bentley, from NFRN-approved business transfer firm Everet, Masson & Furby, was invited to meet John at his property and provide a valuation and discuss selling the shop.

It was a meeting which highlighted just how risky it can be to work with unscrupulous agents and put the spotlight on a number of issues and tips on operating in the market that every independent retailer needs to know.

The scam

Many retailers who are looking to sell their business will want a quick sale or will not know the right way to deal with a system which is currently unregulated. According to Mr Frost this has allowed bogus agents to make money from vulnerable people.

“The agent charges an upfront fee and the fee is based on a percentage of the sale price,” he says. “There’s an interest in them basing their price high because they are charging an upfront fee directly related to that figure.”

Mr Crellin was told his business should be put on the market for £215,000 – a figure which, as we shall see, is significantly above where the market is in his area.

Once they have paid this figure the details of the property go online with details “sat behind a username and password so that when you search online for newsagents for sale in Fleetwood you may see the property but without any real details about accounts,” Mr Frost says.

With such limited information the properties will often sit on the site for months and years with little attention, but having already taken as much as £2,000 from the property owner, the agent has already made a hefty profit.

“That’s when retailers like John realise that they’re not dealing with a very reputable agent,” says Mr Frost.

What’s perhaps worse is that if a retailer gives up on the bad (or more likely non-existent) service it can



“There’s an interest in them basing their price high because they are charging an upfront fee directly related to that figure

mean another huge fee to get out of the agreement in place. “I’ve not had a viewer in five years but when I said, “alright I’ll cancel it” they said I owed them £5,000,” Mr Crellin says.

The contracts retailers have signed are, in most cases, tested in court, meaning retailers have little choice but to pay up or continue to see their property languish on one of the agent’s websites.

Warning signs

So how can retailers ensure that they don’t end up losing money thanks to agents? Both Mr Frost and his approved agent Keith Bentley provide a list of do’s and don’ts as we discuss John’s bad experience and the way that they plan to operate with him now.

The first, and most obvious difference between how Mr Bentley

five years 'alright I'll cancel' owed them **£5,000**

John Crellin Westland News, Fleetwood



Experts believe there are many hundreds of retailers who could be at risk of unscrupulous agents



operates and that of some other agents is the attention to detail he displays. "That's the first time I've had someone in here measuring up," says John.

All of the store's accounts are also carefully analysed, from the number of staff he employs to his weekly turnover - information that Mr Frost says rogue agents rarely pay any attention to.

"I was with a client in Bramley in Leeds the day before yesterday," he says. "She had been caught in exactly the same way and paid £1,800. They'd valued the business, which was struggling, at £185,000 for the goodwill but it was turning over just £3,500 per week. They didn't even ask for the accounts or any financial information - they just said 'how much do you want for it?'"

Although the market is unregulated, there are official signs that you can look out for too, Mr Bentley says. "See if the agent that you are working with is MNAEA accredited - that means they are a member of

the National Association of Estate Agents. If they are they have to abide by their statutes and can be kicked out or fined if they fail to," he says.

Mr Bentley says it's the single best thing you can do to protect your business, and when we look at the details of companies John has worked with previously the MNAEA logo is missing from their accreditation. "It's like Corgi - if you are getting your central heating looked at you will get a Corgi installer."

Selling the business

One of the most pernicious aspects of the way retailers are treated by some agents is that the inflated valuations the company gives in order to ramp up its fee gives the store owner an unrealistic expectation of the sale value of their property.

John's store had been valued at £215,000 by one agent and when he was approached directly by a



Selling a store should be simple

family, proposed a sale at £185,000. He believed that this was a great deal for both parties - giving him the option of a quick sale and allowing the family to take the business at a discount of £30,000.

Yet Mr Bentley, who knows the area and gives a thorough assessment of both the property and the accounts comes to a figure closer to £150,000. "If the family had agreed to £185,000," Mr Frost tells John, "the bank that provided the funding wouldn't have accepted that valuation."

It's a huge £65,000 difference between what John had been told to expect and what now emerges to be a more realistic figure.

"I want to retire and I'm trying to work out what money I have available," he says.

To take the security away from a longstanding and dedicated newsagent looking forward to their retirement is just one more example of how low these rogue agents will stoop. ●

Have you been affected by a rogue business transfer agent?

RN would like to hear from you - email tom.gk@newtrade.co.uk or tweet @TomGK_RN

“

I want to retire and I'm trying to work out what money I have available



John and Barry Frost go through the paperwork together (left); Mr Bentley's rigorous analysis provides a realistic valuation

CHRISTMAS GUIDE

PART
4
SOFT DRINKS



Suppliers are providing more choice to non-drinking customers

December is just around the corner and, in part four of our seven-part Christmas guide, RN focuses on seasonal soft drinks. With a panel of great retailers to provide advice and all the essential product news every week, Nadia Alexandrou shows you how to start planning and profiting from the festivities today

Seasonal soft drinks

Sophie Towers

Spar Hillingdon Convenience Store, Burnley, Lancashire



Recently joined Spar

Inspire customers with winter cocktails I put Jameson whiskey, ginger ale and lime together on promotion, which becomes even more popular when I highlight the deal with a sign encouraging customers to use them in a cocktail.

Use sampling to get customers in the Christmas spirit

Last year we offered samples of Jack Daniel's Winter Jack



Sophie puts soft drinks near the ice

Apple Punch, which we served hot. Not only did this create a great Christmas vibe, it also significantly boosted sales.

Put 2l bottles near bags of ice In the run up to Christmas I make space for larger soft drinks next to my ice freezer for party shoppers. This works even better if the bottles are on promotion.

Paul Sohal

Nisa Local, Crich, Derbyshire



Owner of eight stores

Run your own promotions on Christmas favourites I run my

own deals on brands such as Shloer and J2O at Christmas. A good deal on four-packs of J2O Glitterberry, for example, will be particularly popular.

Tempt customers with basket displays Putting wired baskets underneath the chiller is a good way to drive impulse purchases, especially at Christmas when I fill those underneath my soft drinks with festive snacks.

Put mixers on promotion next to alcohol Big brands such as Coca-Cola usually run good promotions at Christmas, which I'll merchandise next to a spiced rum or vodka to drive incremental sales. >>>

YAZOO

Great new look from the No. 1 brand*

RRP **95P**



- Our fresh 'look at me!' bottles bring extra wow to your milk drink fixture
- Our boldly branded price mark packs offer 40% POR and sell twice as fast as its nearest competitor

stock up now



*flavoured milk IRI Total Independent Convenience Market volume 52 wks 25.04.15

'TIS THE SEASON TO
**POUR MORE
 FLAVOUR**



STOCK UP NOW

DISCOVER GREAT TASTE IN **EVERY** BOTTLE

BRV314143_15



THE SPECIALIST

Rural retailer

Pratish Kataria

North Leverton Village Stores, North Leverton, Nottinghamshire

"Soft drinks are popular with all age groups, and as one of our best-selling categories, Christmas is a busy time for us," says Pratish. In the run up to the festive season, Pratish makes sure his six-metre chiller caters to every customer's needs, adjusting range and layout accordingly. "For example, Red Bull is very popular in the morning, especially with those who are gearing up for a day of shopping, so I expand my range to offer a better selection," he says.

For his older, more traditional customers, he second-sites Christmas dinner foods which are easily forgotten on a supermarket shop – such as brandy and cranberry sauce – next to soft drinks.

Being aware of his regulars' favourite brands also helps Pratish decide which Christmas variants to make space for. With



Boost one of the more popular brands, Pratish is adding its new winter variant, Winter Spice, to his range.

Don't forget to stock a strong range of cordials Three of my customers' favourite brands – Vimto, Ribena and Robinsons – usually losing out new cordial flavours for Christmas.

Position larger bottles by your alcohol I put 2l bottles on promotion at two for £2, and highlight them in my alcohol aisle. This encourages customers to buy all their Christmas party drinks – including spirits, mixers and wine – in one go.

Never run out of energy drinks

At Christmas customers will often substitute a cup of coffee for an energy drink such as Red Bull to get them through a full day of seasonal preparation, so I keep extra stock in my storage room.



At Christmas customers will often substitute a cup of coffee for an energy drink

Jazz Goraya

Nisa Local, North Fleet, Kent



Father and son-run convenience store

Have a bigger multipack range I find multipacks always sell faster at this time of year, particularly winter editions such as J2O Glitterberry, which customers can pick up on the way to seeing friends or family.

Use Christmas-themed display units Major soft drinks brands usually offer Christmas-themed pricing displays, such as wobblers and shelf strips, which I use to decorate my chiller.

Be selective on promotions People want to trade up and treat themselves at Christmas, so it's not always a good thing to promote the more upmarket drinks, as it may lower the value perception of the product. >>

NEW! LIMITED EDITION WINTER SPICE.

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MIN
POR!

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*Based on a suggested WSP of £5.40.



CHRISTMAS GUIDE



Retailers nationwide are readying their soft drinks displays

Adam Hogwood

Budgens of Broadstairs, Broadstairs, Kent



Forecourt retailer

Give suppliers the chance to showcase their products In the past I've invited suppliers to decorate my store to promote recently-launched soft drinks. This is particularly effective at Christmas, when people are open to trying new things.

Stock something they've never seen before Customers are always looking for something a bit different at Christmas, so I'm trying an organic pear and apple juice from a local supplier this year.

Promote big brands Any large bottles of big brands on promotion seem to fly off the shelf at Christmas. The most popular so far have been Coca-Cola on at two for £2.50, and Pepsi for £1.

David Charman

Spar Parkfoot Garages Ltd, Kent



Forecourt retailer with deli counter

Stock a wider variety I find that customers want to be faced with a wider selection of soft drinks at Christmas, will spend longer browsing and often buy two or three different flavours to try.

Increase facings of 2l bottles The number of customers buying larger soft drinks to share at Christmas parties as mixers or alternatives to



I've invited suppliers to decorate my store to promote recently-launched soft drinks

PRODUCT NEWS

Yazoo has been given an environmentally-friendly makeover by its owner, the Dutch dairy cooperative **Freisland-Campina**. The upgraded bottles of its flavoured milk brand use a more recyclable plastic and also eliminates the need for a foil lid.



in four-pack (RRP £4.39) and 10-pack (RRP £9.90) formats, it will be supported by a campaign that runs until December.

Boost has added a limited edition Winter



CBL Drinks has made its **1870** range of mixers available in 500ml bottles, and extended its selection to include Ginger Beer and Lime & Soda. Joining its existing range of 1ltr Tonic Water and Soda Water bottles, the new bottles can be used as either mixers or stand-alone drinks.

Spice flavour to its range. Available in 49p priced 250ml cans, it will deliver a minimum of 45% PoR, the company says.

SHS Drinks re-designed its **Shloer Celebration**



range, including Pink Fizz and White Bubbly, with a new Prosecco-style bottle format. The launch is being supported with a 'Say it with Shloer' campaign.



Britvic has launched **Midnight Forest**, a winter limited edition for **120**. Available

Vinto has relaunched its **Minis RTD** with a new design for its 250ml pack to communicate to customers that it's a 'no added sugar' product. It is available in 59p price-marked bottles.



Health drink brand **Qcumber** is launching **Qcumber Premium Mixer** this month, as an ideal accompaniment to gin or vodka. It is available in 200ml bottles in cases of six with an RRP of £3.65.

Irnbu is launching Snowmen-decorated packs across its range, accompanied with seasonal PoS. AG Barr is also launching a new digital ad to accompany its 'Gets you through' marketing campaign.



alcohol rises significantly, so I increase these facings to drive sales.

Increase your premium adult soft drinks range My sales of brands such as Shloer and Appletiser rise as customers need more options for non-drinkers at Christmas parties.

Nimish Ashar

Newmarket, Rainham, Kent



Traditional newsagent

Don't neglect your 'on the go' range While larger bottles and

multipacks are important, I make sure my availability of cans and smaller bottles remains consistent for customers in need of a pick-me up.

Decorate your soft drinks chiller as early as possible I use decorative PoS supplied by the likes of AG Barr as early as possible to signal my range and availability to customers.

Hang novelty sweets nearby I hang novelty confectionery near the soft drinks chiller to tempt customers to buy more on impulse. ●

NEW 500ml bottle available now

1870

Premium Mixer Drinks

Spring water
blended with
natural flavours

NO SUGAR



NEW from CBL Drinks Ltd | 0191 516 3300 | sales@cbl Drinks.co.uk | www.cbl Drinks.co.uk

BREAKFAST

The days of a convenience store's breakfast range comprising only bread, milk and cereal are long gone and stores which don't adapt risk missing out on a fast-growing market. Nadia Alexandrou explains how stocking just five products can help you meet the needs of even the most diverse customer base

Five starts to their day

1 Bacon

"Cooked breakfasts – be it a bacon butty or a full English fry-up – continue to be a popular choice for customers, especially over weekends," says Katherine Broadley, senior brand manager for Tomato Ketchup at Heinz. It's over these two crucial days where the biggest opportunity lies, she says, and by simply making sure you have a good range of the basic ingredients – including bacon, mushrooms and eggs – you will save your customers from traipsing to the supermarket on what should be a lazy Sunday morning.

Outside of the chiller, Ms Broadley emphasises the importance of condiments – namely tomato ketchup, brown sauce and mayonnaise



– and baked beans as popular accompaniments to any cooked breakfast. "To encourage customers to buy everything they need from you, put condiments such as Heinz Tomato Ketchup and HP Sauce at the end of the chiller near the bacon," she says. Given the fact that just under half of all HP sauce consumption happens over the weekend, having these well-known brands can act as signposts and increase sales even more.

Do you stock the breakfast your customers want to eat?



2 Cereal

A bowl of cereal remains a firm breakfast favourite and the choice for over half of all those who eat theirs at home according to Nestlé Cereal Partners. Georgia Brown, trade marketing manager at the company, recommends retailers with the space should offer at least 25 brands, even if it means only stocking one size of each. "Customers typically have four to six different cereals in their cupboards at any one time, so having the

New formats are revitalising breakfast categories

right range is absolutely crucial," she says. Pricemarked packs have proven particularly successful in this category, and can double sales versus standard packs, she adds.

While traditional cereals have been on shop shelves for decades, smaller formats such as cereal snack pots have now found their way onto core ranges. "Busier lifestyles have led to an increase in the number of people eating breakfast 'on the go', which traditional cereal

Having the right range is crucial

brands have responded to by bringing out single portions of their ranges" says John Baines, trading director at Today's Group.

The success of these single portion snack pots has led to their inclusion on many symbol group planograms. Today's planograms for cereal, for example, display four 'on the go' variants, including Quaker Oat So Simple Golden Syrup and Alpen Porridge Fruit & Nut, for retailers with five 1m long shelves.





3 Coffee

The popularity of grabbing a coffee on the go is yet further evidence of increasingly busy lifestyles. The biggest opportunity for coffee in the morning, according to the Allegra Coffee Shop Report, is to get people to buy something sweet with it. Research shows that 70% of consumers want something to eat when buying coffee, so positioning your pastries and other freshly-baked foods next to your coffee machine can be a great way to drive incremental sales.

“We’ve found that our convenience retail customers in particu-

lar are increasingly demanding fresh bakery for breakfasts, with pastries such as croissants and maple and pecan plaits emerging as favourites,” says Aoife Kenny, head of UK Retail at Aryzta Food Solutions, the company which owns Cuisine de France.

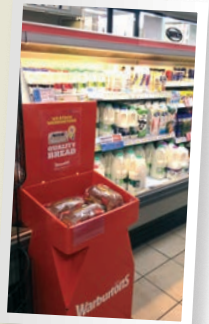
For Broadstairs retailer Adam Hogwood, flapjacks are also an increasingly popular coffee-and-breakfast option, favoured by his customers as a sweeter option to accompany a hot drink. “Ever since I put them next to my Costa Coffee machine alongside fresh pastries, flapjacks sell incredibly well in the mornings,” he says.

Adam Hogwood’s breakfast tips



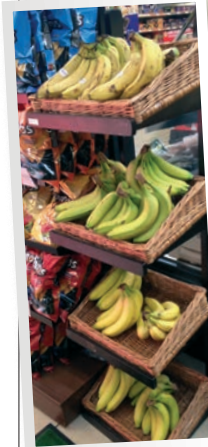
Budgens of Broadstairs owner Adam Hogwood gives three merchandising tips to grow sales

A Second-site promoted bread by milk We have Warburtons price-marked at 75p on a standalone display, which is selling incredibly fast.



B Highlight bananas at the front of your store

Our bananas are placed on a standalone display opposite the entrance, which attracts busy morning commuters who’ve skipped breakfast. To reduce wastage, put the ripest at the top.



C Second site biscuit bars next to the coffee

Second siting breakfast bars, biscuits and flapjacks next to coffee is great for impulse sales.



4 Snack

Not all customers are looking for something as indulgent as a fresh pastry, however. Particularly for those who typically skip breakfast, offering something small yet filling that will keep them going, such as a banana, apple or breakfast biscuit, can be a more attractive choice.

Suppliers such as Mondelez have also launched brands - like breakfast biscuit Belvita - which meets this need. “Belvita was developed for the increasing number of people who skip breakfast during the working week but want something healthy to keep them going,” says Susan Nash, trade communications manager at Mondelez International.



Made with wholegrain cereals (which slowly release carbohydrates over four hours) Mondelez says Belvita Honey & Nuts and Duo Crunch Strawberry are the first and second bestsellers in impulse breakfast biscuits.

Similarly, cereal brand Weetabix says it was the first company to market ‘breakfast drinks’ with the launch of Weetabix On The Go last year. The drinks specifically target consumers who don’t have time to sit down with a bowl and

spoon. “It contains all the energy, fibre and protein of a Weetabix cereal in milk, an ideal product for those who occasionally or often skip breakfast,” says Francesca Davies, marketing manager at Weetabix.



Fresh pastries, flapjacks sell incredibly well in the mornings

5 Bread

Like cereal, toast is another long-standing breakfast staple which has seen a huge amount of change in recent years. While the biggest share of this market still belongs to the standard white sliced loaf, brown and multigrain bread are growing and new formats such as wraps and thins are increasingly important.

“Shopper demand for healthier bread has triggered a period of in-



novation for Kingsmill,” says Nick Dawson, Kellogg’s sales director. Last year, Allied Bakeries launched Kingsmill Great White, a loaf that contains as much fibre as whole-meal, which it claims was the biggest FMCG launch of 2014 with a total sales value of £23.4m.

Demand for health is driving innovation

Almost nine out of 10 people eat breakfast as a family at the weekends, according to Mr Dawson, meaning customers will be more likely to seek out more exciting morning goods such as pancakes, muffins, crumpets and hot cross buns. Aiming to tap into the growing health trend, the company bought out Kingsmill Crumpet Thins last year. ●



Tempt customers into an extra purchase

PREVIEW



Pricemarked clean-up

Procter & Gamble has launched pricemarked packs for three of its 12-pack products: Ariel 3 in 1 Pods; Bold 2 in 1 Liquitabs and Daz Go Pods.

RRP £2.49-£3.99

Outers not given

Contact 0800 597 3388



Sales sweetener

Smint is making a donation of 5p to charity Breast Cancer Care with every purchase of its new Strawberry flavour packs.

RRP £1.15

Outers not given

Contact 01753 442100



Trebtor's soft launch

Trebtor is growing its range with the launch of Softmints Lemon Mint. The product will feature a new pack design.

RRP 51p

Outers 40

Contact 01895 615000



Plenty to shout about

Plenty has extended its household product range with Plenty Easy Clean Wipes designed especially for multi-purpose, anti-bacterial and bathroom cleaning.

RRP £1.99-£2.99

Outers 12

Contact 0800 328 8205



Pizza the action

Dr Oetker Ristorante has a new addition to its range. The Pizza Calzone Speciale is a folded pizza with mushrooms, salami, ham, tomato sauce, cheese and herbs.

RRP £2.99

Outers not given

Contact 01772 643 300



Set to go like hot cakes

Cadbury has launched a new range called Hot Cakes - an after-dinner dessert in double chocolate and butter scotch.

RRP £1.79

Outers not given

Contact 01727 815850



Champion snacks

PepsiCo is offering 50p pricemarked packs on selected Doritos 40g bags to celebrate its sponsorship of the UEFA Champions League.

RRP 50p

Outers not given

Contact 0118 930 6666



Soup-erb thicker range

Batchelors has introduced a premium 'Deliciously Thick' range with four new flavours.

RRP £1.49

Outers not given

Contact 01727 815 850



Refreshing promotion

Carling is running an on-pack promotion offering customers £10 off and free delivery with every transaction over £40.

RRP various

Outers not given

Contact 01283 511000



Follow all the action from the day

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VISIT betterRetailing.com live blog

READ Retail Newsagent coverage on October 23

October 14, 2015
Lord's Cricket Ground, London

For more information on the Local Shop Summit,
visit betterRetailing.com/LSS

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THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES

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Round up



NICOLA STEWART
Magazines
reporter

A COLOURFUL OPPORTUNITY

I was at an airport recently and came across an entire display of colouring in magazines featuring 19 different titles, a few premium colouring in books, and a selection of coloured pencils. It was one of the biggest displays in this store, and a reminder of how fast this trend has been acted upon by both publishers and retailers.

Hachette was the first to introduce colouring in for adults to independent stores, with its weekly partwork Art Therapy launching in March. GMC Publications then launched the first regular frequency magazine into the market in April, with its bi-monthly Zen Colouring now accounting for more than 40% of colouring in title sales.

In less than four months, from April to the end of July, 22 more titles from a range of publishers launched, with colouring in titles earning more than £1.5m in total sales revenue, according to data supplied by Seymour.

Spin-offs from the original trend are now also appearing, including an adult activity book (Creative Pastimes) from Puzzler, and a sketchbook from GMC (see page 44).

Publishers talk about the importance of reacting to trends in the market, and this demonstrates how capable the industry can be in turning around launches quickly.

Independent retailers need to be just as prepared to take on this type of sales opportunity, and as titles are on sale or return, there is no risk in stocking a new product that is boxed out.

If publishers are spending money on something, there is a reason, and by supporting launches, retailers are in line to take their share of the profits.

5-4-3-2-1...

NEW THUNDERBIRDS MAG SALES ARE SET TO ROCKET

The team from Tracy Island are the stars of this new monthly, with a covermounted gift sure to guarantee it will take off

DC THOMSON is launching a monthly title based on the new Thunderbirds series produced by ITV Studios and Pukeko Pictures in association with Weta Workshop. The launch is to be supported by PoS that will be sent to 4,000 independent stores, along with an information sheet. It will also be backed by a multi-channel TV campaign. Aimed at children aged six to 11, each issue of the title will come covermounted with a free branded gift, starting with a Thunderbird 1 mini-model. The magazine itself will feature comic strips, stories, jokes, activities and more. Stores can support the launch by displaying it prominently alongside titles such as Lego Legends of Chima.



THUNDERBIRDS ARE GO
On sale 14 October
Frequency monthly
Price £3.99
Distributor
Marketforce
Display with Star Wars
Rebels, Lego Legends
of Chima, Toxic



There is only one prize
puzzle magazine...

The UK's top-selling puzzle
and prize title since 1991

worth displaying. On sale 15 October.

Take a
Break's
Take
a Puzzle

THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



REAL CRIME CASEBOOK

Celebrating 125 years since the birth of the 'Queen of Crime', Agatha Christie, this one shot from The Mirror Collection takes a look at the life of the iconic crime author and some of the true headlines that inspired two of her classic mysteries. The 84-page title, which features original articles and photographs from the Mirror archives, is one of several recent launches into the crime sub-sector.



On sale 15 October
Frequency one shot
Price £5.99
Distributor Comag
Display with Real Crime, True Detective



DOCTOR WHO COMIC

To celebrate the return of Doctor Who to TV screens, this issue of Doctor Who Comic features a special 'Four Doctors Crossover' comic strip. For the first time, the tenth, eleventh and twelfth Doctors will come together into one storyline, joined by a fourth mystery Doctor. Interest in the comic is expected to be up on previous issues and retailers are advised to display it prominently alongside adult science fiction titles.



On sale 8 October
Frequency monthly
Price £3.99
Distributor Comag
Display with Dr Who Magazine, SFX



DISNEY PRINCESS FABULOUS TALENTS

Disney Princess is a consistently strong brand for primary girls so this new sticker collection from Panini should sell well. There are 240 stickers to collect, including 60 special stickers for collectors to watch out for. Starter packs include an album and 31 stickers and are affordable at £2.99. Retailers are advised to display the collection on the counter where possible, particularly before and after school.



On sale 15 October
Frequency ongoing
Price starter £2.99, stickers 50p
Distributor Marketforce
Display with other collectables



HOME FARM

Farmers Weekly is launching its first ever premium quality bookazine called Farmers Weekly Presents: Home Farm. Priced at £5.99, the title is a 'celebration of the countryside' that includes features on real people, the rural arts, recipes and creative businesses. It should be displayed alongside Farmers Weekly and other country titles in a prominent position on the newsstand.



On sale 14 October
Frequency one shot
Price £5.99
Distributor Marketforce
Display with Farmers Weekly, Farmers Guardian



SHOPKINS

Timed to coincide with the start of the half term, this issue of Shopkins is a special 'ultra' issue that comes with a bumper pack of free Shopkins gifts. The issue is premium priced at £4.99, up from the usual £3.49, and sales are expected to be up on regular issues. Retailers can support the added value by displaying the issue where children can see it.



On sale 15 October
Frequency monthly
Price £4.99
Distributor Marketforce
Display with My Little Pony, Moshi Monsters, Sparkle World



Bestsellers Cookery & kitchen

Title	On sale date	In stock
1 BBC Good Food	30.10	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Delicious	03.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Take a Break's My Fav. Recipes	05.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Eat In	30.10	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Easy Cook	30.10	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Olive	06.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 BBC Home Cooking Series	30.10	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Food & Travel	30.10	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Jamie	29.10	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Food Heaven	05.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Cake Craft & Decoration	05.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Healthy Food Guide	03.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Free-From Heaven	22.10	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 Vegetarian Living	05.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Cakes & Sugarcraft	29.10	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 Veggie	23.10	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 Great British Food	06.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 Eating & Living	15.10	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 Easy Food	15.10	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 Cake Craft Guide	12.11	<input type="checkbox"/>

Data from independent stores supplied by **SmithsNews**

Disney PRINCESS
 Fabulous Talents

BRAND NEW!

Sticker Collection ON SALE SOON!

Sticker Packet 50p
 Starter Pack £2.99

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PANINI
 www.paninigroup.com



DRAW IT NOW

Following the success of its Zen Colouring titles, GMC Publications is launching a 'creative art therapy' special called Draw it Now. The premium-priced magazine is essentially a sketchbook that offers 365 prompts for people to draw. With subjects including the natural world, people and buildings, the title encourages people to take a 'new approach to doodling'. Retailers can support the launch by displaying it prominently alongside colouring in titles.



On sale 13 October
Frequency one shot
Price £5.99
Distributor Seymour
Display with Zen Colouring, Relax with Art



STAR TREK STARSHIPS

The fifth special edition of Star Trek - The Official Starships Collection features a 20cm long model of the USS Kelvin (the first ship to appear on-screen in the 2005 blockbuster film Star Trek). The ship is especially significant as it was used by Captain George Kirk to defeat an attacking vessel, resulting in its destruction and Kirk's death. The special also comes with a 20-page magazine illustrating the design of the ship.



On sale 15 October
Frequency one shot
Price £21.99
Distributor Comag
Display with regular Star Trek - The Official Starships Collection

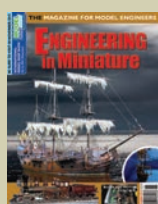


HERITAGE COMMERCIALS

This issue of Heritage Commercials comes with four free postcards each featuring an example of restored or maintained machinery from the heyday of British commercial vehicle manufacturing. The postcards, which are a new added value initiative from publisher Mortons Media Group, are laid on an A4 page so can either be cut into four or kept as one design. Heritage Commercials features news, reviews and features on the classic commercial vehicle world.



On sale 15 October
Frequency monthly
Price £4.25
Distributor Comag
Display with Vintage Roadscene, Truck & Driver



ENGINEERING IN MINIATURE

The latest issue of Engineering in Miniature, the magazine for model engineers, features the usual mix of technical articles and drawings. One of the top modelling titles sold through independent stores, the monthly looks at the construction of scale model locomotives, steam road vehicles, stationary, marine, petrol and hot air engines, clocks and other model engineer projects, tools and machinery.



On sale 15 October
Frequency monthly
Price £3.50
Distributor Comag
Display with Model Engineer, Model Engineer Workshop, Railway Modeller



HEAT & CLOSER MULTIPACK

The next issue of Heat comes in a multipack with Closer, offering an additional £1.15 in value for customers. There will be no standalone copies of Heat, so retailers should display the pack with Heat facings. Frontline is anticipating a 60% sales increase on the multipack, compared to a standard issue of Heat, and 94% more sales revenue.



On sale 13 October
Frequency one off
Price £2.10
Distributor Frontline
Display with Closer, OK!, Hello!



Industry viewpoint Iain McKenzie

Head of circulation (magazines), DC Thomson

THUNDERBIRDS ARE GO FOR YOUR STORE

Most of you will remember Thunderbirds from your childhood. Whether you are old enough to remember the original series from the 1960s and 1970s - or you are a kid of the 1990s and inspired by Anthea Turner's home-made model of Tracy Island on Blue Peter. Either way, Thunderbirds has been entertaining children for 50 years, and this year it is back with a brand new TV series.

While staying true to the original show, the new series has been created with the latest CGI technology, and all the classic characters have been giving a modern makeover. Since premiering on ITV in April, the series has quickly established itself as one of the most-watched children's TV shows of 2015.

Top tip
 Stock Thunderbirds Are Go prominently in store next to other boys titles such as Lego Chima, Toxic and The Beano.

DC Thomson is thrilled to have been selected as publishing partner for the new Thunderbirds Are Go magazine, launching on 14 October.

Each issue is packed with missions, comics, jokes and gadgets, transporting readers into the world of International Rescue. We've also invested in covermounts and each issue of the magazine will come with a branded gift, starting with mini-models of the Thunderbird crafts. Issue one, of course, starts with TB1, with the other aircrafts available to collect over subsequent issues.

We will also be supporting the launch with TV advertising on various children's TV channels.

Thunderbirds Are Go is set to be one of the biggest children's launches of the year.

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THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES

Partworks

Title No Pts £

Amermedia

Military Vehicles 47 48 **5.99**

DeAgostini

Build the Millennium Falcon 40 100 **8.99**

Cake Decorating 186 210 **2.99**

Cake Decorating Relaunch 135 165 **2.99**

Dinosaurs & Friends 33 60 **5.99**

Official Star Wars Factfile 89 120 **2.99**

Zippo Collection 2 60 **9.99**

Eaglemoss

3D Create & Print 38 90 **6.99**

Batman Automobilia 73 80 **10.99**

Build A Solar System 7 104 **6.99**

DC Comics Graphic Novel 4 60 **9.99**

Disney Cakes & Sweets 109 120 **4.50**

Doctor Who 56 70 **7.99**

Knit & Stitch 143 176 **5.00**

Marvel Chess Collection 48 64 **8.99**

Marvel Fact Files 134 150 **3.50**

Military Watches 43 80 **9.99**

Star Trek Off. Starships Coll. 56 70 **10.99**

Hachette

Art of Crochet 5 120 **2.99**

Art of Knitting 37 90 **2.99**

Art Therapy 29 100 **2.99**

Black Pearl 91 120 **5.99**

Build the Mallard 58 130 **7.99**

Build the U96 58 150 **5.99**

Classic Pocketwatches 82 80 **8.99**

Dr Who Complete History 3 80 **6.99**

Judge Dredd Mega Collection 19 80 **9.99**

Marvel's Mightiest Heroes 47 60 **9.99**

My 3D Globe 40 100 **5.99**

Your Model Railway Village 98 120 **8.99**

RBA Collectables

Amazing Dinosaur Discovery 32 80 **5.99**

My Zoo Animals 5 60 **5.99**

Precious Rocks, Gems & Minerals 37 100 **5.99**

Real Life Bugs & Insects 55 85 **5.99**

Collectables

Topps



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



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



Disney Frozen Fashion Pack
Packets **£1.00**



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



Hero Attax Marvel Avengers
Starter **£4.99**
Cards **£1.00**



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



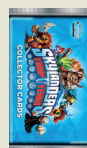
Journey to Star Wars: The Force Awakens
Starter **£4.99**
Stickers **£1.00**



Shopkins
Starter **£2.99**
Cards **£0.50**



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



Skylanders Trap Team
Starter **£4.99**
Cards **£1.00**



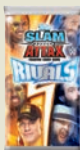
Lego Ninjago
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



World of Warriors
Starter **£4.99**
Cards **£1.00**



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

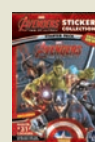


WWE Slam Attax Rivals
Starter **£4.99**
Cards **£1.00**



Merlin's Official Premier League 2015
Starter **£2.00**
Cards **£0.50**

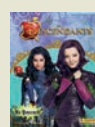
Panini



Avengers 2: Age of Ultron
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



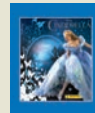
Fifa 365 Adrenalyn XL
Starter **£4.99**
Cards **£1.00**



Descendants
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **50p**



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



Disney Cinderella
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



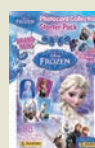
Inside Out
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



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



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



Disney Frozen Photocards
Starter **£3.99**
Cards **£1.50**



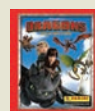
Road to UEFA Euro 2016
Starter **£4.99**
Stickers **£1.00**



Disney Frozen Winter Magic
Starter **£4.99**
Cards **£0.75**



Sofia the First
Starter **£2.99**
Stickers **£0.50**



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



2015 FIFA Women's World Cup
Album **£1.50**
Stickers **£0.50**



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



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



COMING UP IN NEXT WEEK'S RETAIL NEWSAGENT

PUTNEY RETAILER ASH PATEL ON BUILDING A POINT OF DIFFERENCE WITH CRAFT BEERS

Plus, RN's guide to Christmas continues with 21 tips on selling batteries and other essential items, and newtrade expert Neville Rhodes' latest exclusive column



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Back in the day

101

YEARS AGO
10 October 1914



War books published by Aldine Publishing Co Ltd., in particular *The Life of Lord Kitchener*, *How to Shoot* and *Comforts for Soldiers*, were all in short supply, owing to unprecedented demand. *How to Shoot*, the publisher informs RN, is now on its second edition.

50

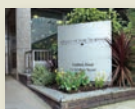
YEARS AGO
9 October 1965



A new women's weekly was launched for "smart girls in their teens". *Petticoat* featured fashion and beauty tips and features on leisure and pleasure that would appeal to a woman "from the time she leaves school to the time she is preparing for marriage". Its initial print run was 250,000.

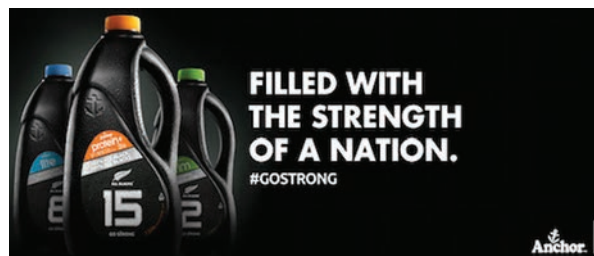
25

YEARS AGO
13 October 1990



There was "universal outrage" as the *Daily Mirror* and the *Sun* announced they were slashing newsagents' terms while increasing their cover prices to 25p. The NFRN wrote to the Office of Fair Trading calling for an inquiry into the 2.5% decrease, with its chief executive calling the move a "sickening quest for profit".

Antipodeans are reluctant to give all black milk a try



Holy Cow! Dairy farmers in New Zealand have been utterly unimpressed with a Rugby World Cup promotion that has seen their milk cartons turn black.

In celebration of the tournament, Anchor issued the limited edition two-litre milk bottles in support of the All Blacks, but the promotion seems to have turned sour.

One dairy farm owner in Wellington is claiming his milk sales are down by 20%. Thakor Gopal said his custom-

ers were put off by the idea of milk in a black bottle.

Another, Dinesh Patel, also reported a sales slump saying that some of his customers were under the impression the milk itself had also turned black.

However, supermarket chains were reporting no such slump, suggesting they were still creaming it in from eager rugby fans, who felt the cartons were outstanding in their field. Dairy farmers, however, remain not a'moosed.

McColl bizarre love triangle

In a bizarre case of mistaken identity, a single mother has had her benefits stopped because HMRC thought she was in a relationship with the newsagent Martin McColl.

Debbie Balandis, from Glasgow, told the *Daily Mail* that her £140-a-week child tax credits, which she uses to help her 13-year-old disabled son, had been halted because the taxman was convinced she had a new partner.

In fact, the regular payments she was receiving from Martin McColl were be-

cause that's the trading name for the newsagent chain RS McColl where the 40-year-old uses the shop's in-store post office to collect her benefits.

According to Ms Balandis, HMRC is not budging until she can prove "Mr McColl" is not her live-in lover. HMRC has responded saying it is required to check people's circumstances so they don't overpay tax credits.

One hopes they've never asked whether this high street lothario ever keeps stationary...

AROUND WITH THE ROUNDSMAN with Blanche Fairbrother



What a relief - my car has passed its MOT, and it now has a new cam belt too. I change them every year as this is a lot cheaper than waiting until they break and wreck the whole engine. My car has been serviced ready for the onslaught of winter and the antifreeze has been filled up, so I'm safe unless we get temperatures lower than minus-30 degrees.

This is truly my favourite time of the year, even though the mornings are now dark again. When daylight breaks there are some wonderful sunrises and the changing colours of the trees are a sight to behold.

As I am writing, there are just 82 days to go until our annual day off, and I was thinking about just how many tonnes of advertising will be turned out over the whole country during the Christmas period. The weekend papers are bad enough now when it comes to weight, but heaven knows what they will be like when Christmas catalogues start appearing, and most of them are a total waste of resources that many people, including me, don't want.

If anyone who works for the daily and weekend Express papers is reading this, can I ask a favour? Please can you print something a tad more cheerful on your front pages? If it's not the weather it's the perils of someone's health.

If a person is not depressed before they read it, they certainly are when they have finished.

I had a surprise at Sutton this morning, where I saw about six swallows flying. It is rather unusual to see them in October because the majority of them went weeks ago, but my Dad always said the later the swallows stay here, the better the winter will be.



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