

# CIGAR STRATEGIES

How two retailers protect their sales

TOBACCO  
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**Our flood nightmare**  
**'But four months on our store's better than ever'**

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# RETAIL NEWSAGENT

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## 'Ease Living Wage burden, Osborne'



- Bill Esterson MP and Nisa boss Nick Read slam government policy as political stunt.
- Retailers call for urgent support ahead of chancellor's autumn statement next week. Pages 5 & 24 >>



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**Trolley good show** Premier Singh's put Supermarket Sweep to shame with its Trolley Dash event this month. Brothers Mandeep, Baljeet and Vrinder gave lucky shopper Ann Luff the chance to win as many products as she could fit into a shopping cart in a two-minute run around their Teynham Road store in Sheffield.

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News UK trials chocolate, water and paper display units in 150 stores.  
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# ILLEGAL TOBACCO

## DON'T BE THE NEXT HEADLINE

**ILLEGAL TOBACCO SHOP OWNER GETS SUSPENDED JAIL TERM**

**FAGS-FRAUD TRADER MUST PAY £2,500**

**BIG FINE FOR ILLEGAL CIGS**

**SHOPKEEPER'S DODGY FAGS LEAD TO CONVICTION**

**HMRC BACKS JTI ON ITS TOUGH STANCE ON STORES' ILLEGAL SALES**

**POLICE DOGS SNIFF OUT ILLEGAL CIGS IN SHOPS**

**SHOPKEEPER FINED OVER CIGGIE SALES**

**JAILED OVER FAKE SMOKES**

**TRADER TRIPPED UP BY HIS SECRET CIG STASH**

**SHOP OWNER FINED £10,000 FOR SELLING ILLEGAL CIGARETTES**

## TAKE A STAND...

Illegal tobacco not only damages your business but it also funds organised crime and terrorism. If you have any information on those selling illegal tobacco contact the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on **0800 555 111** or through the Anonymous Online Form at [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org). Alternatively contact the Customs Hotline on **0800 59 5000**.



**CRIMESTOPPERS**

**0800 555 111**

Call anonymously with information about crime

## LEADER



**One publisher told me its vision for ensuring the long term sustainability of the category – stop thinking and acting like a publisher**



CHRIS GAMM

Editor

@ChrisGammRN

In a recent blog, former Natmags chief executive and media consultant Colin Morrison sets out his vision for how newspapers should change radically in order to survive. His suggestions include reducing weekday frequency, focusing on profitable weekend editions, separating print and digital into distinct businesses and, in some cases, going free, either completely or during the week. He points to the Star, Express, Independent and Guardian as possible candidates.

However, one publisher told me its vision for ensuring the long-term sustainability of the category – stop thinking and acting like a publisher.

News UK independents sales manager Greg Deacon pointed to the newspaper feature in last week's RN as evidence. The theme was investment in the category, but the focus was largely squabbling over margins and sales figures rather than plans for the future.

Mr Deacon has banned the word 'publisher' from all sales meetings. Instead, they look at The Sun and Times as FMCG brands that outsell most others in any store.

His job is to make these brands more relevant to consumers and increase their appeal throughout the day. In this week's issue, you can read how News UK is doing this by working with stores to merchandise titles alongside water, chocolate and, in future, even fruit and veg.

Colin Morrison is likely right about seeing titles disappear from the news plinth in the future. However, I struggle to see how the economics of dropping daily editions stack up.

I believe there is a long future for print newspapers. Working together to create a thriving category is essential to safeguard individual brands. And those that make their brands most relevant to today's modern consumers will undoubtedly have the most successful futures.

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# NEWS



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## Amazon Pantry 'may help' c-stores

The launch of Amazon's Pantry grocery delivery service in the UK this month could help convenience retailers maintain availability of bulk items and prevent stock shortages.

Anx Patel, founder of stock replenishment app GoKart, believes local stores could benefit from the service by using it for last minute top-up purchases for their stores. Amazon Pantry offers Amazon Prime customers next day delivery on more than 4,000 grocery lines including food and drink, cleaning products and pet food.

Mr Patel said while the Pantry would provide shoppers with a viable alternative to supermarket delivery services, it could also present opportunities to convenience retailers.

"Everyone has an Amazon account now and people are familiar with its delivery system," said Mr Patel.

"In convenience, this could help improve availability on bulk items - for example, if a retailer needs to stock up on cases of Coke before a busy weekend."

## Training prizes

JTI is offering tobacco retailers the chance to win an additional 500 training packages so staff can gain a qualification in responsible retailing.

The BTEC Level 2 Award in Under Age Sales Prevention is recognised by Trading Standards, the police and local authorities. The tobacco company initially offered 50 packages worth £100 but has extended the prize draw.

Retailers have until 25 November to enter.



## Minions join in opening day fun

Superheroes and Minions were the order of the day at the opening of One Stop's latest franchise store in Faversham, Kent, last Saturday. The store's owners, Raj, Sandee and Sarbjit Bains, officially welcomed customers with an open day featuring music, a magic show for children and a number of costumed characters.

**Government would lose vote says politician** 'For the moment, the danger has subsided'

# Tory MP: Sunday trading delays signal 'victory'

by Gurpreet Samrai

Delays to Sunday trading proposals should be hailed a victory, according to a Conservative MP.

Speaking to RN as plans to relax trading hours laws were due to be debated by politicians, David Amess said it is "quite clear" the proposals have been put on hold because the government doesn't have a majority to push them through.

It comes after the SNP, around 20 Tory MPs and the

majority of Labour MPs said they planned to oppose the proposals.

"The mathematics mean if they went ahead with it, they wouldn't be able to get the bill through," Mr Amess said. "I think this should be regarded as a victory."

Speaking about concerns the government will find another way to push the proposals through, he said: "It may do, but I don't think it's going to alter the outcome. So although we shouldn't just sit back on

our laurels, I think for the immediate moment the danger has subsided."

However, retailers told RN they are not so confident.

Serge Khunkhun, of Premier Woodcross Convenience Store in Wolverhampton, said: "I think it's already a foregone conclusion that they will push Sunday trading through. I'm hoping that the SNP putting its weight behind it might stop it from happening."

"But it seems like the government is once again trying to set up something that sounds good to the public, but is not actually based on any evidence."

The Association of Convenience Stores said although Downing Street has said it is still planning to progress the proposals, it has not been confirmed when it will be put to the vote and it is awaiting the consultation response and any amendments to the proposal.

## Backing for anti-illicit trade campaign

Retailers have welcomed a campaign launched by a Yorkshire shop owner calling on suppliers to help stamp out illicit trading.

The crusade, spearheaded by a former special constable turned award-winning retailer, is calling on suppliers to form an alliance and sign a code of conduct which states they will sever ties with

businesses convicted of selling illegal tobacco or alcohol.

Stuart McClymont, of Mac's in Mansfield, said: "This initiative is excellent and a step in the right direction."

Sandeep Bains, of Simply Fresh in Faversham, said: "Illicit trading is taking money out of our pockets and money out of the gov-

ernment's pockets. It needs to be addressed as quickly as possible."

This week, Booker said any Premier or Family Shopper retailer prosecuted for selling illicit products would be removed from the group, and wholesaler Bestway has echoed the Yorkshire retailer's call for the industry to pull together to fight illicit trading.

James Hall, Bestway symbol director, said: "If a retailer is convicted of flouting the law then collectively - wholesalers, symbol groups and suppliers - should send out a message both to shoppers and other retailers that we are taking a zero-tolerance approach to stores that continue to trade irresponsibly."

Indies 'forgotten' says Bill Esterson MP Retailers demand autumn statement support

# MP and symbol boss slam Nat Living Wage 'burden'

by Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski

A senior politician and convenience industry leader have united in criticism of the National Living Wage, as independent retailers demand urgent support ahead of next week's autumn statement.

In an interview with RN, Labour MP Bill Esterson blasted the government's policy, calling it a burden "to make up for the fact the government is cutting thousands of pounds from millions of people through

Child Tax Credits".

The shadow small business minister said the policy is squeezing those who can least afford to pay it, with the five million people who run small businesses being "completely forgotten".

"It's really vital that we value, encourage and support small business and those that run them, but they can't do it on their own," said Mr Esterson.

Nisa chief executive Nick Read also slammed the policy this week. He said: "I think it was a political state-

ment by Osborne that was ill-thought through, done for political gain and to try to steal some of the middle ground from Labour."

Retailers are hoping this criticism of the policy will put pressure on chancellor George Osborne to take action to support small businesses in his autumn statement.

Adam Hogwood, of Budgens Broadstairs, said: "I'd love some reassurance as part of the autumn statement. Even a glimmer of hope would be nice, but

I think any reassurance should also be treated with a degree of scepticism."

Meanwhile, a senior trade union figure has also admitted the policy would pile unfair pressure on independent retailers.

John Hannett, general secretary of shopworkers' union Usdaw, said: "We are trying to build a road map to get to the highest level of pay while maintaining job security and the business itself."

● RN interview with Bill Esterson - page 24.

## PayPoint chief on a mission

PayPoint's chief executive Dominic Taylor is on a "personal crusade" to rebuild relationships with retailers.

The company's group marketing director Steve O'Neill told RN Mr Taylor was "surprised and upset" about retailers' reaction following the announcement of its commission cap cut.

"He is driving how we rebuild relationships with retailers and challenging the way we do things," he said.

"He is ultra-aware of where we've been, where we've got to and where we need to get to. He is on a personal crusade and is holding us all to account."

He added a retailer survey last month received 700 responses, double the number of retailers who participated previously. He said the top two themes were improving customer service and banking charges.

## Demand for Paris news grows sales

Newspapers reporting the Paris attacks last Friday saw increased sales over the weekend due to extended coverage. However, some newspapers arrived without supplements.

Around half of Saturday's Daily Mirror print run included stories, while extended coverage featured in the Sunday Mirror and the Sunday People. Across the three titles, 50,000 more copies were sold. A number of these Sunday papers alongside the Sunday Telegraph were delivered without supplements, because print-runs could not be increased.

## End of era as FHM and Zoo get axe

Lads magazines FHM and Zoo are to cease publication by the end of the year, publisher Bauer has announced.

FHM first appeared on shelves as For Him Magazine in 1985 before changing its name and becoming a monthly title in 1994. Zoo was launched in 2004.

Rivals Nuts ceased publication in April 2014 and Loaded published its final edition in May.



### Retailers reveal funny sides for heroic fundraising

Retailers across the UK showed their generosity by supporting last week's Children in Need charity event. Charminster Post Office in Dorchester baked cakes and offered Children in Need badges to raise more than £100 for the good cause. Owner Lindy Christopher said: "We had good support from customers and even had some giving money once the event had finished." Meanwhile, One Stop stores also showed their support with various fundraising activities ranging from fancy dress competitions to a sponsored 'busk-a-thon'.

## Camelot holds firm on paid-for helpline

Camelot has refused to do a u-turn on its decision to switch its retailer helpline from a free phone to paid-for number following a request from the NFRN.

The change means Lottery retailers must now pay to report service problems, including faults on their

terminals, to the operator NFRN chief executive Paul Baxter told federation national councillors meeting in London this week that he had left Camelot in no doubt that members were "extremely disappointed" by its action.

Mr Baxter said he had

asked Camelot to revert to the free helpline at least until its new communications system for retailers is fully operational.

However, a Camelot spokesman said: "We met with Paul on Monday, so he is well aware of the rationale behind the nominal

fee for the retailer helpline and the significant digital investment we are making.

"We believe this decision is the right one and it therefore has not been reversed."

● Full national council report next week.

# NEWS

## BUSINESS

### Sainsbury's vows to cut more prices despite loss

Sainsbury's has pledged to cut even more prices at its stores despite seeing a 17.9% drop in profits in its half year financial results.

Mike Coupe, chief executive of Sainsbury's, announced pre-tax profits had fallen from £375m to £308m, following on from the company investing around £150m to lower prices last year.

Mr Coupe said Sainsbury's would continue to cut prices in a bid to compete more effectively and take back market share from the likes of Aldi and Lidl.

He added: "We've closed the gap reasonably significantly to the discounters."

"But we still think there's room and opportunities for targeted investment in certain categories."

### Free paper bag trial in Tesco store

Tesco has reportedly started giving away free paper bags to shoppers in a bid to avoid the 5p charge introduced on plastic carriers in the UK.

Shoppers have posted pictures online of brown paper bags being given to them at one of the supermarket's stores in London.

The bags are recyclable and branded with the message 'Love food, hate waste'.

Retail businesses with 250 or more staff are now required by law to charge customers a 5p levy for the use of a plastic carrier bag.

Tesco confirmed it was trialling the scheme at one store, but would not confirm whether it will roll this out to other stores.



## P&H takes campaign on the road

Palmer & Harvey has launched its first branded advertising campaign on its delivery vehicles to raise awareness of the promotions and products it sells.

The ads will be rolled out across P&H's fleet of 1,400 lorries and vans and will

change every three weeks to coincide with changes in promotional periods. The first campaign will feature products from Burton's Biscuits, including Maryland cookies and Cadbury biscuits.

At the same time, P&H revealed it is merging its

wholesale and direct van sales teams to create a single sales team.

Martyn Ward, managing director of wholesale at Palmer and Harvey, said: "The current structure has allowed a certain degree of duplication in having two sales operations which

often overlap.

"The new structure, which will come into force in December, allows one single point of contact for our valued independent retailers, making their own operations much simpler and Palmer and Harvey easier to do business with."

**Bespoke deals and web pages on the cards** App will link with group's loyalty card scheme

## Simply Fresh app to tailor better in-store campaigns

by Steven Lambert

Simply Fresh will launch a new digital app next month to make it easier for its retailers to tailor their promotions and marketing campaigns to customers.

The app uses technology provided by e-commerce platform Cornershop Online and will be trialled in a number of stores early next month, with a full rollout planned for the end of December.

It will allow Simply Fresh owners to produce bespoke deals and web pages to promote their businesses to shoppers.

Kash Khara, managing director of Simply Fresh, said it will encourage consumers to download the app with PoS material and supplier giveaways.

He added that Simply Fresh stores will be able to link the app with the group's loyalty card scheme to give retailers

greater access to shopper data.

"If retailers wanted to check what times their shoppers are coming in, for example, they can capture that information and adapt their business accordingly," said Mr Khara.

"We can also tailor the loyalty scheme with the app. If someone sells a lot of coffee, we can go to someone like Costa and see if we can set up deals for

that shop."

Cornershop Online founder Purdeep Haire said: "Simply Fresh is a strong group and with the app we'll be concentrating on getting more shoppers into their stores more frequently."

Mr Haire also revealed Cornershop Online is launching a Christmas raffle for users of its app, with prizes being given to shoppers every day in December.

## Nisa chief says it's time for further growth

Nisa will be back on the recruitment drive next year as it turns its attention to growing the group, chief executive Nick Read told RN.

With the company on track to hit its full year trading targets, Mr Read

said his "overarching challenge" for the year ahead will be growing the business and ensuring it is financially stable.

"Even though we've retained our existing membership, what we've not done over the summer

is recruit because people have looked at us and gone 'what's going on there?' So it's really important we get back on the recruitment drive," he said.

"I also want to make sure the company is sustainable, so even if it gets rocked by

something, as it did last year and the year before, it won't cause it to fall over."

Last week, Nisa revealed it had hit earnings before tax of £3.3m in its first half year trading figures, up £3.5m from the same point last year.

## NEWSTRADE

**Cross-category units trialled in 150 stores** 'If we join forces we can drive sales'

# Sun is sharing shelf space with chocolate and water

by Helena Drakakis

The Sun is trialling cross-category units across 150 stores with the aim of boosting sales of newspapers alongside secondary items such as chocolate bars and bottled water.

The initiative is currently being partnered with Mondelez and Danone for three months. It sees The Sun displayed alongside bars of Twirl and Double Decker and Volvic water on 100 specially designed cross-category newsstands and 50 gutter trays attached to primary fixtures.

Publisher News UK says the coalition between brands "makes sense" and is directing the cross-promotion towards breakfast, lunch-on-the-go, impulse and distress purchases sales opportunities.

News UK's independent sales manager Greg Deacon said: "We're working with retailers to increase sales. If we join forces we can drive a high sales penetration.



There's lots to be done in cross-category selling, but the primary fixture makes this unique."

Data from the trial is currently being analysed, but anecdotal feedback from retailers has been positive, according to Mr Deacon, with three or four extra purchases of chocolate bars and water bottles made

every day, which could be doubling or tripling sales in some stores.

Paul Donovan of 3D Leven Park News in Cleveland has taken part in the trial. He positioned his unit next to his till and beside his confectionery stand.

He said: "We all need to help each other and working together to generate ex-

tra sales can only be a good thing. I've found that more chocolate bars have sold as a result, whereas my water didn't sell from the unit but did sell from the fridge.

"It's been a worthwhile avenue to pursue, and we'll certainly keep the stands going even if the products change."

## Xmas TV mags sale early December

TV titles What's on TV, TV Times and TV and Satellite Week have announced the publication of their bumper Christmas editions.

The issues will be published on 8 December and have extended on-sale dates. To capitalise on sales, retailers are being advised

to take advantage of the wider audience that Christmas TV listings magazines attract.

"To maximise sales opportunities of the double issues, retailers are advised to prominently display copies for the full on-sale period and to place copies

at various locations around the store, particularly at till points," a spokesman for publisher Time Inc said.

Each title will feature interviews with some of the best loved TV personalities as well as extra film pages to keep readers entertained

during the holiday period. Titles will also include the latest news on the Christmas specials, from explosive soap story lines to one-off specials.

What's on TV and TV Times are consecutively fourth and fifth best-selling magazines nationally.

## New Frozen collection leads way for sequel

Topps collectables has launched a new Disney Frozen collection following confirmation of a 2018 sequel to the 2013 film.

Launched this month,

the Friendship Activity Card Collection features new poses of sisters Anna and Elsa and Olaf the snowman. There are more than 160 cards to collect includ-

ing glitter cards, holographic foil cards, colour-in cards and Frozen rainbow and neon foil cards.

Disney Frozen Starter Packs (£4.99) include a

collector's guide, collector's binder, game mat, one-frame card holder and a packet of eight cards, plus one limited edition card. Packets of eight are £1 each.

## Trinity seals £220m Local deal

Trinity Mirror has taken over local newspaper publishing group Local World in a £220m deal. The deal, which was announced last month, was formally ratified last Friday.

Shareholders unanimously backed the deal, with 83% voting in favour. As a result, Trinity Mirror and Local World will now operate under one entity.

The newly merged company is now the largest local newspaper publisher in the UK with newspapers in major population centres across the UK, including Liverpool, Bath, Bristol, Swansea and Essex.

## Future in PC Format shutdown

Future Publishing has stopped producing its PC Format magazine.

The magazine, which 15 years ago had a circulation figure of 100,000, had dropped to 6,249 before its final issue this November. Its first issue was published 24 years ago.

Content from the magazine will now feature in publications Maxim PC and PC Gamer.

## Cheques in the post

NewstrAid, the newspaper and magazine benevolent fund, has posted 455 £100 cheques out to newsagents, assistants, and wholesale and delivery staff among others, who have fallen on hard times. The annual Winter Comfort Grant is designed to alleviate fuel poverty among those in need.

# NEWS

## PRODUCTS

### Diageo's festive trade-up

Diageo is encouraging shoppers to trade up this Christmas with gift packs and bottle sizes under its premium Reserve range.

The firm has unveiled a 20cl limited edition gift box for its Johnnie Walker Blue whisky (RRP £49) to urge more consumers to trial the product. It has also introduced a limited edition white gift box to its Ciroc vodka range, covering Blue Stone, Pineapple and Red Berry variants (RRP £39.45). The brand will also be available in 20cl (£14.55) and 5cl (£4) bottles during Christmas.

Meanwhile, Tanqueray gin will get its own gift box featuring an art deco design, which will be available with 70cl bottles (£33).

### Imperial's Red for economy

Imperial Tobacco has launched Player's Red Volume Tobacco for use in roll-your-own cigarettes and cigarette maker machines.

The new line is being targeted at the economy end of the tobacco market, and will be available in three sizes – an 8g trial pack (RRP £2.59) and 20g pouch (£6.52) both with pre-packed rolling papers, and a 50g can (£16.20).

Emma Stew, brand manager at Imperial, said: "The volume-boosting technology works in conjunction with our new tobacco blend to provide consumers with even more tobacco for their money."



### Jacob's celebrates with the longest ever cheeseboard

United Biscuits went to great lengths to celebrate the 130th anniversary of its Jacob's Cream Crackers by setting up the 'longest ever cheeseboard' across the Tower Bridge Walkway in London this month. Members of the public were invited to try a number of Jacob's products with cheese as part of the publicity stunt, which was used to grow awareness of the brand.

**On-pack promotion to offer tracking devices** Huge campaign kicks off on X Factor

## Richmond helps kids find toys with Sausages & Chip

by Helena Drakakis

Children will be in with a chance of winning a toy-tracker that can locate their lost favourite toy as part of a £3m campaign launched by Kerry Food's sausage brand Richmond this Christmas.

The campaign, called Sausages & Chip, will feature an on-pack promotion which gives parents the chance to win one of 200,000 toy-trackers.

The trackers, which have

been exclusively designed in partnership with Richmond, can be attached to a child's favourite toy which, if missing, can be tracked through a phone app.

Sarah Davies, senior brand manager for Richmond, said: "Sausages & Chip will be our biggest campaign of the year, and comes at a key sales period when sausages are meal-time favourites for families, and an essential Christmas dinner ingredient."

The campaign's first advert will go out on 28 November during a break in the X Factor. There will also be Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube activity as well as digital advertising running across Amazon and eBay sites.

The adverts, featuring the strapline, "Keeping the Family Together" will feature one of three real-life families whose child's toy has gone missing.

Convenience retailers

will also have access to a range of PoS material through their wholesaler including barkers and window posters.

From 30 November to early January, Kerry Foods will also release three limited edition Richmond sausages – Pork & Stuffing, Pork Bacon & Leek, and Pork & Cranberry.

The limited edition sausages will also feature the toy-tracker on-pack promotion.

## Nestlé promises 'significant' Easter sales aid

Nestlé said it will help retailers take advantage of the "significant" Easter sales opportunity with its latest range of seasonal confectionery unveiled this week.

The manufacturer claimed more than eight million shoppers purchased Easter confectionery this year, with 80%

of these making repeat purchases from stores.

Nestlé said it will build on these figures next year with its latest range of novelty lines and chocolate eggs, which includes a new Smarties Chick in Egg line. The product encompasses a milk chocolate egg containing Mini Smarties and a

milk chocolate chick (RRP £2.55) and will be aimed at young shoppers.

In addition, Nestlé has launched Black Magic Mini Eggs (£2), which it claims will target 67% of adults buying mini egg products for themselves.

The company has also expanded its Easter egg

range with a Milkybar Milk & Cookies flavour (£3), which will feature cookie pieces embedded in Milkybar chocolate. It will sit alongside a new Crunch Collection giant milk chocolate egg, which will contain a selection of milk and white chocolate Crunch bars.

### Hot products for your shopping list



Imperial is aiming for the economy end of the market with Player's Red Volume Tobacco



Diageo is encouraging Christmas sales with gift boxes for its Reserve spirits



Jacob's is celebrating the 130th anniversary of its Cream Crackers



# Kingsway 'Let it Snow' Christmas Range



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# NEWS

## PRODUCTS

### Guinness and cheese toastie for Burts Chips

Burts Chips is adding a third flavour to its range of Guinness flavoured crisps as it looks to improve on £4m sales accumulated by the brand since launch.

The firm has unveiled Guinness Toasted Cheddar, which will combine flavours of the humble 'cheese toastie' and the Irish stout.

The new line will look to replicate the success of the last variant added to the range, Guinness Rich Beef Chilli, launched in 2013, according to Burts.

Simon Knight, sales director at Burts, said Guinness Toasted Cheddar would offer "retailers a strong point of difference with a proven track record of success".

### Jäger to get spicy

Mast-Jägermeister UK is making its Jägermeister Spice variant a permanent line following a successful trial last Christmas.

The product, which features a combination of spices and cinnamon and vanilla flavours, is being rolled out nationally to stores this month. It will be backed with a six-figure marketing campaign including social media and sampling activity.

Nicole Goodwin, marketing director at Mast-Jägermeister UK, said: "We saw over a quarter of the limited edition Jägermeister Spice stock sell through within a 12-week period and we're expecting even better results in the run up to the key Christmas period."



### Muppets sign up for Warburtons

Warburtons has followed up its marketing campaign featuring Hollywood actor Sylvester Stallone with a new star-studded campaign, this time featuring the Muppets. Kermit the Frog, Miss Piggy, Fozzie Bear and other characters from the show all appear in the TV ad, which sees them pitch an idea for the "The Giant Crumpet Show" to Warburtons chairman Jonathan Warburton to support the company's new Giant Crumpets range.

**Total of £3.2m spent by Department of Health on anti-smoking ads** Exclusive RN data

## Stoptober campaign sees £27m lost cigarette sales

by Helena Drakakis

Exclusive data taken from 3,000 EPoS systems in independent shops show cigarette sales fell 5.4% in October, at the same time a dedicated campaign encouraging smokers to kick the habit was running.

The Stoptober campaign, set up by the Department of Health, had £3.2m ploughed into it this year, with TV advertising first broadcast on 8 September during prime time.

According to data analyst John Eastwood of EDFM, independents lost £27m in five weeks ending 31 October compared with August. This number equates to around £160 per shop per week.

He said: "In August, 240.5 million sticks were sold, on average, each week. As the campaign got under way this fell markedly to 230 million. This fall continued through October."

Compared to 2014, before the extra money was given to the campaign, cigarette

consumption declined by only 2.8%, Mr Eastwood added.

Pete Hart, of newsagents Chapmans of Southwold, said he felt Stoptober contributed to an ongoing downward trend in the sale of cigarettes, but he could not be sure whether, in his store, this was as a direct result of campaigns.

He said: "When we went dark we removed our gantry and placed cigarettes under the counter. I'm sure campaigns like Stoptober add to

the decline but, in our case, it would be hard to discern how many have been lost because people aren't aware we still stock cigarettes."

Rushik Parmar, of Kenwins in Herne Bay, said he had noticed no difference in sales.

He said: "Lots of people say they'll give up, but I don't see it in my store. My cigarette and tobacco sales remain steady regardless of whatever campaign is happening."

● Analysis - p19.

## Christmas special gift packs from Maxxium

Maxxium UK is getting shoppers into the spirit of Christmas by unveiling a wealth of Christmas gift packs across its alcohol range.

The firm said it will focus more heavily on limited edition packaging this festive season, after

its research revealed 68% of spirit drinkers would be looking to buy gift packs this year.

New additions include a gift carton for Jim Beam Apple, which includes a highball glass for making cocktails (RRP £19.68), while Maker's Mark bour-

bon will be available in a gift pack with a 70cl bottle, branded glass and an ice ball mould (£29.12).

Meanwhile, Maxxium will launch gift packs for Courvoisier VSOP (£34.31) and Highland Park 12 Year Old (£34.93), with each containing pairs of drinking

glasses.

It will also introduce two gift packs for The Macallan Gold - one containing a 70cl bottle with a stopper featuring images from photographer Ernie Button, the other featuring a 70cl bottle in a presentation box with a magnetic door.

### Hot products for your shopping list





Burts Chips are now available in Guinness Toasted Cheddar flavour



Maxxium is offering a wide range of new Christmas gift packs

Jägermeister Spice is now a permanent addition to the Jäger range



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.....



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# NEWS

## REGIONAL

### Sounds like a good way to cut costs

A Leicestershire retailer says he is making savings of more than 50% after switching to licence free music in his stores.

Raj Aggarwal, who owns three Spar stores and a coffee shop, has gone from paying an average of £700 per store per year in Performing Rights Society (PRS) and Public Performance Limited (PPL) tariffs for playing licensed music to around £300.

Although the music he now plays in-store is not mainstream, Mr Aggarwal said it still has the same effect of making the store feel less "tinny and empty". He said as part of the package provided by FreedomMusic, messages are also played every few songs announcing special deals in-store that day.

Convenience stores in the UK are spending more than £10m a year in PRS and PPL fees, according to data gathered by FreedomMusic.



### Happy Diwali from a star of the community

High Wycombe retailer Raaj Chandarana was hoping to see an uplift in his chocolate sales as he offered his customers a Diwali treat. A basket filled with a variety of chocolates on promotion at Premier Tara's News was put on the counter and offered to customers to celebrate the festival last week. "If customers taste them they might come back to buy them," he said. Mr Chandarana had another reason to celebrate after being nominated for Wycombe District Council's Business in the Community Award.

**Brighton Argus' terms cut by 5%, Bolton News by 2%** NFRN 'aghast' at move outside price change

## Newsquest margin cuts 'outrageous and not on'

by Gurpreet Samrai

Publisher Newsquest has come under fire after slashing retailers' margins on two of its newspapers while maintaining the cover price.

From 23 November The Brighton Argus' terms will be cut by 5%, while from 30 November the Bolton News' margin will be reduced by 2% bringing both to 18%. The move will ensure both titles remain

daily newspapers and "realign its overheads", the publisher said in letters to retailers.

Navin Patel, of Southern Cross Store in Brighton, said: "It's all lose, lose, lose, and no gain whatsoever. Everybody is cutting our terms, so where do we go from here. They want to make their money and nibble into our profits."

The NFRN is challenging the decision and has called for a suspension on

the terms reduction while talks are held.

Brian Murphy, NFRN head of news and magazines, said: "We're absolutely aghast a publisher has made this decision with one of its key trading partners.

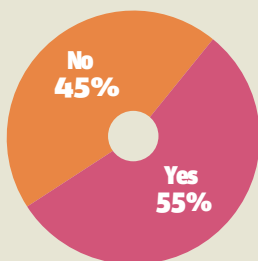
"It's very unusual for any publisher to cut terms today and outside a price increase is outrageous and simply not on.

"If our members' businesses experience dif-

ficulties, they are unable to take action like this. So why is one minor supplier allowed? This must be stamped out. It breaks the notice periods required within the terms and conditions of supply and undermines the protocols that we all work to in the supply chain."

The federation was due to meet with bosses at The Argus on Wednesday and has arranged a meeting with the Bolton News.

### RN READER POLL



**Has the Deliver My Sun campaign added HND orders to your business?**

### NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION

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

**Have your vote now**

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

## NLW impact in focus as jobless Scots tops 6%

The Scottish Grocers' Federation (SGF) has raised concerns about the potential impact of the new National Living Wage on the country's rising unemployment rate.

The jobless total rose by 11,000 in the three months to September to 166,000, the

Office of National Statistics revealed last week. The Scottish unemployment rate is now 6%, which is higher than the UK rate.

Female employment has been highlighted as a particular concern by the federation, with 9,000 women becoming unemployed

during the quarter.

The federation is calling on the Scottish government to assess the potential impact of the new National Living Wage on employment.

John Lee, head of public affairs, said: "Our recent survey on the impact of

the living wage showed that retailers will respond by reducing staff hours, redundancies, delaying and even cancelling planned investment. The living wage will simply lead to yet more unemployment in 2016 with a particularly negative impact on women."

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# NEWS

## REGIONAL



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## Sandy's festive treat for elderly

A convenience store retailer is getting into the festive spirit early with plans to organise a Christmas meal for elderly customers.

Sandy Sarwar, owner of Premier Pricecracker in Dundee, said he is looking to provide food and drink to around 100 guests and is currently searching for a suitable venue to host the event on 23 December.

He said: "I was listening to the radio about how Christmas is the loneliest time for elderly people and I wanted to do something about it."

"I was originally going to treat the staff to a Christmas lunch, but after speaking with them about this idea, they agreed that we should do this instead."

● *Retailer profile* - p22.

## Support business Saturday

The Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) is encouraging retailers to get involved in Small Business Saturday on 5 December.

The event highlights small business success and encourages consumers to shop local and support businesses in their communities.

James Lowman, ACS chief executive, said: "We are delighted to support Small Business Saturday and will be encouraging local shops across the UK to take part this year."

Retailers who register to take part will be provided with a marketing pack, including posters and a window sticker, to make their customers aware of the day.



## Liverpool Echo fights off tough competition to take top daily title

The Liverpool Echo was crowned Daily Newspaper of the Year at the O2 North West Media Awards last week for the third year running. The judges praised the paper's recent re-launch under editor Ali Machray (left) following the 'Tell Ali' social media exercise. The Echo fought off stiff competition from The Sentinel in Stoke, Carlisle's News & Star and the Lancashire Evening Post. The daily paper's newly-launched sister title, the Sunday Echo, was named Weekly Newspaper of the Year. Meanwhile, The Sentinel won Specialist Publication of the Year for its tribute to Second World War veterans.

**Shoppers' behaviour influences business decisions** 'It's been brilliant in giving me data'

# Sunder's in-store camera helps his customer focus

by Helena Drakakis

A Leamington Spa retailer who installed a £300 footfall camera in his store to analyse customer behaviour is planning to install after-hours vending machines as a result of his findings.

Sunder Sandher, of One Stop Working With Royals, is one of several retailers taking advantage of technology to drive footfall and increase sales inside and

outside of their stores.

Mr Sandher installed the camera in July to track a range of behaviours such as the number of people who walk past his store without entering, and the amount of time customers spend inside.

Now, because of the insight he's gained, he has extended his opening hours from 6am to 11pm instead of 7am to 10pm. He is also poised to unveil two vending machines outside

his store to capture passing trade in the hours his shop is closed.

He said: "The camera has been brilliant in giving me the data I need. I can see that there's a lot of footfall and cars pulling up outside my shop after I close at 11pm so I'm going to install two vending machines to capture that after-hours trade."

Mr Sandher said the two vending machines will

serve coffee and snacks such as chocolate bars, crisps and soft drinks. Customers will be able to buy the items using contactless cards.

"I hope to be up and running in four weeks. The machines are ordered and I'm in the process of building a shelter so the area is lit and secure. There's no point in sitting on the data. I'm biting the bullet and trying out the idea," he added.

## Pop in for a paper – and a mortgage

An enterprising retailer has been attracting more trade to his shop after becoming one of the first sub-postmasters to start offering mortgages through the Post Office.

Amit Patel, owner of Stratford Post Office in London, said he is one of only 10 post office branches who are now able to offer mortgages.

Mr Patel said his staff have been given extra training to handle mortgage queries from customers, while he also receives support from a specialist mortgage consultant.

He said: "We were chosen based on our sales and the fact that we already had a separate room set up to deal with financial transactions, such as setting up debit cards, which we could use to handle mortgages."

Mr Patel said he has been offering the service for a number of weeks and is seeing "growing interest" from customers.

"With the amount of new property being built around the area, we have a lot of people looking for good deals on mortgages, which is something I think we can provide," he added.



## LETTERS

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

## TERMINAL DESPAIR OVER BLUE SCREEN CRASH

On 12 November we had a frozen screen when I tried to turn on my National Lottery terminal between 5.30am and 6am. Despite rebooting my machine and switching it on and off a few times I was finally able to log on at 7.30am.

In that time I was not able to process several transactions. This has happened before, namely two weeks ago when there was a software update to accommodate the new lottery games. I didn't contact Camelot then and nor did I this time. I do not want to pay a premium rate for the phone call.

Instead, I tweeted a picture of my frozen, blue screen. However, that tweet goes to a general Twitter account and there is never any comeback. Camelot don't have a Twitter account for retailers and that would be a good thing.

If this happened at one of my peak times it would really affect me.

I also don't want people coming in having bought a ticket somewhere else not being able to collect their winnings at my store. They may think that is



deliberate, and that's not what I want customers to perceive.

**Amit Patel,**  
Belvedere News and Wine,  
Kent

**A Camelot spokesman said:**  
*"We regularly perform terminal software upgrades overnight following a draw and, from time to time, these result in a slight delay*

*to the terminals coming back online first thing in the morning – which is what happened on Thursday morning (12 November). It is very rare that we experience terminal outages at peak times.*

*"Ultimately, our Retailer Hotline is there for urgent retailer queries and it should be used for situations like this – where a retailer is unable to process National Lottery transactions. To*

*be clear, the Retailer Hotline is not classed as a premium rate number – it costs 7p per minute plus the retailer's service provider's access charges.*

*"As Mr Patel says, we do not have a bespoke Twitter account for retailers. We do offer a free email service – retailers can email retailhelp@camelotgroup.co.uk – but this isn't suitable for urgent technical queries like this."*

## Please can I have my partworks, Smiths?

Having read Mr John Read's letter last week (Publishers: Let's work together, RN 13 November), I have to ask where is the evidence of his claims.

From my experience, in terms of partworks, we retailers are treated like third-class citizens after the subscribers and then supermarkets.

If there is stock available of the Zippo collection, then why have I been waiting for part two since 30 September and for part three since 19 October from Smiths News?

My customer has now got tired of waiting and has stopped collecting.

I already have other partworks that have been

cut by Smiths News at the last minute such as Doctor Who figurine by Eaglemoss.

When I have two on order for two customers, I only get one.

This has happened numerous times and I'm still waiting for part 51 and we are now on part 58. If there is so much stock available, where is it?

**Sachin Ashore,**  
Ashra's News,  
Paddington,  
London

## I would delist Menzies if it were possible

I run 27 Spar stores across the north of England. Last Wednesday, my newspapers were almost an hour and a half late.

I use Menzies Distribution for some stores and for our more southerly stores I use Smiths News. In my

Talbot Drive store in Chorley the situation last week was intolerable.

I was in store, Menzies had not delivered at 6am as it is supposed to, and I watched as customers walked in, saw that there were no papers and did an 180° turn out of the shop because the shelves were empty.

It is so frustrating because I'm not only losing newspaper sales, I'm losing knock-on sales too.

We've been selling newspapers for more than 30 years. My customers know this and they know me for HND too.

I am losing so much goodwill. When I ring the wholesalers, they blame the publishers.

What I want to hear is that there's more vans and more drivers, not that it's never Menzies' fault.

People understand that after the horrific attacks in Paris on Friday that news



**Kevin Hunt's empty shelves at his store in Chorley**

deadlines might be pushed back, but this problem happens week in, week out.

If I could de-list Menzies I would, but I have no choice but to use them.

**Kevin Hunt,**  
Lawrence Hunt & Co Ltd

**Menzies didn't respond to RN's request for a response to this letter.**



# OPINION

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Printed by Southernprint, Poole, on 80gsm Galerie Fine Gloss paper

Distributor Seymour Distribution, 2 East Poultry Avenue, London, EC1A 9PT



Audit Bureau of Circulations  
July 2014 to June 2015 average net circulation per issue **14,539**



Winner of the **2009 ACE** gold award for circulation excellence by a smaller magazine



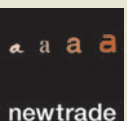
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## YOUR SAY One in five shopworkers do not report violent attacks by customers according to a new report because they don't feel it would make a difference or it's just a part of being in a frontline job. How do you handle incidents?

### Peter Lamb

Lambs Larder,  
Bells Yew Green,  
East Sussex

We've never had a violent attack. We have had a couple of shoplifters who we reported to the police, but no violence.

It's important incidents are reported because, like any crime, the more times it happens, the more it's reported, the more attention the police give it.

I don't think it's a part of being in a frontline job. Nobody should have to accept violence in their workplace.

### Rocky Leach

Chellow Heights Service Station and Spar,  
Heaton,  
Bradford

If it's violence against my staff we report it, but we don't report theft drive-offs because West Yorkshire Police don't investigate them anymore, so it's just a waste of time.

But when it comes to violence



we would report it because they'd actually do something about it.

If it's not reported it distorts all the crime figures.

### Kate Mills

Heath Stores,  
Horsmonden,  
Tonbridge

We are very fortunate being in a village where violence is pretty rare.

We have been shouted at

and sworn at, but it happens rarely.

Having said that, we have a zero tolerance policy with all crime.

We know who the troublemakers are and we will, and have, banned people who we've had reasonable suspicion of shoplifting.

We also work very closely with our PCSO and we will inform them of any incident.

## YOUR STOCK Kinder Joy is set to launch in the UK this month following a successful trial in Ireland. Do you see it being a profitable addition to your Easter range next year?

### Luke Mansell

Chalbury Food & Wine,  
Weymouth,  
Dorset

A new Kinder product would be good.

I think Kinder eggs do well anyway as kids love something with a toy and the new launch would be a good addition.

It would add some extra sales as people look to try something new.

People who have perhaps had Kinder eggs for years as children might not want to have Kinder again next year, but if there's a new Kinder they would be tempted to try it.



### Trish Lettley

EJ Teare Newsagents,  
Wellington,  
Somerset

Yes, definitely. We are always looking for something different for Easter. It takes sales away from other products initially, but it levels out with people continuing to buy the new product or going

back to the old product if they don't like it.

But I think people are quite keen to try new products. I do see it being a profitable addition.

### Joey Duhra

Jule's Premier Convenience Store,  
Hadley,  
Telford

We will try it. I think it will go well initially as people try it, but then it will die down. It will take sales from Kinder Surprise because people will only buy one or the other.

But it's something new and you have to keep the market new and give the customer something different.



# YOUR ISSUE

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## PAYPOINT AND CAMELOT CALLED TO ACCOUNT

Whether you've been running independent stores for one month or 50 years, the challenges and stress of setting up a new business are something that every retailer goes through no matter what their experience.

Just ask Sudesh Patel, who has been running shops for the better part of 35 years, and has recently taken over a Lonsis store in Chipstead Valley Road in Coulsdon, London.

Despite his knowledge of the retail trade, even Mr Patel has not been immune to the frustration of setting up new accounts with suppliers for his business.

In particular, he points to PayPoint and Camelot, claiming that both parties have failed to set up services in his shop despite him sending through the relevant details and cash deposits.

Mr Patel says: "We took the business over coming up to about eight weeks ago now.

"Prior to the takeover, the previous owner and I told PayPoint about the change of ownership of the shop.

"The last owner emailed PayPoint about when the shop was being sold, and we signed documentation. We've also given them a cash deposit. Eight weeks down the line, we're still waiting for them to sort it.

"We were contacted recently by PayPoint, and they asked us for notification from the previous owner about selling the business, even though it had already been sent through. It's going to be difficult for us to get this because the previous owner is now out of the country.

"Now they want a copy of our lease - the situation is getting ridiculous. We have a number of customers asking us about PayPoint every day, which we can't provide to them.

"PayPoint already has our deposit and details, what more information could they want? I could get a job in MI5 quicker than PayPoint sorting this out."

Mr Patel was also critical of Camelot and the processes behind



Sudesh Patel's customers want to buy Lottery tickets from his shop and use PayPoint, but registering for accounts has left him frustrated

setting up a direct debit mandate with the company.

He says: "Camelot has also taken a big deposit from us and we've tried to set up a direct debit with them, which we were told could take weeks.

"This means we've been having to physically take money to the bank to pay Camelot each week. The deadline for this used to be Tuesday but this recently got changed to Monday, which is difficult for us coming off busy weekends.

"We had a member of staff off sick last Monday, meaning I had to cover in the shop and, therefore missed the deadline, so Camelot turned our terminal off.

"I've tried to get through to their accounts team to sort this out, but I get put on hold for ages. Setting up a direct debit normally

takes days, so why does Camelot take weeks?"

Responding to Mr Patel's concerns, a PayPoint spokesman says the firm is yet to receive a cash deposit from Mr Patel.

He adds: "We acknowledge Mr Patel's frustrations with the Change of Ownership process to date. We are in touch with Mr Patel about this and are currently waiting for his bank to provide a guarantee.

"We hope that Mr Patel's bank will action this as soon as possible to enable the change of ownership process to be completed."

Camelot told RN it could not provide a comment at the time of RN going to press. However, it added it is sorry to hear of the difficulties Mr Patel is experiencing and it will contact him directly to address the issue.



**PayPoint already has our deposit and details, what more information could it want? I could get a job in MI5 quicker than PayPoint sorting this out**

**Sudesh Patel**

Lonsis retailer, Coulsdon, London

# INDUSTRY PROFILE

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## USDAW

From the National Living Wage to proposed changes to Sunday trading, it's a busy time for John Hannett, general secretary of USDAW, the trade union for those working in the retail industry. To ensure a sustainable sector he wants to build closer links to retailers of all sizes



### RETAIL NEWSAGENT Tell us about USDAW

**JOHN HANNETT** We are a union for those working in retail and related industries. We have more than 420,000 members in total, making us one of Britain's biggest unions.

### RN Do you have members working in the independent trade?

**JH** In family-run stores it's unlikely they will get involved with us because it will be all hands to the pump. In small franchised or symbol stores, such as Spar, you'll often find people who work there who are in the union.

### RN How do you work with these employers?

**JH** If you are dealing with such a small company you tailor any agreement you have between the staff and employer to that business. You wouldn't have regional and national forums as we do with big retailers like Tesco, for example, but we can build agreements and discipline for things like health and safety.

### RN USDAW argued passionately against changes to Sunday trading laws. What were your arguments?

**JH** I think the balance of the so-called "great British compromise" in 1994 is about right. So we are not trying to go back to a bygone era, we just fear the costs of opening would mean larger retailers would say that they could no longer afford premium pay on Sundays. Privately, larger retailers recognise this won't be an income

generator for them. We asked our members and 91% opposed it.

### RN With the Scottish National Party vowing to vote against it, has this issue been settled in your eyes?

**JH** That was the initial impression we had, but it hasn't gone away at all. The government has done its homework and it knows who the rebels in its party are. The latest story is that it may well use a different vehicle, such as the Enterprise Bill, to get it through. It's complicated and we're just trying to work this out now.

### RN USDAW supports the National Living Wage. What do you say to retailers who fear it may harm their businesses?

**JH** It doesn't help anybody if you impose the National Living Wage on



**It doesn't help if you impose the National Living Wage and the business goes bust**

somebody and the business goes bust. Our members want a decent rate of pay, employers want to pay a decent wage – the question is how we create a road map towards what that should be, but in a way that can be managed.

### RN How are retailers you work with making it work for them?

**JH** As a union we are charged with sitting down with employers and asking how far they are away from paying this figure. The National Living Wage is about an hourly rate and the boss of Tesco recently said that, in his view, certain benefits are also part of a full pay package such as pension provision. What we're seeing in the industry now is a degree of trade off where you have the wage rise in return for the loss of other benefits.

### RN USDAW campaigns for greater protection and respect for those working in shops. Why is this work so vital?

**JH** I think retail has an image problem. If you talk about car manufacturing, the public already has an idea of it being important. People think retail is just low paid work done by part timers, something you do until you can get something better. Yet it's so important to the economy – three million jobs – and I think there's a lot more that USDAW can do with retailers in showing the value of retail to communities and elevate its profile.

## \*\* Company CV \*\*

**Company** Organisation Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW)

**General secretary** John Hannett

**Profile** With 420,000 members, USDAW represents an industry of more than three million workers. It has individual agreements with very large retailers, such as Tesco, as well as small independent businesses.

**Latest news** A vociferous campaigner against changes to Sunday trading legislation, USDAW celebrated the announcement that the SNP has apparently killed off proposed liberalisation. At the time of going to print, however, it was feared that renewed efforts to revive them were already advancing.

\*\*

\*\*

# JOHN EASTWOOD

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**This year the Department of Health gave millions of pounds of extra funding to the annual smoking cessation campaign 'Stoptober'. As John Eastwood highlights, the effects were dramatic**

## Stoptober – Did it work?

In 2014 it was reported that more than 260,000 people stopped smoking as result of the 'Stoptober' campaign. Not content with these results the Department of Health upped its support to £3.2m for 2015. Did it have the effect they wanted?

To find out the extent to which the campaign affected tobacco sales in stores like yours, EDFM studied a sample of more than 3,000 independent shops throughout England, Wales and Scotland, comparing the results with those in 2014.

The campaign was formally launched on 3 September, with the first TV ad broadcast during Emmerdale on 8 September. For that reason we compared data from the five weeks ending 29 August, before any activity had begun, with figures from the five weeks ending 31 October.

If the campaign had no effect at all we would expect to see a decline in cigarettes of about 0.01% of sticks sold per week, or 0.5% over the full period studied. For rolling tobacco, meanwhile, there should have been little or no change in the level of sale. The reality was very different.

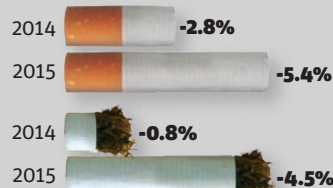
In August, 240.5 million sticks were sold, on average, each week. As the campaign got under way this fell markedly to 230 million. This fall continued through October, with a small uplift in the last week. When we look at the month of August and October, instead of the trend expectation of about 0.5% we see a decline of 5.4%. Rather than staying still, rolling tobacco sales volume fell by 4.5%.

In 2014, before the extra money for the campaign, cigarettes declined by only 2.8% while RYO sales reduced by 0.8%.

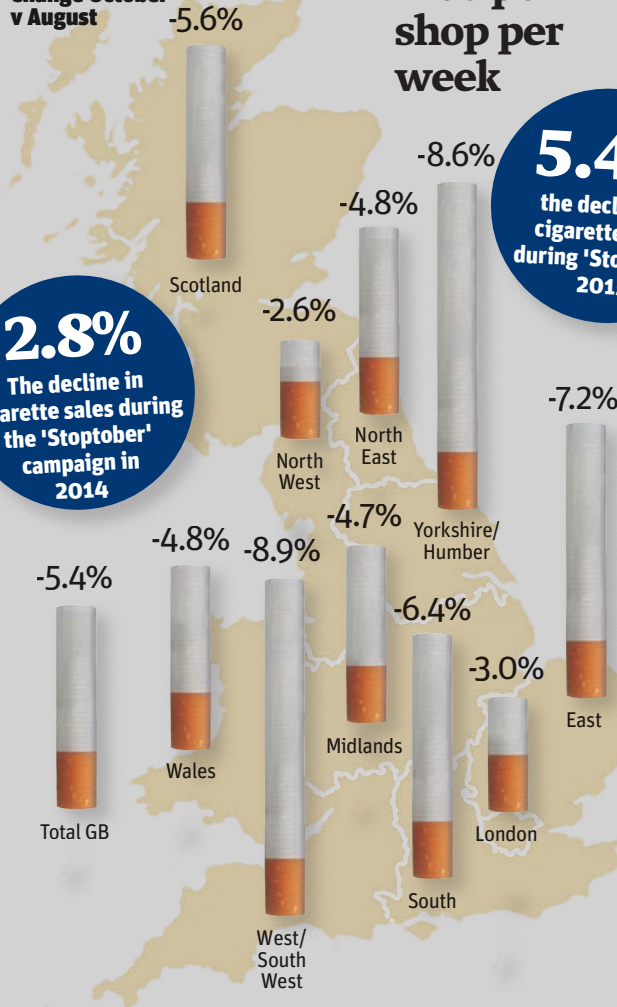
The effect of all this on independents' sales was dramatic. With cigars and the nearly-extinct pipe tobacco sectors also both losing sale, total value of tobacco products through independents lost £27million in the five weeks of October compared with

### What a difference a month makes The campaign in numbers

#### Volume Changes October v August (cigarettes & RYO)



#### Cigarettes % Change October v August



This equates to around **£160 per shop per week**

**5.4%**  
the decline in cigarette sales during 'Stoptober' 2015

**2.8%**  
The decline in cigarette sales during the 'Stoptober' campaign in 2014

August. This equates to around £160 per shop per week.

And there was little compensation for this loss of revenue from E-cigs. Despite growing by nearly 8% in value between August and October the value is still only about 0.5% of total tobacco product sales.

Analysing the data further, a few interesting trends emerge. The national decline in cigarette sales of 5.4% was well exceeded in the west and south west of England where numbers fell just short of 9%. In the north west of England and inside the M25 the declines were far smaller (2.6% and 3%, respectively). Rolling tobacco sales, meanwhile, actually grew slightly in the north east and London. Curiously, in Scotland, both cigarettes and RYO fell slightly more than the national average, despite the force behind the campaign being the Department of Health in England and Wales.

Another surprise came in who was most affected by the campaign. I assumed 'Stoptober' would find greater favour with younger smokers, who are more likely to be buyers of smaller packs. The data showed just the opposite – 10 packs of cigarettes only showed a small decline of 1% while larger packs (now typically 18s or 19s) fell by 7%. RYO was very similar.

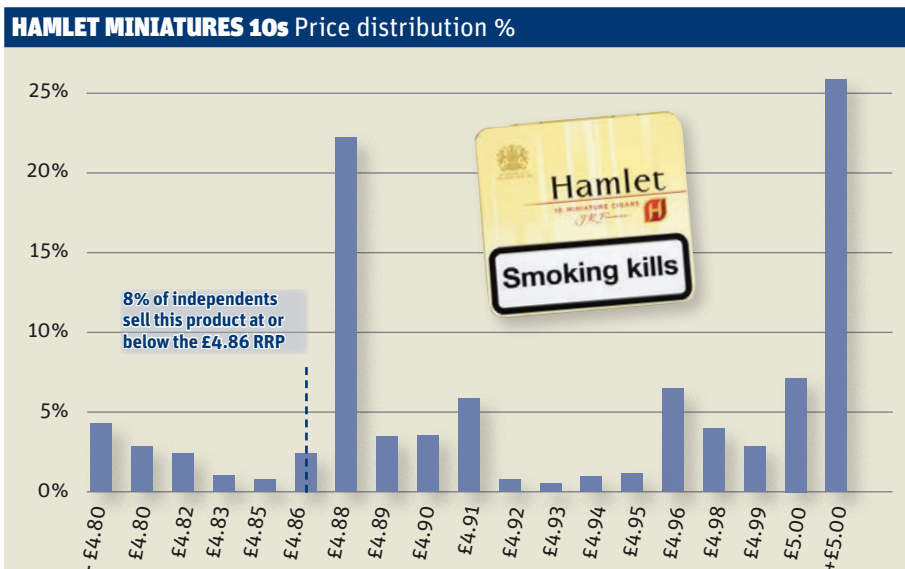
There was no consistent pattern in changes in level of sale between premium and budget brands.

The legacy of the 2014 campaign was that sales continued their decline at a rate beyond the long term trend of tobacco sales until mid-February 2015, after which this reversed until the end of July. It is impossible to say that this will repeat itself, but at a higher level, following this campaign but RN will keep a close eye on it through the data provided by EDFM. ●

John Eastwood is a data analyst for EDFM

# PRICEWATCH CIGARS

CIGAR PRICES AROUND THE UK							
PRODUCT	RRP	AVERAGE	RETAILER 1	RETAILER 2	RETAILER 3	RETAILER 4	RETAILER 5
<b>Café Crème Blue</b> 10s	£5.10	£5.14	£4.40	£4.99	£5.15	£5.23	£5.10
<b>Hamlet Fine</b> 5s	£5.15	£5.20	£5.15	-	£5.15	-	£5.25
<b>Castella Classic Cigars</b> 5s	£5.58	£5.57	£5.58	£5.58	-	£5.68	£5.65
<b>Panama Cigars</b> 6s	£5.46	£5.50	£5.46	£5.46	-	£5.56	£5.55
<b>Hamlet Miniatures</b> 10s	£4.86	£4.94	-	-	£4.90	£4.96	-
<b>Café Crème</b> 10s	£5.10	£5.13	£5.05	£4.99	£5.15	£5.23	£5.10
<b>Hamlet Fine</b> Single	£1.07	£1.10	£1.00	£1.00	£1.05	-	£1.09
<b>Royal Dutch Miniature Blue</b> 10s	£3.95	£3.72	-	£3.95	-	-	£3.55
<b>Henri Wintermans Half Coronas</b> 5s	£9.43	£9.41	-	-	£9.45	-	£9.45
<b>Hamlet Fine</b> 10s	£10.24	£10.23	-	-	-	£10.34	-
<b>Hamlet Miniatures</b> 5s	£2.50	£2.59	-	-	-	-	£2.65
<b>King Six Small Panatella Cigars</b> 6s	£4.82	£4.93	-	-	-	-	£4.99



## Pricing strategies



### RETAILER 1

**NAME PAUL MATHER**  
**STORE** Sherston Sub Post Office  
**LOCATION** Malmesbury, Wiltshire  
**SIZE** 1,350sq ft  
**TYPE** village

I mostly stick to Bestway's RRP's, although I charge slightly less for Hamlet. There's been a general decline in my sales, and I now only have about five cigar-smoking customers left. We're in a village with no passing trade so if one of my customers stops smoking cigars, it means we're left with a lot of dead stock. If someone comes in and asks for a niche cigar, I will first make sure they intend to regularly buy them before I order any in, otherwise I end up wasting a lot of money.



### RETAILER 2

**NAME ALAN WATERSON**  
**STORE** Walsh J  
**LOCATION** High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire  
**SIZE** 750sq ft  
**TYPE** village

I stick to the manufacturer's RRP, rather than a wholesaler's, as they tend to set prices slightly too high for my customers. I recently bought Café Crèmes on a deal from Booker, however, and passed the saving on to my customers. These are our best-selling cigars, and they now sell even faster at the lower price. I've gradually reduced my range over the past few years, taking out slower selling lines such as Villiger. I would love to stock more cigars - this is a category I love managing - but there's just no demand for it in my area.



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

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

**Nadia Alexandrou**  
 nadia.alexandrou@newtrade.co.uk  
 020 7689 3350

**RETAILER**

**3**



**NAME GORDON HENDERSON**  
**STORE** Henderson's Newsagents  
**LOCATION** Luton  
**SIZE** 2,000sq ft  
**TYPE** residential

We stick roughly to Palmer & Harvey's RRP, and round up to the nearest 5p or 10p to make prices clear and simple for customers. Hamlet Miniature 10s are our best-selling cigars, and miniatures in general are a popular format among my customers. I keep my cigars in my gantry alongside cigarettes, and earn around an 18% margin on them. This is quite a static market, and I've had the same dozen or so smokers for the past couple of years.

**RETAILER**

**4**



**NAME PAUL GARDNER**  
**STORE** Budgens of Islington  
**LOCATION** Islington, London  
**SIZE** 5,000sq ft  
**TYPE** high street

This is not the fastest-selling category in my shop, and I've had to reduce my range over the years because of declining sales. We now just stock the mainstream brands with the widest distribution, as these are the cigars which customers can seem to ask most often for. I stock all cigars alongside the cigarettes in my gantry, which are covered by sliding doors. We're based in an affluent area of London, so I don't have to lower my prices or run promotions in this particular category. I buy all my cigars directly through Budgens.

**RETAILER**

**5**



**NAME JOHN HANNA**  
**STORE** Smokemart  
**LOCATION** Brighton  
**SIZE** 550sq ft  
**TYPE** high Street

I try to keep prices as consistent as possible for customers, so I put between 5p and 10p on top of the RRP to cover the price changes between the different companies I buy my range from. My three best-selling cigars are Henri Wintermans Half Coronas, Royal Dutch Half Coronas and Café Crème Blues. My range from Hunters & Frankau, including Villigers, tends to attract a very different type of customer and are very good for my cigar business. Hamlet sales have suddenly gone down for some reason, although the singles are popular among customers who are trying to quit smoking and are using cigars to help them cut down.



ACADEMY IN ACTION  
 Follow up



**Retail Advisory Support**

In July, Sinso Retail Support visited Aktar Muhammed's newly-opened Premier store in Alyth to discuss building loyalty and increasing sales. Three months later, we found out how he has been getting on.



**Aktar's action plan**

- Use EPOS reporting to identify non-selling products and improve stock control
- Position price labels to the bottom left of products to improve merchandising and range analysis

**Aktar says**

"Just after Sinso's visit there was a huge flood in our village and we had to refit our shop. Now we are back open, we have a new EPOS system which we've been using to identify fast and slow sellers. We noticed bakery, fruit and vegetables were selling well so we expanded both these sections. Also, Premier helped set the shop back up and positioned our price labels at the bottom left of each product, as Sinso suggested, which is helping us with our merchandising."

**Your action plan**



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

# RETAILER PROFILE



## Flood and guts

With water damage of £150,000 to his new store just a month after being re-opened, Sandy Sarwar was told he wouldn't be trading for six months. But, with grit and determination, he and his team proved everyone wrong.  
**Steven Lambert reports**

**W**ith a brand new shop under his wing and a steadily growing number of regular shoppers, Sandy Sarwar was looking forward to developing his latest Premier Pricecracker business located in the village of Alyth.

That was back on 12 June – but just a month later, he was left with £150,000 worth of damage costs and a “totally devastated” store after a nearby burn broke its banks and flooded the area.

“It was really frustrating as we'd only taken over the business on 6 June and had invested a lot of money into refitting it,” says Sandy. “We were getting ready for an official reopening but everything was completely destroyed.”

An assessment from his insurance company bought more bad news – they claimed that it would take more than six months for the business to be up and running again. But Sandy and his team had other ideas.

“We said that wouldn't do. The longer we were closed, the more chance the business and our customers would suffer. That was the driving force behind us getting back up and running as soon as possible.”

With the help of the local community, Sandy was able to immediately make the first steps towards rebuilding his store.

“The flood had knocked all the stock off the shelves, so we had to get that out and

have a complete clean up. We had people coming in off the streets to help us out and, without them, we wouldn't have been able to turn things around as quickly.”

Shelves also had to be removed and walls stripped back, and even the entire floor had to be taken out to dry off.

Despite his troubles, Sandy was determined to keep supporting his customers. So much so that during the rebuilding process, he was able to reinstate his home news delivery service.

He says: “The computer with all the HND data got soaked, but with help from my staff and a computer repair company, we were able to get the data back.”

“We had dried out one corner of the shop, and we set up a bench where we could prepare the papers. Out of 100 news delivery customers, we only lost six while we were fixing the shop.”

Through hard work and sheer determination, Sandy was finally able to re-open the store on 5 September – beating his insurance team's estimate by a solid three months.

He says: “We had a tremendous open day. We had support from Booker and suppliers and were able to give out freebies to customers. We must have had about 150 people outside the store.”

Since then, Sandy has taken every opportunity to make the store even better a second time round.

**“I’m always looking out for new products, so I find the product pages in RN really useful for finding out about new products we can stock in our stores.”**

**SANDY SARWAR**



**Sandy Sarwar got his flood-damaged store open far quicker than his insurer expected. Loyal customers enjoy great value and variety with expanded frozen food and bake-off sections**



**“The longer we were closed, the more chance the business and our customers would suffer. That was the driving force behind us getting back up and running as soon as possible.”**

#### VISIT MY SHOP

**Premier Pricecracker**

10 Commercial Street,  
Alyth,  
Blairgowrie  
PH11 8AF



“We’ve increased the space we have for fruit and veg and our sales have gradually grown since then.

“We’ve also added in more frozen food and groceries, extended into gifts, and installed a Rollover hot dog unit and a coffee machine. We’re now looking to develop our bake-off section in the next few weeks.”

While Sandy says sales have not fully returned to where they were before the flood, he expects trade to pick up following the completion of nearby repair works. “Some families are only just moving back into their homes after the flood and the council are looking to redevelop three walkways over the burn that were damaged, so we’re hopeful for the future.”

Much like the new flood defences that are now being put in place around him, Sandy says the experience has only strengthened the bond between he and his customers.

He says: “We had had two elderly gentleman who would visit us every day while we were rebuilding and every time we would offer them a coffee and have a conversation with them. We still have the same two gentleman coming to the shop now. I think retailers these days need to persevere more than ever, and if you work closely with the community, it goes a long way.” ●



**Want to see more of Sandy's store?**  
Go to [betterretailing.com/sandy-sarwar](http://betterretailing.com/sandy-sarwar)

# THE RN INTERVIEW

## Bill Esterson

On the key issues of the day, the new shadow small business minister believes Labour is on the side of independent retailers. Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski reports

**Bill Esterson MP says small business issues are "second nature" to him**

**W**hat does Labour stand for? It's a question that's been asked again and again since the party lost yet another General Election in May.

With many pinpointing a lack of trust on the economy as behind its loss, finding an answer which wins over small businesses is vitally important for the party. The man charged by Jeremy Corbyn to do it is shadow small business minister Bill Esterson MP. So what's his answer?

"Labour's for a level playing field. Labour's for working together," he tells RN. "We have an adversarial type of economy in this country where it's manager against worker, government against the private sector, large against small. We even have schools competing against each other - this is a nonsense. What we need is partnership, collaboration. I think that's where Labour needs to be and where Labour, at its best, is."

Mr Esterson has been an MP for Sefton Central since 2010, but before that he ran a training consultancy for fifteen years and says business issues are "second nature" to him.

"I'm very familiar with issues regarding access to finance and the way the banks changed

their approach overnight when the financial crisis hit," he says.

He's confident that he and his party can be the natural home to independent retailers, dismissing as "rubbish" the charge that by voting for a veteran left winger as its new leader, Labour had given up on winning over business.

Two big issues - the National Living Wage and Sunday trading - are areas where the green shoots of electoral success may just be visible.

His response to the challenges presented by the National Living Wage is an example of where, unexpectedly perhaps, Labour can sound more pro-business than the government. "We had a very sensible situation where the Low Pay Commission set a minimum wage agreed by business, the trade unions and independent economists," he says.

Far from being the sign of Conservatives out flanking Labour on wages, he believes the National Living Wage is a trick to hide its welfare cuts. Much better, he says, to promote the full, even higher, Living Wage (as calculated by the Living Wage Foundation) on a voluntary basis.

"But if businesses can't afford it, you don't force them [to pay the National Living Wage] to make up for the fact that you're cutting thousands of pounds from millions of people through Child Tax Credits."

He also indicated that any Labour government in the future would make increase in statutory wages "transitional" to ensure higher rates of pay are sustainable for small businesses.

One of the major criticisms from



Interview by **Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski**  
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 tel 020 7689 3361



**Bill Esterson supporting the Small Business Saturday campaign, this year on 5 December, in his consistency**

independent retailers to the National Living Wage, however, has been how many business owners are already unable to pay themselves this rate.

"Five million people run small businesses and the people who run them need a decent living too," he says. "People who run small businesses who are struggling are completely forgotten."

He says that he had, at times, eschewed paying himself a wage while running a business in the past, but says the impact now is increased by the government's actions.

"Many of those people running small business rely on those tax credits which are going to be cut".

While retailers nationwide are working out how to pay ever-increasing wages, another threat that was equally unexpected in the aftermath of the last election is proposed changes to Sunday trading laws. Here, too, Mr Esterson believes he has a message that small businesses will want to hear.

"We currently have a great British compromise that big retailers can open for six hours, while people who value their Sundays can keep them as a rest day too. I think that works extremely well," he says.

He blames "vested interests" for the recent efforts to reform Sunday Trading laws and commits Labour to supporting the status quo in the future. "The evidence doesn't support the changes on economic grounds because you just displace spending

from other days. You also make life that bit less enjoyable for working people and, for small businesses, you move the spending away from them to larger stores."

Away from the issues of the moment, there is a clear sign that Labour's business policies would be more active in markets than the Conservative party, happy to step in to ensure smaller firms aren't muscled out by larger predatory companies. Mr Esterson lambasts his opponent Anna Soubry's commitment to a "small state".

"Government's role is to intervene to make sure that the structures are in place to allow businesses to succeed," he says.

On issues like the recent controversies with retailer margin cuts from Paypoint, this could mean naming and shaming bad practice.

"If a company's cutting its costs by cutting retailers' margins, then that's a perfect example of an imbalanced relationship," he says. "That's not a partnership, that's someone using their muscle to exploit smaller business."

It's language many retailers will be pleased to hear from a politician and may go some way towards making amends for the accusation of "pure greed", thrown at retailers who charge customers for using Paypoint by his colleague Rosie Cooper MP, last month.

Yet he also argues that business policy is not an island. "Public

## RETAILERS' QUESTION TIME

**Financial penalties are not strong enough to stop many retailers selling illicit tobacco. What would a Labour government do?**

**Amit Patel**

Bellevue Food & News,  
South London



"This puts pressure on law-abiding businesses and if a retailer has committed a crime, they really need to be watched closely in the future. If you cut the number of trading standards officers, however, then there's no one there to deal with it and that's what's been happening."

**How can retailers pay the National Living Wage when the Star has cut £500,000 from retailers' margins in one month?**

**David Woodrow**

Woodrow's News,  
Renfrewshire



"Newspapers are under pressure, but they can't just take it out on retailers. We need to highlight best practice, where there are newspapers who do pay a decent margin, and ensure that all publishers work as closely with the trade bodies as possible."

**What support would you give retailers in areas where immigration and other pressures means your customer base is changing all the time?**

**Anna Patel**

Star News,  
Nottingham



"Our view is that communities where there's been large changes need additional investment. It's challenging for areas like Manchester, Rochdale and Nottingham and government needs to invest so that employers have the support they need to keep people in work."

**How can we stop illicit tobacco hitting the market in the first place?**

**Ranjan Patel**

Marsh Hill  
News, London



"We need to make sure that the border force is equipped to catch illicit tobacco as it comes in. Unfortunately, this is going in the wrong direction and with the reduction in their budgets we will see fewer people stopped and caught."



**People who run small businesses who are struggling are completely forgotten**

services are important too," he says. "If staff don't get treated well by the NHS, then they're off work longer. If you can't get to work because the roads are so congested or rubbish piles up on the street, then business suffers too."

Still settling into his role, Mr Esterson is getting to know the world of independent retail. Yet it is already clear that there is now a big difference between the Labour and Conservative policies on small business. What's perhaps less expected is that it is the former which sounds more in tune with the concerns of retailers today. His mission is to keep it that way until the next election. ●

# CIGARS



Ray Monelle has maintained cigar sales in difficult conditions

Despite tough regulations and a market which is in overall decline, two retailers are protecting their cigar profits by following just a few simple strategies. Nadia Alexandrou reports

# Protect your profits

**S**easide retailers Ray Monelle and Pete Hart have both found that following supplier advice, offering something different and building strong relationships with the industry has helped them maintain and even grow cigar sales at a time when the display ban is making it extremely difficult for many others.

Ray, who runs Orchard News in Weston-super-Mare, Somerset, serves mostly regular cigar smokers. He stocks a range of about 20 products, earning margins between 13% and 15%. On the other hand, Pete's Chapmans of Southwold store specialises in gifts and stationery for its varied customer base of tourists and local residents. To cater for this affluent area, he holds a larger, more exclusive cigar range, and enjoys margins of up to 30% on certain premium brands.

Though situated on either side of the UK, with very different ranges and customer demographics, their approaches to the category are remarkably similar. Here are five strategies that can help you emulate their success. >>



**Since the display ban customers aren't able to browse my range**

**Pete Hart**

Chapmans of Southwold

## RETAILER STRATEGY

### Use your local wholesaler to build a core range

Ensuring they stock a core range of best-selling cigars is central to both Ray and Pete's success. They use their local wholesalers – Bookers and P&H, respectively – to source the most widely-distributed and popular products. "Wholesalers tend to stock the more heavily-marketed well-known cigars and I often talk to depot staff to get their insights and recommendations," says Ray.

Both store owners have consequently ended up stocking many of the same core brands, including Hamlet, Castella, Panama, Café Crème and Henri Wintermans. "These brands have become even more important since the display ban because customers aren't able to browse my range and less well-known cigars have dropped off their radar," says Pete.

**Stocking bestsellers is integral to both stores' success**



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# CIGARS

## RETAILER STRATEGY

### Find a specialist distributor

Pete and Ray agree that offering a range of premium cigars - no matter how specialist - is crucial to success. Working closely with tobacco specialists has been invaluable in doing this effectively. Ray buys from a local tobacco wholesaler, Wessex Tobacco, for his small and concise range that includes brands such as La Rica, Romeo Y Julieta and Bolivar. Pete, meanwhile, uses cigar importer and distributor Hunters & Frankau for a wider, even more premium selection of cigars which customers won't find elsewhere in the area.

This company sources high-quality Cuban cigars - one of the many reasons Pete was drawn to working with Hunters & Frankau, stocking their brands including Montecristo Cohiba and Mehari. Priced between £6 and £26, and offering a 30% margin, Pete benefits from customers' willingness to pay more and travel far to buy these cigars.

## RETAILER STRATEGY

### Build a great relationship with your cigar rep

Ray and Pete have taken full advantage of the small and niche nature of this category and established a close relationship with a cigar rep, who they both agree, tend to be more attentive and engaged than others. Ray has known his cigar rep for 30 years, and is visited by him monthly to top up his stock and update him on market and product news. "He allows me to tailor my own cases - whether that's a single cigar or a quarter of an outer. It greatly reduces the amount of cash I have tied up in stock," he adds.

Similarly, Pete agrees that the close relationship with his cigar rep allows him to build a more tailored range for his customers, focusing particularly on multipacks and singles in metal tubes. "The fact that I have flexibility on the singles also saves me from investing in a humidor for selling loose cigars," he says.

## WHAT SUPPLIERS ARE DOING

Now that we've looked at the strategies behind two successful cigar retailers, how do they compare with what suppliers are doing? Here's what we found out.

### Increased flexibility for cases and outers

Knowing the reluctance retailers have in having too much cash tied up in stock, suppliers have developed increasingly-flexible packaging for their cigar products. STG's Henri Wintermans Half Coronas and Slims, for example, are available to buy in outers of five and are both individually bar coded to give retailers the choice between selling them as a pack of five or as single cigars. Similarly, Ritmeester offers its Royal Dutch Panatellas in a 'convenience-friendly' 20 stick outers, while JTI introduced Hamlet half outers earlier this year.

### Encouraging development of niche ranges

Recognising the importance of offering niche ranges as a point of difference, suppliers are encouraging retailers



to stock niche variations of their own mainstream brands. "Niche products, such as Café Crème Filter Arome and Break Filter Cigarillos, enable retailers to differentiate their range from local competitors," says Jens Christiansen, head of marketing and public affairs at Scandinavian Tobacco Group (STG).

### Extra push for December

December is a peak sales period for cigar sales, and like Ray and Pete, suppliers emphasise the importance of maintaining availability in the run up to Christmas. They communicate this largely through their reps the trade

press, and websites. "Cigar sales in the week before Christmas can increase by as much as 10-15% compared to the preceding weeks, so it's absolutely key that retailers don't run out of their customers' favourites," says Jeremy Blackburn, JTI's head of communications. Ritmeester's Andy Swain agrees, and stresses the importance of staying fully stocked up on larger cigars in particular. "There is always a shift to larger cigars such as panatelas and half coronas because consumers look for something different to celebrate with over Christmas and New Year," he says.



## RETAILER STRATEGY

### Make the most of Christmas

At a time when customers trade up to more premium cigars to celebrate and give as gifts, availability is a top priority for Ray and Pete. "Having out of stocks when customers have run out to your shop specifically for cigars makes it more likely for them to go elsewhere next time," says Ray.

Both retailers also keep their suppliers' Christmas catalogues close to hand for any customers who want to buy cigars as a gift but don't know what to get. "We may only get one or two requests, but the fact that they normally order ten of one premium cigar, and that we also offer to gift wrap it for them, makes it likely for them to come back to us next Christmas," says Pete.



**Pete Hart's shop floor cigar unit is ban-compliant**

## RETAILER STRATEGY

### Clearly signpost your cigar range

Clear signage has been a key element to each shops' reputation as being the go-to place for cigars locally. Pete has made his availability unmistakable to customers with a large free-standing display unit out on the shop floor, which allows him to exhibit his cigars outside the gantry while still complying with the display regulations. "There's no branding on the stand and you can't see the actual cigars, but it is clearly labelled 'Havana Cigars,'" he says.

Ray, on the other hand, signposts his cigar range with a clear display of e-cigars - something which draws the attention of many customers. "It's not the fastest-moving product, but it offers high margins and is a good quality product that attracts both cigar and non-smoking customers. It also helps me highlight my cigar range," he says. ●



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# MINTS & GUMS

From innovative new products to eye-catching competitions, suppliers' investment in the mints and gums category is paying off. Nadia Alexandrou focuses on five reasons why it's time readers focused on this convenience stalwart

## Sales worth chewing over

### 1 More investment behind sugar-free products

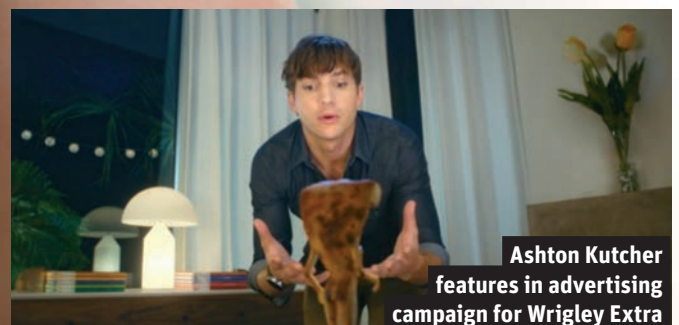
The ever-growing demand for healthier products has encouraged suppliers to invest more in their sugar-free mints and gums brands this year, and for some major manufacturers, become the sole focus of their marketing campaigns. More than 95% of Wrigley's gum brands are sugar free and the company has spent £15m on its 'Eat, Drink, Chew' campaign to highlight the oral care benefits of sugar free gum.

"The trend towards sugarfree gum and oral care is showing no signs of slowing, and this strategy encourages consumers to chew sugarfree gum whenever they eat or drink to keep teeth clean," says Julio Guijarro, Wrigley's marketing director.

According to Mr Guijarro it is important retailers understand that sugarfree gum represents a huge area of growth, especially when stocked as a healthier option by till points. "Almost half of shoppers who chew gum weekly expect to find it at the front of a store, making it a prime location for this category," he says.



**Almost half of shoppers who chew gum weekly expect to find it at the front of a store**



**Ashton Kutcher features in advertising campaign for Wrigley Extra**

## Mints and gums in numbers

**94%**

Wrigley's share of the total UK gum category

**75%**

Extra's share of the chewing gum market – up 5% in value sales growth

**18.4%**

The year-on-year growth of Extra White, Wrigley's biggest-selling brand

**62%**

of single gum purchases are unplanned

**570**

the number of individual packs a standard impulse gum display holds

**300m**

the number of XXX Extra Strong Mints sold in the UK last year

**38.5%**

the share Mondelez has of the UK mint market

**1.7%**

the rate at which the chewing gum market is growing, driven almost exclusively by the rise of bottle packs

**71%**

the share of single formats in the mint market

**5.2%**

the rate at which the Mentos brand has grown year on year

**99%**

the distribution of Polos across 2,200 stores recorded in this year's What to Stock



## 2 Focus on fruit flavours

Fruit flavours continue to dominate this year's wave of product development for mints and gums, aimed largely at attracting a younger audience. Ferrero's launch of Tic Tac Mixers, for example, featured two mixed-flavour varieties including Cherry Cola and Peach Lemonade, specifically targeting young adults. "As the UK's fastest growing confectionery brand, we are constantly looking for new ways to excite young shoppers, who love trying new products and flavours," says

Levi Boorer, customer development director at Ferrero.

Other fruit flavoured products launched this year include Wrigley's Strawberry and Bubblegum Extra gums and, more recently, Mondelez' addition of Trebor Softmints Lemon Mint. "These new flavours are designed to grow sales by attracting new younger customers to the category, and tap into growing trends towards oral care and fruit flavoured product," says Mr Guijarro.

## 3 Development of PoS material is driving impulse sales

As one of the most impulsive categories in a store – half of all shoppers who see gum will buy it, according to Wrigley – suppliers are developing their displays to make their brands as visible to customers as possible. Both Ferrero and Mondelez, for example, developed PoS ranges to support their respective Tic Tac and Trebor launches this year. Ferrero's range includes a dumpbin and a wobler, which it has made available to independent and symbol group retailers free through its trade website. According to the company, retailers



who have used such displays, including Tic Tac countertop units, have seen their sales increase by up to 200%.

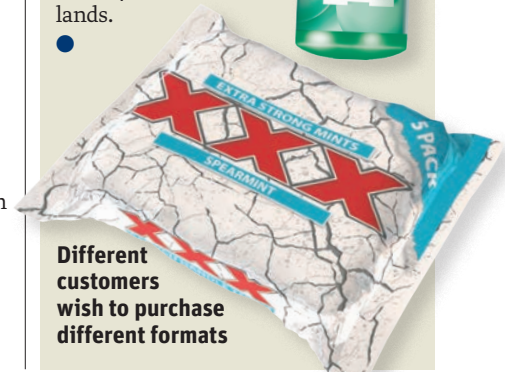
In addition to the displays designed for Softmint Lemon Mint, Mondelez is also encouraging retailers to use its 'Fresh Stop' unit to hold the whole Trebor range. "Around 70% of spend comes from shoppers who only buy one mint variant, and less than 10% of Trebor shoppers purchase both flavours, so stocking all varieties is recommended to maximise sales," says Susan Nash, trade communications manager at Mondelez.

## 4 Formats are becoming increasingly varied

While bottles are increasingly popular formats for chewing gum, suppliers are developing a wider variety of multipacks and singles for their mint brands, too. Big Bear Confectionery, for example, added a spearmint flavoured 5-pack to its XXX Mints range this year to offer its customers increased value. "Spearmint is one of our best-selling flavours, so it was the obvious choice for the launch of our multipacks which offer customers great value for money," says Ross Stanley, head of trade marketing at Big Bear Confectionery.

Increasing demand for value maybe growing sales of multipack formats, but singles are still the most popular choice for mints according to Perfetti Van Melle, with the convenience channel holding the lion's share of the market.

With sales of Mentos showing the biggest growth in single formats in convenience stores (42% year on year sales growth, compared to 5.2% total brand growth), retailers can expect to benefit even further from Perfetti's 'Who Says No to Mentos?' campaign, which began this month. The campaign includes a five week-long TV ad, sampling and outdoor activity in the midlands.



**Different customers wish to purchase different formats**

# PREVIEW



### Season to be Joy-ful

Ferrero is bringing Kinder Joy to the UK – a Kinder Egg with a milk and cocoa cream filling in one half and a toy in the other.

**RRP** 99p  
**Outers** not given  
**Contact** 01923 690 300



### Beef & Onion is back

PepsiCo is bringing Walkers Beef & Onion back to shelves after the line won its Bring it Back competition.

**RRP** not given  
**Outers** not given  
**Contact** 0118 930 6666



### Müller's NBA promo

Müller Rice has launched a social media competition giving away tickets to the NBA Global Games London 2016.

**RRP** various  
**Outers** various  
**Contact** 01355 244261



### Lorry loads of treats

Mondelez has launched a Cadbury Christmas ad featuring a fleet of trucks lined up to create a giant advent calendar.

**RRP** various  
**Outers** various  
**Contact** 0870 191 7343



### Grouse campaign

The Famous Grouse is being supported with a TV marketing campaign and sponsorship of articles appearing in the Guardian.

**RRP** various  
**Outers** various  
**Contact** 01786 430 500



### Carling sponsorship

Carling is sponsoring shows on TV comedy channel Dave as part of a 14-month deal.

**RRP** various  
**Outers** various  
**Contact** 0845 6000 888



### Legendary promotion

Casillero del Diablo is being promoted in a new 'Wine Legend' marketing campaign running on Sky Movies and Channel 5.

**RRP** £7.99  
**Outers** 6  
**Contact** 01865 873 713



### New ranges unveiled

Treasury Wine Estates is targeting a £76m sales opportunity with its latest wine ranges – 19 Crimes and Gentleman's Collection.

**RRP** not given  
**Outers** not given  
**Contact** 0208 843 8411



### Martell turns 300

Pernod Ricard is celebrating the 300 year anniversary of Martell with pack redesigns and new gift packs.

**RRP** £15 - £26.25  
**Outers** various  
**Contact** 0208 538 4484



# THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES

✉ RNreporter@newtrade.co.uk  
☎ 020 7689 3358  
@RetailNewsagent  
facebook.com/retailnewsagent



## Round up



HELENA DRAKAKIS

Magazines  
reporter

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In a time of declining newspaper sales it's interesting to see how local newspapers are making capital of powerful, local campaigns. This week the Oxford Mail devoted a whopping 15 pages to a campaign to stop the Freedom of Information Act from being watered down under new government proposals. For those not on the news frontline, the act has been a valuable tool in a journalist's armour for uncovering local, and indeed, national stories of public interest.

Meanwhile, in the north of England four titles including the Cumberland News and the Workington Times and Star have been making their voice heard via their Fight the Cuts coverage, which campaigns against £26m cuts to Cumbria's police service. Last month the newspaper handed over a 12,000 signature petition to Downing Street.

With a rise in digital, the only way local newspapers can continue to carve out a niche is to concentrate on hyper local issues and champion strong community campaigns, providing insight and depth where online media cannot.

I was talking to one regional newspaper sales director recently who highlighted that newsagents should take full advantage of an increasing emphasis on strong, local campaigns by getting behind the action, displaying local titles prominently – on the counter if need be.

While the local newspaper landscape is very unclear, and with terms cuts on the horizon, it's worthwhile advice in making the most of what matters to a community.

## Mobile mindfulness

# BIG FUN FROM COMPACT PACKAGE FOR ART FANS

It seems there's something new on the newsstands every week for colouring in enthusiasts. The latest comes in a handy, portable size

**THERE'S NO DOUBT** that creative colouring magazines are storming the market at the moment, and brand new to this growing category is the handbag-size version of Puzzler Media's Creative Colour. The compact magazine is for all those colouring fans who love to take their favourite hobby with them, wherever they go - whether on a dull commute, sitting in a waiting room or simply relaxing at home. With the proven stress-busting benefits of colouring, the all-new Compact Creative Colour comes in a convenient A5 format making it small enough to pop in a bag yet still big enough to gain the most enjoyment out of colouring.



**COMPACT CREATIVE  
COLOUR 1**  
**On sale 25 November**  
**Frequency monthly**  
**Price £2.99**  
**Distributor  
Marketforce**  
**Display with Relax  
with Art, Art Therapy,  
Zen Colouring**

**FIFA 365**

The Golden World of Football

**STICKER COLLECTION**

**ON SALE NOW**

IN ALL GOOD NEWSAGENTS

**BRAND NEW!**

**STARTER PACK**  
£2.99 RRP

**STICKER PACKET**  
50P RRP

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# THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



## Bestsellers Women's interest

Title	On sale date	In stock
1 Woman's Weekly	02.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Chat	26.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 People's Friend	25.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Closer	24.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Hello	23.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 That's Life	26.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Heat	24.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Yours	08.12	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Bella	17.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Woman	24.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 My Weekly	24.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 New	24.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Women's Own	24.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 Grazia	24.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Real People	26.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 Best	24.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 Reveal	24.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 Pick Me Up	26.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 National Enquirer	24.11	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 OK	24.11	<input type="checkbox"/>

Data from independent stores supplied by



### EMPIRE

January's special Star War's edition of Empire film magazine goes on sale at the end of this month in preparation for the December launch of the latest release in the film series, The Force Awakens. Retailers are being advised to display prominently as this special edition could achieve a potential sales uplift of 38.5%. The Force Awakens is officially released in the UK on 18 December.



**On sale 26 November**  
**Frequency** monthly  
**Price** TBC  
**Distributor** Newstrade  
**Display with** Neon, Total Film, Close Up, other Star Wars collectibles



### BELLA

This bumper Christmas issue of Bella features many more pages filled with festive fun and prizes, alongside the usual celebrity features revealing the inner secrets, gossip and style tips of Britain's favourite stars. There's also the usual real-life stories, as well as classic features and articles covering fashion, beauty, health, food and travel. The price is increased for this seasonal edition, but publishers are predicting that retailers can expect a 40% sales uplift.



**On sale 24 November**  
**Frequency** Monthly  
**Price** £1.80  
**Distributor** Frontline  
**Display with** Best



### SCOOTERING

This December issue of Scootering will carry a free pull-out A2 events wall planner, featuring all of the key rallies, exhibitions and shows for readers to plan their 2016 itinerary. Also included are in-depth features on customised and restored scooters, including the NK race replica Vespa SS90 that appears on the cover. There's also a feature on a Honda-powered Lambretta 600, test results of Vespa exhausts and a reader competition to win crash helmets worth £600.



**On sale Monthly**  
**Frequency** Monthly  
**Price** £4.10  
**Distributor** Comag  
**Display with** Motorcycling News, Twist & Go, Bike



### ECLIPSE

This issue of Eclipse Puzzles should make the perfect stocking filler for Christmas - as a collection of four smaller format wordsearch titles with something for puzzlers of all ages. There's four titles: Eclipse 2-in-1 Wordsearch at £1.95; Eclipse Best Value Wordsearch at £1.50; Eclipse Hide 'n' Seek Wordsearch at £1.95; and Eclipse Will & Aimee's Wordsearch at £1.95.



**On sale 20 November**  
**Frequency** Monthly  
**Price** £1.50-£1.95  
**Distributor** Frontline  
**Display with** Wordsearch titles



### CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE MECHANICS

Classic Motorcycle Mechanics features the ground-breaking machines of the 70s, 80s and 90s. This issue will feature restoration and maintenance advice from leading bike mechanics, as well as all the news and event reviews from across the classic scene, both in the UK and around the world. There's also a free sheet of workshop stickers for enthusiasts to enjoy.



**On sale 18 November**  
**Frequency** Monthly  
**Price** £4.20  
**Distributor** Comag  
**Display with** Classic Bike Guide, Classic Bike



# A GREAT SELECTION OF COLOURFUL CHRISTMAS CONTENT

## ON SALE 26 NOVEMBER

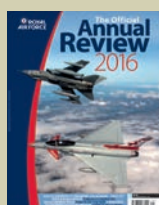


## OUR WAR

This latest special from the Mirror Collection commemorates the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII and looks at what life was like for those who did not go off to fight. Whether it was rationing, air raids, evacuations or just worry for loved ones overseas, life for those in Britain not on active service was markedly different than before. The 84-page special will feature images and features taken from the archives of the Mirror newspaper.



**On sale 16 November**  
**Frequency One shot**  
**Price £5.99**  
**Distributor Comag**  
**Display with Military titles and other WWII one shots**

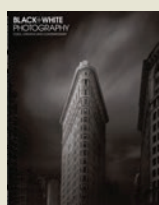


## RAF OFFICIAL ANNUAL REVIEW 2016

Produced by Key Publishing with exclusive access to the Royal Air Force, and featuring articles written with and by RAF personnel, The Official RAF Annual Review 2016 is a 132-page special magazine that provides behind the scenes insight into the aircraft, equipment and people of one of the world's premier air forces.



**On sale 26 November**  
**Frequency One shot**  
**Price £5.99**  
**Distributor Frontline**  
**Display with Other military titles**



## BLACK + WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

Black+White Photography is a magazine dedicated to the monochrome photographer. The winter issue will include 16 additional pages featuring the winning pictures from the Black+White Photographer of the Year 2015 competition which attracted entries from around the world. The magazine also features high-quality imagery from some of the finest names in black and white photography.



**On sale 26 November**  
**Frequency Monthly**  
**Price £4.75**  
**Distributor Seymour**  
**Display with Amateur Photography, Outdoor Photography**



## THE SNOWMAN AND THE SNOWDOG

The Snowman and Snowdog Christmas special is aimed at boys and girls aged 3-9 years and this seasonal issue contains not only a magazine packed with puzzles, games and crafts, but a separate story book, stickers and a snowglobe gift. It is presented in a silver foiled bag and would make a fantastic stocking filler or Christmas gift.



**On sale 19 November**  
**Frequency One shot**  
**Price £4.99**  
**Distributor Comag**  
**Display with Children's titles**



## YOURS

This bumper Christmas issue of Yours features family favourite Paul O'Grady on the cover and invites readers to celebrate in style with seasonal fashion tips and a party make-up guide. There is also a bonus pull-out featuring 60 years of Christmas memories including top Christmas toys, films, Christmas No 1s and star pin-ups.



**On sale 24 November**  
**Frequency Fortnightly**  
**Price £1.99**  
**Distributor Frontline**  
**Display with other women's magazines**



**Retail viewpoint**  
**Julie Duhra**  
 Premier Convenience Store, Telford

## WE GIVE CUSTOMERS A 'ONE-STOP SHOP'

**I**t's been a year since we've taken in newspapers and magazines. We owned a shop next door which we leased to a newsagent for 20 years, but when he left we housed the newsagent's within our convenience store.

We now open two hours earlier at 6am. My husband, Joey has been getting up at 5am which has been a bit of a shock to the system, but we felt it was worth it to bring in extra trade. We wanted that market straight away before customers went somewhere else.

From the beginning we displayed titles at the shop front so that morning commuters saw them from the road. It's not increased our footfall as much as we'd hoped but it's a reasonable 25%, and we've benefited from knock-on sales such as lighters and drinks that would have been made next door.

From the start, we ordered everything our neighbour did. We found it was about getting to know our customers. Some customers ordered expensive magazines and never picked them up so now we'll only save them if we're confident they will be taken up.

Taking on a new category has been challenging, but customers want a one-stop shop these days. We've learnt at 6am a smile goes a long way – so does tidying the magazine rack. You'd be amazed at how messy it can get!



### COMING UP IN NEXT WEEK'S RETAIL NEWSAGENT



## PETE AND CLARE HART ON HOW TO PLEASE TOURISTS AND LOCALS ALIKE ON THE COAST

Plus, what to expect from an e-cigarette and vaping supplier, and news editor Gurpreet Samrai looks at the training tools available from a modern symbol group



# THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES

## Newspaper terms

### Daily newspapers Margins/pence

Sun	40p	9.28p
Mirror	60p	13.92p
Mirror (Scotland)	65p	15.08p
Daily Record	60p	13.20p
Daily Star	20p	4.84p
Daily Mail	60p	13.92p
Express	55p	13.31p
Express (Scotland)	50p	12.10p
Telegraph	£1.40	32.62p
Times	£1.20	28.20p
FT	£2.70	54p
Guardian	£1.80	41.40p
i	40p	10p
Independent	£1.60	35.52p
Racing Post	£2.20	53.35p
Herald	£1.30	29.90p
Scotsman	£1.40	31.50p

### Saturday newspapers Margins/pence

Sun	70p	14.98p
Mirror	90p	19.26p
Mirror (Scotland)	90p	19.26p
Daily Record	85p	18.70p
Daily Star	30p	7.26p
Daily Mail	90p	19.26p
Express	85p	18.19p
Express (Scotland)	80p	18p
Telegraph	£2.00	48.00p
Times	£1.50	35.25p
FT	£3.50	79.10p
Guardian	£2.70	62.10p
i Saturday	50p	12.5p
Independent	£2.00	47.20p
Racing Post	£2.50	58.125p
Herald	£1.70	39.10p
Scotsman	£1.80	40.50p

### Sunday newspapers Margins/pence

Sun	£1.00	21p
Sunday Mirror	£1.30	27.30p
People	£1.30	27.30p
Star Sunday	50p	11.05p
Sunday Sport	£1.00	24.3p
Mail On Sunday	£1.60	33.60p
Sunday Mail	£1.60	33.60p
Sunday Mail (Scotland)	£1.60	33.60p
Sunday Telegraph	£2.00	45.50p
Sunday Times	£2.50	52.50p
Observer	£2.90	72.50p
Independent on Sunday	£2.20	55p
Scotland on Sunday	£2.15	49.45p
Racing Post	£2.50	60.625p
Sunday Herald	£1.50	34.50p
Sunday Express	£1.40	29.68p
Sunday Post	£1.50	33.00p

### Daily newspapers Margins/percentage

Sun	40p	23.20%
Mirror	60p	23.20%
Mirror (Scotland)	65p	23.20%
Daily Record	60p	22.00%
Daily Star	40p	24.20%
Daily Mail	60p	23.20%
Express	55p	24.20%
Express (Scotland)	50p	24.20%
Telegraph	£1.40	23.30%
Times	£1.20	23.50%
FT	£2.70	20.00%
Guardian	£1.80	23.00%
i	40p	25.00%
Independent	£1.60	22.20%
Racing Post	£2.20	24.25%
Herald	£1.30	23.00%
Scotsman	£1.40	22.50%

### Saturday newspapers Margins/percentage

Sun	70p	21.40%
Mirror	90p	21.40%
Mirror (Scotland)	90p	21.40%
Daily Record	85p	22.00%
Daily Star	60p	24.20%
Daily Mail	90p	21.40%
Express	85p	21.40%
Express (Scotland)	80p	22.50%
Telegraph	£2.00	24.00%
Times	£1.50	23.50%
FT	£3.50	22.60%
Guardian	£2.70	23.00%
i Saturday	50p	25.00%
Independent	£2.00	23.60%
Racing Post	£2.50	23.25%
Herald	£1.70	23%
Scotsman	£1.80	22.50%

### Sunday newspapers Margins/percentage

Sun	£1.00	21.00%
Sunday Mirror	£1.30	21.00%
People	£1.30	21.00%
Star Sunday	£1.00	22.10%
Sunday Sport	£1.00	24.30%
Mail On Sunday	£1.60	21.00%
Sunday Mail	£1.60	21.00%
Sunday Mail (Scotland)	£1.60	21.00%
Sunday Telegraph	£2.00	22.75%
Sunday Times	£2.50	21.00%
Observer	£2.90	25.00%
Independent on Sunday	£2.20	25.00%
Scotland on Sunday	£2.15	23.00%
Racing Post	£2.50	24.25%
Sunday Herald	£1.50	23.00%
Sunday Express	£1.40	21.20%
Sunday Post	£1.50	22.00%

## Newspapers

### Scale of third-party advertising insert payments

Insert weight	Original scheme	Mail	Mirror	News UK	Express	Guardian	Telegraph	Independent
Cumulative?	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
0-69g	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
70-100g	1.5p	2.5p	2.57p	2.7p	2.15p	2.75p	2.65p	2.49p
101-200g	2p	3p	3.36p	3.3p	2.75p	3.35p	3.30p	2.77p
201-300g	4p	5p	6.09p	5.5p	5p	5.75p	5.66p	5.32p
301-400g	5p	7p	7.43p	6.7p	6p	7p	6.38p	6.65p
401-500g	*	7.5p	*	*	*	*	*	*
Over 500g	*	8p	*	*	*	*	*	*

\* By negotiation

### Weight Watchers 14-15 November

	Total weight	Supplements weight	Ad inserts weight	Number of Inserts	Heaviest ad insert
Telegraph	1,895g	1,275g	350g	5	195g
Sunday Times	1,755g	1,080g	285g	7	110g
Sunday Telegraph	1,375g	770g	355g	9	80g
Mail on Sunday	1,070g	560g	155g	5	50g
Observer	990g	355g	220g	5	115g
Guardian	935g	275g	205g	4	65g
Times	930g	515g	150g	4	60g
Mail	660g	235g	120g	5	65g

### Insertion payment guide

Per copy sold Guardian Newspapers =2p. News UK =2p. Associated Newspapers =2p. Express Newspapers =2p. Telegraph Group =2p.  
Per copy supplied Independent News & Media =2p. Financial Times =2p. Mirror Group Newspapers =2p

COMING UP IN



**IAA  
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REVEALED**

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**Win in  
2016**

**This year's  
IAA champions  
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secrets on how to  
make your store  
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- Features & Benefits**
- Low 324mm front for maximum capacity
  - Electronic controller as standard
  - Low energy light and fans
  - Top trim colour Jura (cream)
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FROM £599

- Features & Benefits**
- Vertical Interior LED Light
  - 1,2 and 3 door
  - Fitted Lock
  - Switchable LED illuminated Canopy
  - Adjustable Shelving
  - Digital Temperature Display
  - Fully Automatic Operation
  - Temperature Range -12/-24 C
  - No. of Shelves . . . . . 5 Per Door

FROM £749



**UPRIGHT FREEZER 1,2 & 3 DOORS**



FROM £950

- Features & Benefits**
- Switchable Interior Lights
  - Fully Automatic Operation
  - Electronically Controlled
  - Digital Temperature Display
  - Marble rear shelf
  - Straight/CURVED Glass
  - Under storage
  - Temperature Range +2/+4 C

FROM £899



**ASSOS**

ONLY £1999



**COLD ROOM**

FROM £2199



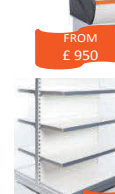
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FROM £299



**WALL UNIT**

FROM £89



**GONDOLA UNIT**

FROM £134



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  - ✓ CEILING
  - ✓ E-POS
  - ✓ AIR CONDITIONING
  - ✓ COUNTERS
  - ✓ CATERING EQUIPMENTS

**ECA Approved** Condensing Units & Cabinet  
**Low Noise** Energy Saving Cabinet & Condensing  
**Hydraulic Blinds**



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## Back in the day

**101**  
YEARS AGO

**21 November 1914**

According to the Paris edition of The New York Herald, American newspaper publishers are seriously considering the doubling of the price of one cent newspapers, the increase in the price of paper having rendered them unprofitable at the smaller figure.

**50**  
YEARS AGO

**20 November 1965**

National daily and Sunday newspapers, chocolates and sugar confectionery are among 84 goods and services which have been listed as provisionally subject to the voluntary "early warning" system for price increases adopted by the government, in which manufacturers must give a month's warning of a price increase.

**25**  
YEARS AGO

**24 November 1990**

A number of newsagents in Glasgow have refused to handle a free colour calendar, worth £2, which was to be inserted in Tuesday's issue of the Daily Record. Although the trade received a 2p handling fee per copy, it was the view of these agents that this would harm sales of regular calendars.

## You don't need a big budget to spread your Christmas message



Yes, we know it's only November and we already covered a story on Christmas ads last week.

But when we heard news of students launching their own spoof of the John Lewis festive campaign using puppets, we couldn't resist delving a little deeper.

The art students from London's School of Communication Arts took seven hours and £700 to create their own version of the retail chain's 'Man on the Moon' ad, a snip on the £1m and seven months invested to create the real thing.

Though the performances from the actors may be a little - ahem, wooden - and features the group's own bespoke

soundtrack, the parody video retains many of the elements from its big screen counterpart.

However, it does contain one striking difference. Whereas John Lewis' ad seeks to raise awareness of the loneliness of elderly people at Christmas, the student's version ends with the message: "Some things need a big budget. Your Christmas isn't one of them."

The charming effort has been viewed more than 38,000 times on YouTube and while it may pale in comparison to John Lewis' 10m views, it certainly had the same effect of pulling on the heartstrings of the Extra Extra! staff.

## Service, please. And make it snappy

Retailers will no doubt be well accustomed to the odd snappy customer but for store owners at a Texas shopping centre, this took on a slightly more literal meaning this month.

Workers turning up for the morning shift at the Sugar Land centre faced a nasty surprise when they found an 800 pound alligator blocking their way.

The scaly beast, known

locally as 'Godzilla', had wandered over from a nearby creek for a spot of window shopping.

But before he could be turned into one of the many expensive handbags on display, he was subdued by a crack team of specialist 'nuisance alligator trappers'.

Readers will be pleased to hear that Godzilla is now residing happily in a nearby alligator reserve.

## AROUND WITH THE ROUNDSMAN with Blanche Fairbrother



It's the morning of Tuesday 10 November and what's in the tote box? Yes, bumper double issue magazines and, let's face it, we need these like a hole in the head.

They get earlier and earlier every year - why do we have to put up with it?

It just causes a lot of harassment because next week my phone will be ringing with customers wanting to know where their mags are, as they have forgotten that this one is for two weeks.

Why can't we go back to sensible times when we got one double issue the week before Christmas, leaving us with just papers to deal with?

I had a surprise last week. A lady rang to see if it was convenient for her to call in for a chat, which was nice of her.

It was Mavis Gould, the retail development manager from the NFRN, and she turned out to be a delightful soul.

She was trying to find my shop, only no-one had told her that I am only a roundsperson - but it was very nice to meet her.

On Tuesday morning I felt extremely sorry for my delivery driver. He arrived in a bit of a state, because his van had a dent in the door, a broken wing mirror and the side indicator was hanging off.

He was driving across Cannock Chase when a deer ran out and collided with him. This has happened to a number of people on that road and, unfortunately, deer don't come with insurance, so he will have to suffer the repair bill himself.

It is now Thursday 12 November and I have just seen the article in today's RN about Saturday Telegraph sales going down. It's not surprising, because people are fed up with it having too much in it.

Can't the publishers see that anyone who just pops out to the shop to buy a paper simply can't carry it home?

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