

RETAIL NEWSAGENT

A RISE TOO FAR?

Can you afford a living wage?

NEWS ANALYSIS

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My shelves, their choice
'I based my range on customer suggestions'

Page 24 >>



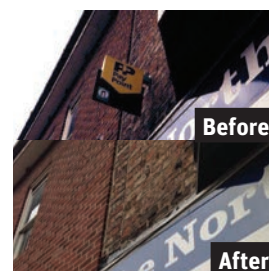
NEWS • CONVENIENCE • PROFIT

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£100k flood bill to save my new shop



- Sandy Sarwar's store was submerged in water, damaging everything but the roof, weeks after £40k refit.
- Defiant retailer determined to re-open in weeks, despite being told it could take up to six months by insurer. Page 5 >>



COMMISSION ROW

No profit, no posters, shops tell PayPoint

Retailers refuse to promote service until terms improve. Page 4 >>

WHOLESALE

P&H boss: 'We are stronger than ever'

Martyn Ward refutes availability and service complaints. Page 6 >>

UNITED BISCUITS

14% biscuit club boost

Strong start to Ambassadors scheme. Page 8 >>



Dennis is up for the cup Heineken key account manager Chris Stirling (pictured right) brought the Webb Ellis Trophy to Dennis (pictured) and Linda Williams' Premier Broadway Convenience Store in Edinburgh as part of the company's Rugby World Cup activity. Customers at the store also had the chance to play Batak, a training aid used by professional rugby players.

NEWSSTAND

Sporting titles kick off sales season

Bumper Four Four Two, Rugby Attax, Match Attax and World Cup specials on way. Page 7 >>

Crimestoppers campaign targets illicit tobacco sellers in Birmingham, Glasgow and Cardiff.

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PUMP UP YOUR VOLUMES

LIMITED EDITION



STERLING

The **UK'S No.1**
cigarette brand*

* Nielsen MarketTrack May-15 YTD

LEADER



The size of increase being discussed and the speed of implementation puts retailers in a difficult position



CHRIS GAMM

Editor

@ChrisGammRN

In 1998, the year Britain set its first minimum wage, I got my first Saturday job taking telephone orders at our local Pizza Hut. I went on to earn the new under-21 rate of £3 per hour the following year when the law was introduced.

I got thinking about my entry into the workforce this week when reading an article on the National Living Wage in The Economist.

Now is the worst time for a drastic rise, the article says, as technological advances are enabling firms to replace more people with computers. It uses an analogy of burger-flipping machines to make the point that low-skilled positions are those most at risk. I can identify with this, as my Pizza Hut role has largely been replaced by a slick online system serving its 650 branches.

In this week's news analysis, however, Kent retailer David Charman makes a strong case for why retailers should seek high-skilled managers of the future rather than low-skilled burger-flippers.

Doing this means his 24-hour store runs efficiently when he's not there and any of his well-trained staff can step in if the bakery manager, for example, is sick. For this, he pays a living wage and tells them it's because he wants to and not because he has to.

The size of increase being discussed and the speed of implementation puts retailers in a difficult position and 79% of retailers told RN this week that they will let staff go to pay the National Living Wage.

One thing we can be sure of, though, is that we know relatively little about the effects of a small rise to the minimum wage and nothing about the effects of a big rise. To assume a big rise would be harmless because small increases have seemed so would be reckless.

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Pizza Hut franchise to running a Lifestyle Express store, with his son Harpreet

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set the cat among the pigeons with his recent budget announcement. What does it mean for already cash-strapped retailers?

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RN INTERVIEW

Palmer & Harvey boss Martyn Ward on past challenges and future opportunities



FUNCTIONAL SOFT DRINKS

Why quenching thirst isn't enough for today's customers

I LIKE TO THINK OUR PEOPLE WORRY ABOUT THAT SLIGHTLY LESS

– RETAILER DAVID CHARMAN SAYS PAYING THE LIVING WAGE LETS HIS STAFF FOCUS ON THEIR WORK RATHER THAN THE BILLS Page 26 >>

NEWS

Shoppers head out of town to spend

High street footfall in June fell 2.8% on last year as shoppers flocked to out-of-town retail parks, according to the latest figures from the British Retail Consortium (BRC).

The BRC Springboard figures also found footfall at shopping centres was in year-on-year decline of 2.4%, while footfall at retail parks had grown 2.8% during the same period.

Helen Dickinson, director general at the BRC, said the results indicated "the re-invention of the high street is far from complete".

She added: "The process of creating multi-use destinations in the heart of our towns and cities needs to continue in earnest if people are going to be drawn back to the high street."

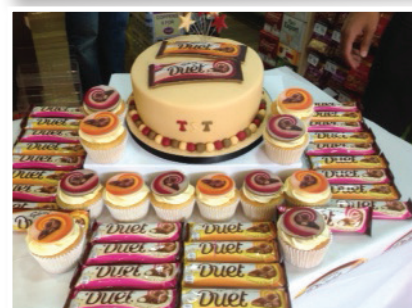
Charity praises guide for disabled

A charity has praised the Association of Convenience Stores for launching a guide showing retailers how best to meet the needs of disabled customers.

The guide, developed in partnership with the Business Disability Forum, covers a range of topics from wheelchair access to assisting customers with dementia.

It has also received approval from small business minister Anna Soubry, and highlights how disabled customers have spending power of £80bn a year.

Jolanta Lasota, chief executive of Ambitious about Autism, said: "We are delighted to see learning disabilities being addressed in this guide."



Singh's Premier retailers deliver Duet bar treats

Singh's Premier retailers Mandeep, Vrinder and Bal Khaira handed out a few hundred free chocolate bars at one of their Sheffield stores on Tuesday to celebrate the launch of the new Galaxy Duet bars. The team stopped people walking past the shop, as well as boarding local buses, to give away the chocolate. Mandeep said: "You have to put something back into the community and this is something that isn't available anywhere else yet."

Owners' commission row action 'I won't advertise a product that doesn't make me money'

Retailers remove PoS in latest PayPoint protest

by Nicola Stewart

Independents have found another way of pushing back against PayPoint's commission cap cuts – taking down branded PoS.

RN spoke to several retailers this week who are refusing to promote or show support for the payment service in their stores.

Malcolm Dobson, of Skinnergate News in Darlington, said he had taken down anything that identified his store as providing PayPoint, including a sign

bolted to his outside wall.

"I just don't believe in advertising a product that isn't making me any money – or, in fact, is costing me money," he said.

"We have too many people coming in who think of us as a PayPoint shop and that's it."

Mr Dobson, who has been a PayPoint agent for 17 years, said he isn't afraid of being in breach of contract as he hasn't renewed his contract since it ended in 2010, but has continued to offer the service.

Chris Watson, of Cors-

eford Keystore in Renfrewshire, said he was sticking to his contract by keeping official signs up, but had removed the logo from his window, promotional flyers, website and Facebook.

"I had done a lot of extra PoS myself, but after the cut to commission, decided to take it all down. I don't believe the footfall argument and the commission is just a farce," he said.

Mo Razzaq, of Premier Mo's and Family Shopper in Blantyre, said he wouldn't be using any new

PoS or upselling any PayPoint products until terms were made clear.

"For instance, we have been given travel tickets, but I'm not going to be putting out the posters and leaflets until I find out what the commission is," he said.

PayPoint group marketing director Steve O'Neill said: "It is a breach of contract to remove permanent signage installed and paid for by PayPoint."

"If a retailer has any issues with signage, they can contact us directly."

PayPoint campaigners fighting on

Campaigners are keeping up the fight for a better deal for all PayPoint retailers despite in-fighting.

The PayPoint Pay Fair Facebook group has descended into chaos over the past few weeks, resulting in some retailers turning away from the group.

"It's shambolic the way

some retailers on there are behaving, especially the comments they are making," said Blantyre retailer Mo Razzaq, who set up a new page for retailers to discuss concerns.

"I don't post on the group anymore because I don't want to be associated

with manners like that. Yes we have an issue with PayPoint, but there's a way of speaking to them and that's not it."

He says the campaign is "still going strong" with "lots going on behind the scenes in Scotland in particular" with a dossier being put together to pres-

ent to local councils and MSPs.

"You have got to remember the Scottish government and local councils give PayPoint business. If we can get one council to agree to something that will set the ball rolling for the other councils," he said.

Tobacco firms avoid paying out £557m

Three major tobacco manufacturers have avoided paying out a combined C\$1.13bn (£557m) following an appeal against a court case that has ordered them to pay more than C\$15bn (£7.4bn) to smokers in Quebec over claims they failed to warn customers about

the dangers of smoking.

A Canadian court has waived a preliminary deposit due to be made by the companies, which include Imperial Tobacco Canada, a subsidiary of British American Tobacco; JTI-Macdonald Corp, a subsidiary of Japan Tobacco

International; and Rothmans, Benson & Hedges Inc, a subsidiary of Philip Morris International.

The three firms were due to make the payment as part of a court decision made on 1 June, which saw damages totalling C\$15.6m awarded to two smoking

class action cases.

However, the Quebec Court of Appeal overturned the provisional execution order last week.

Tamara Gitto, vice-president law & general counsel at Imperial Tobacco Canada, said the group "welcomed" the decision.

Morrisons 'in breach'

Morrisons has been accused of breaching a government-backed code after buyers for the supermarket attempted to secure one-off payments from around 20 suppliers.

Morrisons' legal team is understood to have only blocked "a handful" of the payments, while buyers were urged to seek advice on how to demand one-off supplier payments while satisfying regulators, according to a leaked internal email sent to The Guardian.

The Groceries Code Adjudicator is investigating the case.

Shop devastated one month after £40,000 refit 'Only bit undamaged is the roof' says owner

Retailer faces £100k bill for 'freak' flood repairs

by Gurpreet Samrai

A defiant shop owner says he will have to plough £100,000 into getting his business up and running again following a devastating flood just one month after a £40,000 refit.

Sandy Sarwar's Pricecracker in Alyth was submerged in water after the banks of Alyth Burn, which runs parallel to his shop, burst earlier this month.

The shop underwent a major refurbishment in June shortly after Mr Sarwar took it over, and had only been open for a month before the "freak incident".

"It has completely damaged the shelves and refrigeration, the counters are half submerged and a new floor will have to go in," he said. "The only bit undamaged is the roof because it

came through the doors like a ton."

He estimates it will cost more than £100,000 to get the shop back to good repair.

Despite being told by his insurance company that it could take up to six months to re-open, Mr Sarwar said he is determined to turn the shop around in three to four weeks. This week, he took matters into his own hands and started to strip the shop back ready to be refitted, following a meeting with a loss adjuster.

"If we wait for the insurer's contractors it will take longer, so we are doing some of the dirty work ourselves, and hopefully we will start to get some payments in the next couple of weeks," he said. "At the end



of the day I'm an independent retailer and I rely on my customers.

commenced rounds this week.

The store was taking around £30,000 a week, including PayPoint and the Lottery, before the disaster, Mr Sarwar said.

"We're trying to put systems in place so our customers are not inconvenienced," he said. "With a lot of hard work we will hopefully be able to bounce back and get the business going again."

It's our livelihood."

Mr Sarwar's staff have already recreated the store's home news delivery list of around 150 customers from memory after the computer it was on was damaged, and

Ibec call for 'less excise'

Business lobby group Ibec has called on the Irish government to reduce excise on alcohol ahead of October's Budget.

In its submission to the Department of Finance, the group claimed Irish alcohol excise rates are among the highest in Europe and had "increased substantially" in the past two years, including a full-year effect of €180m in 2013 and a further €145m in 2014. It has urged the government to reverse the most recent Budget increases over the coming years.

Stacks of Kent cash

Kent retailers have seen growth in tobacco sales and trade as a result of Kent Police's use of its Operation Stack procedure, which caused traffic chaos on the M20 leading to the Channel Tunnel.

Simply Fresh Faversham owner Sandeep Bains said tobacco sales were £500 up this month as a result of illicit traders struggling to smuggle stock through the Channel Tunnel.

"Customers who were just buying Rizlas before are now buying tobacco along with it," he said.

Proposed tobacco register 'no good'

A proposed tobacco retailers' register in Wales would have little impact on illicit trade, while cutting into the profit of responsible retailers, the NFRN has said.

Members met with the Welsh government last week to raise concerns over the scheme, outlined in the

Public Health (Wales) Bill, which requires any retailer who sells tobacco products to register, paying a £30 fee for one store and £10 for any additional stores.

NFRN South Wales district president Matthew Clark said he was not convinced the register would

have any benefit, adding that he would have to sell about £800 worth of tobacco to cover the fee.

"I am completely against paying for the privilege of selling tobacco.

"I don't have a problem registering, but it's not going to solve anything.

People selling illicit tobacco are obviously not going to register."

It was positive, however, that the government was listening to retailers, along with removing a draft suggestion that retailers should pay to re-register every three years, said Mr Clark.

NEWS

BUSINESS

Closures by Tesco triple that of rivals

Tesco has closed three times as many new supermarket sites as rival multiples combined with 62 developments being abandoned.

The figure, collated by data company Barbour ABI for The Telegraph, is higher than the 49 sites Tesco chief executive Dave Lewis announced it would be scrapping in January.

By comparison, Sainsbury's has halted development at 13 sites, Morrisons at four and Asda at two – a total of 19 stores.

Michael Dall, economist at ABI, said the move paved the way for discounters to grow their retail estate.

"The big four have an advantage because of their size already, but as they shelve stores it provides an opportunity for Aldi and Lidl to move into new areas while they concentrate on other parts of their business," he said.

Sainsbury's 'reinvents c-store'

Sainsbury's chief executive Mike Coupe said he will "reinvent the superstore" with the launch of a new convenience format.

The multiple is understood to be introducing the format to six stores being opened around the UK.

While full details are being kept under wraps, Mr Coupe said fresh fruit will feature prominently at the front of the stores, and will also include new self-scan technology allowing shoppers to pay with their phones.

Mr Coupe said: "Our challenge is to reinvent the superstore for the next generation."



Blakemore Fine Foods goes online

Blakemore Fine Foods has unveiled a new online ordering system allowing retailers to view and order from more than 3,500 locally sourced and premium products. The service will provide images and descriptions of the entire Fine Foods range, while a producer search feature will also enable retailers to find suppliers in their local area. Blakemore Fine Foods commercial director Caoire Blakemore said: "Our new online ordering platform will considerably simplify the ordering process."

MD responds to criticism over Costcutter migration BuyCo partnership seeks new members

P&H boss Ward says 'we are stronger than ever'

by Steven Lambert

Palmer & Harvey managing director Martyn Ward said service levels for retailers have returned to where they were before the transition to Costcutter and the wholesaler is now in a "stronger position" as a result.

His comments come a year since the migration of Costcutter stores to P&H under a new supply deal, which led to service and availability issues for a number of retailers involved in the switchover.

But retailers speaking to RN said they are still experiencing issues 12 months on, with one business missing 60 items on a recent Costcutter promotion.

Store owners were also critical of P&H's use of agency delivery drivers, which they said was affecting deliveries.

Responding to the claims, Mr Ward said there were "still elements around range, price and promotion that are not quite right", but insisted that service levels have returned to normal since the final quarter of

last year.

He admitted that P&H had been "caught on the back foot" during the migration and had taken on more agency staff as a result, but said the majority of these workers had become permanent staff. "We really do believe that while it was a painful two or three months during the integration, strategically it was the right thing to do," said Mr Ward.

"Palmer & Harvey is in a much stronger position than where it was before. We're now better able to

compete in what is a very difficult market."

In addition, Mr Ward said he was "pleased" with the progress and level of supplier support given to its BuyCo partnership between P&H and Costcutter.

He added that both companies are now looking at further wholesale and convenience groups interested in signing up to the joint venture in the near future.

"BuyCo will not be Palmer & Harvey and Costcutter alone going forward," said Mr Ward.

Support for Nisa chief at 'positive' summit

Nisa retailers have given their backing to chief executive Nick Read and his team, who told members the company is beginning the "fightback" against falling turnover and market pressures at last week's Nisa Summit.

Retailers at the event told RN they were certain the group will hit its target of

£7.2m operating profits by the end of the next financial year, as outlined by Mr Read in his presentation.

Harj Dhasee, owner of Nisa Mickleton Village Stores, said: "The reaction from members at the summit was mostly positive, and there was the sense that we are moving in the

right direction."

Peter Mann, owner of a Nisa Local in Luton, added: "We were told Nisa will increase product prices to improve our margins, and I'm confident it will achieve this."

Those in attendance also had the chance to hear from Ursula Lidbetter, chief executive of the Lincoln-

shire Co-operative, who discussed the processes her company went through following its investigation by Lord Myners last year.

It follows on from Lord Myners' review of Nisa's business practices this year, which has led to members being consulted about governance at the company.

NEWSTRADE

Sunday Post's unique selling point

The Sunday Post printed a cartoon strip unique to each copy in this week's edition, in what is thought to be a UK first.

Publisher DC Thomson's new printing system at its Dundee-based printing arm allows it to change what is printed in individual copies

without swapping plates on the press.

Sunday's issue of the Post had unique competition codes on its comic strip The

Broons – along with alternative endings to the story. The codes allowed up to 500 readers to claim from a cash prize pool of £10,000.

Rugby World Cup and Premier League set to invigorate sales '90% hike in sales' expected

Major sports events will kick sales into overdrive

by Nicola Stewart

Independent retailers can look forward to a cracking few months on the magazine stand as the Premier League and Rugby World Cup kick off.

Distributors are already forecasting strong sales, as publishers invest in special issues, one shots and new collectables.

One of the first to hit tote boxes will be a season preview special, from Haymarket's Four Four Two, pictured, which is expected to almost double sales on previous issues.

Frontline head of new-strade marketing Richard Jefferies told RN: "We are expecting to see a similar sales uplift to last year, where sales in independents were 90% higher than the average over the rest of the year.

"This issue has become the issue to stock every year in the football category."

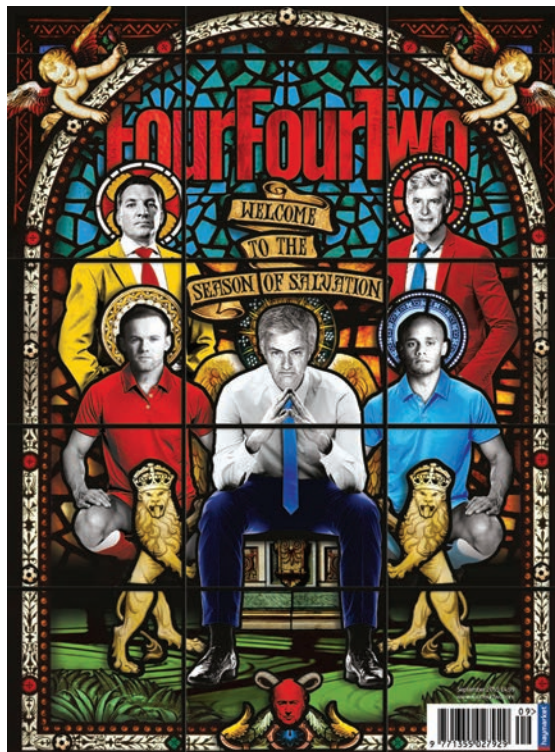
Featuring a foil bag and supplement, the special previews the fortunes of every Premier League and Football League club in advance of the season's return on 8 August. On sale 1 August, it has a one-off increased price of £4.99.

Meanwhile, Topps is taking on both codes, launching a Rugby Attax trading card collection on 13 August, followed by a new series of Match Attax on 24 September.

Match Attax collections for the 2014/15 season out-sold all other collectables on sale during the same period, with sales of the trading cards doubling in the past 12 months, according to Topps sports marketing manager Dominic D'altia.

Special publications dedicated to the Rugby World Cup are also tipped to spark sales, driving revenue with premium cover prices.

One example, the Official Rugby World Cup 2015



Travel Guide from Ardent, goes on sale on 13 August for £9.99 and will be dis-

tributed to selected independent stores through the wholesalers' sales clubs.

Journal's mugger mission

The Press and Journal in Aberdeen has put up a £1,000 reward in a bid to help catch a thief who mugged an injured pensioner.

The daily launched the appeal on its front page last week after the suspect stole hundreds of pounds from a 71-year-old man who had fallen in the street.

The reward is being offered to anyone who can provide information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the thief.

Press and Journal editor-in-chief Damian Bates said: "If the Press and Journal can help in some small way to catch the culprit then we'll do everything in our power to do so."

Shooting one shot

Sporting Rifle, a monthly shooting title, has launched a premium one shot dedicated to the art of shooting foxes like expert pest controllers.

Sporting Rifle Presents Foxing, on sale now, has a cover price of £7.99, and features chapters on 'lamping', technological solutions such as night vision and thermal imaging devices, and techniques such as ambush.

Retailers are advised to display the special alongside the regular Sporting Rifle, Shooting Times & Country, and Sporting Gun.

Egmont considers video blogging title

Egmont is considering launching a regular frequency title based on vlogging – video blogging – after its one shot Oh My Vlog! created a storm on Twitter.

The title, launched on 22 July as part of the publisher's All About series, caused heated debate on the social networking site about the relevance of a print magazine based on something as

modern as YouTube.

Malcolm Mackenzie, editor of We Love Pop, the team behind the magazine, said: "People on Twitter have questioned the point of Oh My Vlog! Well, you can't print out a vlog and stick it up on your bedroom wall, can you?"

"Our job is to understand and respond to what young magazine readers want."

Online and national media picked up on the launch, with stories running in the Metro, Guardian and Independent, as well as on Wired, Vice, Glamour and the Huffington Post.

Siobhan Galvin, publish-



ing director of All About, said: "We launched this as a one shot to test the market and we will now be reviewing sales potential for a regular frequency title."

Oh My Vlog! is on sale until 19 August.

FT bought for £844m

The Financial Times has been sold to Japanese media group Nikkei for £844m by UK firm Pearson.

Pearson has also confirmed it is "in discussions" about selling its 50% share in The Economist magazine.

NEWS

PRODUCTS

Marmite embraces Summer of Love

Marmite is taking inspiration from the 'summer of love' with a Woodstock-themed marketing campaign launched this month.

The 'Summer of Love Not Hate' initiative will see the brand promoted in three London Underground posters featuring a sixties art style. It will be backed with an animated film appearing on Facebook and YouTube.

The activity will be used to promote limited edition Marmite jars launched in July, featuring either a Summer of Love or Summer of Hate label, which will be available until the end of September.

Butterkist £500,000 popcorn prizes

Butterkist is giving away £500,000 worth of cash prizes in its new 'Try for Cash' promotion running on seven million popcorn packs.

The rugby-themed scheme will feature on core sharing bag flavours including Toffee, Cinema Sweet and Sweet & Salted until the end of the year.

Shoppers can use on-pack promotional codes to play an online rugby game, giving them the chance to win £10, £50, £100 or £1,000 along with 50p money-off coupons.

'Innovation and accessibility' from Heineken

Heineken is focusing on 'innovation' and 'accessibility' for its latest batch of cider and ale launches.

The brewer has unveiled Strongbow Cloudy Apple this month, a premium 4.5% ABV cider targeted at 20

to 30-year-old drinkers.

Cloudy Apple will be priced in line with Strongbow Dark Fruit and will be available in a 500ml glass bottle, a 4x500ml price-marked pack and a 10x440ml can case.

It will be supported with an £8m marketing investment including TV, outdoor and social media ads, along with a £1m sampling campaign targeting city centres and transport hubs. In addition, Heineken is expanding

its John Smith's brand with the launch of John Smith's Golden Ale designed to appeal to 25 to 49-year-old lager and ale drinkers. It will be available in a 500ml bottle, 4x500ml can pack and a 10x440ml can pack.

Kent retailer's delight at success of manufacturer's initiative Category advice pays off

United Biscuits club ambassador's 14% boost

by Steven Lambert

United Biscuits (UB) has reported early success for independent stores involved in its Ambassadors Club, with one participating retailer seeing his biscuit sales grow by 14% in six weeks.

Adam Hogwood, owner of Budgens of Broadstairs in Kent (pictured right), is one of 12 local retailers working with UB to trial in-store initiatives and share feedback on the biscuit category under the scheme, which was launched in April.

Mr Hogwood has been working with UB's field sales team to revamp his biscuit fixture using the manufacturer's Better Biscuits, Better Business category management platform.



Adam Hogwood (right) with UB third party field sales controller Richard Williams

Changes included 'blocking' the sweet biscuit fixture on a 'good, better, best' principle, with own label lines placed on the bottom three shelves and 'special treat' biscuits placed on top.

In addition, sweet biscuits were repositioned

next to hot beverages to encourage extra impulse sales, while PoS material, including header boards and branded fins, were used to attract more shoppers to the aisle.

Mr Hogwood said: "We were lacking consistency

across the biscuit range before but, since we've made the changes, our total biscuit sales have grown 14% in just over a month, which is a fantastic result."

Hena Chandarana, trade communications controller at UB, said the company is collecting testimonials and sales data from the remaining Ambassador Club retailers, with the information being used to shape future biscuit category advice for independent retailers.

She said: "We've had some really positive feedback and results from retailers involved in the Ambassadors Club, and the group will be meeting in September to discuss further opportunities around the category, including Christmas."

Speedy retailers stake claim for £5k vouchers

Retailers will have the chance to win a share of £5,000 Love2Shop vouchers in a competition to be launched by JTI next month.

The activity will run alongside new limited edition packs of Silk Cut

Purple, Blue and Silver King Size 20s.

Store owners will be encouraged to visit the JTI Advance website and play the Silk Cut Discovery Game, which involves matching four pairs in the

quickest time.

An online leaderboard will record the fastest times, with the top five receiving prizes. The leaderboard will also be reset four times throughout August, giving retailers

more chances to win.

Jeremy Blackburn, head of communications at JTI, said: "With such a large share of the sector, retailers should stock up and ensure they try their hand at the online competition."

Hot products for your shopping list



£500k of prizes are on offer in Butterkist's 'Try for Cash' promotion



New limited edition Silk Cut packs are linked to a JTI retailer promotion



Heineken has launched Strongbow Cloudy Apple cider and John Smith's Golden Ale



Cadbury

25p PMP RANGE STOCK UP NOW!

NEW



✓ From the **Nation's Favourite Chocolate** Brand**

✓ The taste **Mum loves*****

✓ Now available in a comprehensive **PMP range**

For great category advice go to
www.deliciousdisplay.co.uk

Source: *New refers to PMP pack, non PMP pack available, retailers are free to set their own prices
Nielsen Total Value Sales MAT to 17.05.2015, * Ipsos BHT 'Amongst Mum's' Jan- April 2014

Mondelēz
International

NEWS

PRODUCTS

Juiceburst pricemark Blippar bonanza

Purity Soft Drinks is targeting value-conscious shoppers with a pricemarking campaign running on its core Juiceburst range.

Juiceburst Orange, Apple, Orange & Carrot and Blackcurrant flavours will feature a £1 price flash on 400ml bottles from this month.

The new packs will also feature Blippar technology, allowing buyers to scan labels and play an online game to win prizes.

Jon Evans, marketing director at Purity, said: "Pricemarked packs play a key role in communicating great value for money to consumers. They also offer retailers a significant sales opportunity."

Musical Mentos

Perfetti Van Melle is giving away £1,500 worth of prizes to shoppers to support the launch of its Mentos music app. The confectionery brand has teamed up with digital music service Spotify to help 'freshen up playlists' as part of a six-month partnership. Spotify users can visit the Mentos Freshener website to get new songs and band suggestions based on their music tastes.

Those sharing their new playlist on Facebook or Twitter will also be in with a chance of winning a Spotify premium code. Perfetti is promoting the campaign to millions of music fans with Mentos advertising running on the Spotify website until the end of the year.

Increase in business to rival 2014's football event 'Big incremental sales opportunity'

Heineken's Rugby World Cup sales drive for indies

by Steven Lambert

The Rugby World Cup could generate a similar scale of business for independents as last year's football World Cup, but retailers must work harder to build awareness of the event among sports fans.

This is the message from Heineken, which has revealed a support package for local stores to generate extra sales and footfall during this year's tournament, which kicks off in September.

The manufacturer is providing wall planners, posters and other PoS material to newsagents and convenience stores to remind shoppers about forthcoming fixtures.

Retailers signed up to its Star Retailer scheme will also be able to offer their customers free rugby scarves when they purchase four packs of Heineken beer.

Craig Clarkson, category and trade marketing director at Heineken, said:

"The Rugby World Cup is a huge opportunity, but there won't be as many easy sales compared to last year's football World Cup – retailers will have to work for it.

"There will be a core of rugby fans watching the matches, but there will also be a number of general sports fans who will be interested in the World Cup.

"If we can get local retailers to let these consumers know when the matches are on, tie these in with

offers on snacks and alcohol and work closely with sponsors, then it will be a big incremental sales opportunity for them."

Mr Clarkson said Heineken will create Rugby World Cup-themed stadium displays in wholesale depots to encourage retailers to stock up before games.

He added that Heineken 'fan zones' will also be set up around convenience stores located close to where World Cup matches are taking place.



Happy landings with Carlsberg

Jetlagged passengers on a flight to London City Airport got a pleasant surprise when they received their own free crate of Carlsberg beer after landing. Those travelling on the 18.24 flight on 19 July were sent the gift via the airport's baggage carousel, which was secretly filmed by the beer brand and posted on YouTube. The publicity stunt forms part of Carlsberg's £12m 'If Carlsberg Did' campaign.

New term packaging and recipes for Hydro

New packaging and reformulations will form part of Britvic's plans to grow sales of its Robinsons Fruit Shoot Hydro drinks.

The manufacturer is updating the children's flavoured water brand next month ahead of the start of

the new school term.

Britvic will introduce changes to Hydro packs, including larger logos, new imagery of fruit and clearer 'No Added Sugar' claims.

Kirsty Hunter, brand director at Britvic, said: "As well as driving awareness

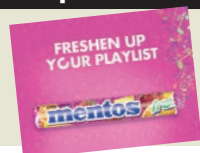
of the new formulation, the new-look packaging will create great on-shelf stand out for Hydro and increase sales for our customers for the start of the new school term and beyond."

In addition, the manufacturer has reformulated

Hydro based on consumer feedback, which now features improved fruit flavours and reduced sweetness.

Ms Hunter added: "We're confident that our new Hydro range will appeal to both kids and parents alike."

Hot products for your shopping list



Mentos is putting a new spin on shoppers' musical playlists



Juiceburst bottles are to be given a £1 pricemark



Britvic is giving Robinsons Fruit Shoot Hydro new packaging and a new recipe

NEWS

PRODUCTS



Male rugby cheerleader is the new face of Foster's

Following the departure of Brad and Dan this year, Heineken has unveiled its latest humorous Foster's TV campaign featuring one man's attempts to become Australia's first male rugby cheerleader, under the strapline 'Why The Hell Not?'. The ads will be backed with activity running across Foster's social media channels.

American-inspired favourites 'We are shaking up the cooked meats aisle'

Fire & Smoke set to ignite meat market

by Steven Lambert

Kerry Foods is targeting a bigger slice of the cooked meat market by bringing its premium Henry Denny's Fire & Smoke range to Great Britain next month.

The premium selection, previously only available in Ireland, includes seven pre-packed meats and two deli options that take inspiration from American cooking.

The products include 100g packs of sliced ham and

chicken breast, which are slow cooked, fire grilled and smoked.

Kerry claims Fire & Smoke currently controls a 3% share of the cooked meat market in Ireland, and said the wider launch will drive incremental growth in the £1.6bn UK cooked meat category.

Chris Owen, meats marketing controller at Kerry, said the range will be targeted at younger shoppers looking for alternative food options. "Consumers' tastes are evolving

and demand is high for great tasting quality products," he said. "With the launch of Fire & Smoke, we are planning on shaking up the cooked meats aisle, making it a destination and driving sustainable growth into the category."

Kerry is backing the launch of Fire & Smoke with a digital, social media and sampling campaign, along with the launch of a consumer website. A full range of PoS material will also be available to retailers.

Peanut flavour joins Gooeys line-up

Burton's Biscuit Company is updating its Maryland Gooeys range with the launch of a peanut flavour this month.

The new line, a peanut cookie filled with chocolate (RRP £1.79), is the first addition to Gooeys since its launch in 2013. It will join existing

Chocolate, Triple Choc and Hazelnut flavours.

It marks the latest launch by Burton's under its Maryland brand this year, following on from the introduction of its Soft Baked and Mix'ems biscuit ranges.

David Costello, head of cus-

tomers category management at Burton's, said: "The new peanut variant will capitalise on the surge in consumer demand for peanut butter that is seeing growth year on year."

Maryland Gooeys Peanut is available in 160g packs in case outs of eight.

Hot products for your shopping list



Kerry Foods is bringing its Henry Denny Fire & Smoke range to Great Britain



Maryland Gooeys have a new edition – a peanut flavour

HND HEROES

In association with

News UK

Top Tips

Tony Parker

Field partner manager, News UK



OFFER CONVENIENCE

1
TOP TIP

Sell the HND offer to all your customers. Convenience is more appealing now than ever before with 87% of your customers willing to pay for it.

To complement this, always offer a fair but profitable delivery charge. The News UK field team is happy to advise on the average delivery charge for your area and how to set yours.

Also make sure to display PoS material to advertise that your store offers HND.

CHECK YOUR AREA

2
TOP TIP

Ensure canvassing is done regularly to expand existing rounds if necessary and check for any expansion in the area, like a new housing estate.

USE THE SUN'S OFFER

3
TOP TIP

Get your customers to participate in the 12 Weeks Free HND offer from The Sun. Retention rate on this offer is 90%. Each new customer is worth £165 a year to your business.

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NEWS

REGIONAL

Masters plan gives 60% gum sales hike

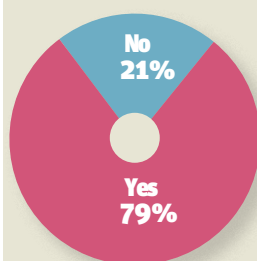
Two Sutton retailers have seen a joint increase of 60% in their gum sales after working with RN and Wrigley through the Merchandising with the Masters programme to implement the latest merchandising techniques.

Mentored by Sandeep Bains, of Simply Fresh in Faversham, who took part in the programme last year, Amita Patel, of News, Food & Wine, saw a sales increase of 105% by stocking all 29 Wrigley variants in a new unit.

And Ushma Amin, of Londis London Road, saw an increase of 14% by upselling bigger packs and following the planogram he was given.

Raj Jadeja, Wrigley field sales representative, said: "These figures show how important visibility and availability are to maximising gum sales."

RN READER POLL



Will you have to let staff go to pay the National Living Wage?

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION

Has illicit tobacco trading in your area grown, stayed the same or decreased since the introduction of the tobacco display ban?



Have your vote now

Go to betterretailing.com



£35,000 recycling takes the biscuit

More than £35,000 has been raised for charity and 2.5 tonnes of biscuit wrappers saved from UK landfill through a recycling scheme launched by United Biscuits. This week, the initiative reached a major milestone with one million biscuit wrappers collected since 2012 and recycled to make plastic products such as park benches, watering cans and waste bins. Wyeval Garden Centre in Findon (pictured) is one of 260 public drop-off locations nationwide for the McVitie's Biscuit Wrapper Brigade partnership with TerraCycle.

Birmingham, Cardiff and Glasgow targeted 'Tell us who's selling to stop crimes you don't see'

Crimestoppers sets sights on big city illegal tobacco

by Gurpreet Samrai

Illegal tobacco sellers in Birmingham, Cardiff and Glasgow are being targeted in a clampdown launched this week by crime-fighting charity Crimestoppers.

The aim of the campaign is to reduce the amount of illegal tobacco being sold through local retailers, car boot sales and pubs, and reduce funding often connected with organised crime groups with links to serious offences such as human trafficking.

A survey conducted by the Tobacco Manufactur-

ers' Association found 29% of the 12,077 respondents said they were aware of illicit tobacco being sold in their area, but only 14% had reported it.

The charity is appealing for information on local retailers selling illegal tobacco and will use radio advertisements and online tools such as Facebook and Twitter.

Roger Critchell, director of operations for Crimestoppers, said: "The links this trade has to serious organised crime and gangs are very real, and they are operating in your area, which has a

detrimental effect on your community and the lives of their victims.

"This is why we are reaching out to these three communities to tell us who is committing this crime, safe in the knowledge you will remain completely anonymous.

"I would urge you to look beyond just the issue of illegal tobacco and to the major impact it has on funding other crimes. Tell us anonymously who's selling it and help stop the crimes you don't see."

It is estimated that there are four billion illicit cigarettes in circulation in

the UK, and 4,400 tonnes of illicit rolling tobacco. Last year, it was reported that the UK saw a close to 50% rise in the consumption of counterfeit and contraband cigarettes in 2014 – the second highest increase in the EU.

Over the past year, hundreds of thousands of illegal cigarettes and rolling tobacco have been seized by HMRC officers during joint operations in Birmingham, Cardiff and Glasgow.

The campaign is targeting three areas – contraband, counterfeit and illicit whites.

Plain packs 'a total failure' say Scottish grocers

The Scottish Grocers' Federation (SGF) has slammed tobacco plain packaging legislation, branding it another policy that has "totally failed to hit the target".

The federation says the legislation is ineffective in dealing with the main tobacco-related problems in Scotland, with the multi-billion pound illicit market

remaining a key issue.

The comments come after an article by the chief executive of ASH Scotland in The Scotsman last week extolled the merits of the policy in Australia and looked forward to its implementation in the UK.

In a letter of response, John Lee, SGF head of public affairs, said: "Retailers in

Scotland will soon have to deal with the cumulative impact of the tobacco display ban, plain packaging and the European Tobacco Products Directive. In the meantime, proxy purchase will continue to be the main way young people obtain cigarettes, the illicit trade will still cost some £2bn annually and health

inequality will remain as the main tobacco-related problem we have in Scotland. Yet another policy has totally failed to hit the target."

● The SGF announced last week that Scotland's first minister Nicola Sturgeon will give the keynote address at this year's conference in October.

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NEWS

REGIONAL

CCTV is a planning issue after 30 years

A shop owner is facing enforcement action after being told he needs planning permission for CCTV cameras he has had outside his store for 30 years.

Malcolm Tayler, of MG & MV Tayler convenience store in Newport, was told by Newport City Council he had until 26 July to apply for planning consent for one of the larger cameras outside his shop or face being issued with an enforcement notice.

Mr Tayler, who has been running the shop for 38 years with his wife, Mary, said he installed the cameras following a number of incidents in the area. The cameras were upgraded last year because the big camera and recording device were broken.

Mr Tayler told RN he has not applied for planning consent and is waiting to see what the council does next.

UB backs Local Shop Summit

United Biscuits is the latest supplier to throw its weight behind the Local Shop Summit 2015.

It follows in the footsteps of headline sponsor Booker Wholesale as well as JTI, the Post Office, PepsiCo, News UK and Mars. Exclusive to independent business owners, the event at Lord's Cricket Ground on 14 October is an opportunity for retailers to have their say on the future of convenience in front of key industry figures, network, learn from others and find ways to work smarter, not harder.

For tickets, visit betterretailing.com/LSS



From flat batteries to tall towers

A whopping 83,000 batteries destined for recycling were used to create a replica 12 metre long and four metre high Tower Bridge to mark the launch of Energizer EcoAdvanced – the world's first AA battery made with 4% recycled batteries. The sculpture, battery operated to open and close at the same time as the real London landmark, took four weeks to create.

NFRN voices need for all-store compulsory charge ACS says present situation is confusing

Call for carrier bag charge as usage soars 200 million

by Gurpreet Samrai

New figures reveal single-use carrier bag usage soared by 200 million in England last year, prompting fresh calls for small businesses to be included in the upcoming charge.

From October, all businesses in England employing 250 or more staff will have to charge a minimum of 5p for single-use carrier bags. Small businesses can voluntarily adopt the charge, but the NFRN and the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) believe all businesses should be included to prevent consumer and retailer confusion.

The figures published by WRAP show mandatory carrier bag charges for all sized businesses introduced in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are reducing the number of plastic bags given out. Wales has seen a decrease of 78.2%, Northern Ireland 42.6%, and Scotland, which introduced the charges in autumn, 18.3%.

The NFRN is recommending its members introduce a charge from October, and has produced a poster retailers can display to make their customers aware of their intention to charge and that the proceeds will be donated to charity.

Paul Baxter, NFRN chief executive, said: "We continue to believe that in bringing forward a levy with so many caveats it will only lead to confusion for consumers and will not result in the impact we have seen in other countries in terms of a reduction of usage and the resulting effect for the environment. That's why we are encouraging our members in England to apply the charge from day one and share the benefits with their local communities."

The ACS's Voice of Local Shops Survey shows 22% of independent retailers charge for carrier bags.

The organisation says the charge would save retailers costs as well as benefiting the environment.

James Lowman, ACS chief executive, said: "We think charging is most effective and fairer when introduced for all retailers, so we were disappointed that the government decided to introduce a small business exemption from compulsory charging."

"Independent retailers who are exempt from the charge may be reluctant to introduce a charge unilaterally because they can see it putting them at a disadvantage with local competitors."

NFRN drives on with parking charges fight

The NFRN has written to the minister for local government as it continues to press for reforms to parking charges.

The move comes after Marcus Jones noted in an interview with a national newspaper that the areas where high streets were

performing best were those that had thought carefully about their approach to parking charges.

The minister suggested that these councils understand the needs of their local areas and are developing policies to make sure they attract people to shop

in the high street.

Paul Baxter, NFRN chief executive, said: "Local authorities need to rethink their approaches to parking charges as they are driving consumers towards the abundance of free parking at supermarkets and out-of-town

developments."

He added: "NFRN members are aware that not charging is not always an option. Instead, our members would like local authorities to work with local businesses to develop schemes that promote local shopping areas."



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YOUR REGION

NFRN DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT DEVON & CORNWALL AND WESTERN 22.07.2015



Nick Constable reports from the Devon & Cornwall and Western district council meeting

Robust policing to tackle crime

Retail crime is the bane of retailers' lives and needs more robust policing, national president Ralph Patel told members.

Speaking at his first district council meeting since taking office, Mr Patel said members were suffering everything from violence and criminal damage to shop theft and abusive language. Yet complaints to police were too often met with a half-hearted response, he said.

Mr Patel cited a recent example – a ram raid at a Croydon newsagents – reported by one witness as it was happening at 4.30am. “The police finally turned up at midday,” he said. “This is the kind of thing we’re putting up with day in day out.”

He said the All Party Parliamentary Group, which the NFRN has helped establish, was keen to bring the issue up the political agenda.

The federation had also put its case in writing to every police and crime commissioner. “Some have responded but others haven’t even bothered,” said Mr Patel. “Some of them haven’t got a clue.”

Workers missing out on papers

Factory workers are missing their morning paper because of persistently late deliveries, Western district vice president Derek Cook warned.

He said copies of the Daily Mail and Western Daily Press produced at



Stronger action by police is needed to curb retail crime

Associated Newspapers' Didcot plant were being distributed too late for the huge potential market around Swindon. In one case, copies were released from Didcot at 3.28am to meet a Swindon cut-off time of 3.30am.

“There are lots of HND newsagents and loads of factories in that area,” said Mr Cook. “Sales are being lost and if it carries on much longer businesses will be dead.”



Derek Cook

‘Don’t forget core business’

Smiths News’ attempts



Sales are being lost and if it carries on much longer businesses will be dead

Derek Cook

Western district vice president

to boost business and cut delivery costs have resulted in months of poor service, a senior roundsman claimed.

Gloucester HND operator John Jackson said the wholesaler had begun delivering Amazon parcels, sweets and soft drinks in its news vans – resulting in up to 20-minute delays over the past six months.

“We can’t always

blame the publisher for lateness,” he said. “It’s the wholesaler as well.”

National vice president Ray Monelle added: “Wholesalers must not forget their core business.”

HND retailers need priority

Retailers with HND rounds should be flagged on wholesaler databases to ensure firm newspaper orders are met, members heard.

The call from Ray Monelle followed complaints from North Devon newsagent Roy Crawford



Ray Monelle

over the Sunday Times.

Mr Crawford, who has a 60-mile daily rural round, has 70 orders for the paper every week.

During July he received deliveries of 65, 64 and 81 papers. “On our patch we can’t go out and buy from a supermarket to meet the shortfall,” he said.

“These are lost sales.”

Mr Monelle said:

“We have impressed on Smiths and Menzies the need to get this sorted. They accept their system of flagging up home delivery customers isn’t good enough.”

Van share delays

The Mirror’s ‘van share’ scheme with the Telegraph is causing regular 45-minute delays in the west country, members heard.

Wiltshire roundsman Derek Cook said: “In theory it may make economic sense. But not for a time-sensitive product like ours.”

Figures from membership services manager Nigel Smith showed that four of the five worst ‘late inbound’ destinations were in the west – Bournemouth, Plymouth, Taunton and Gloucester.

Get tweeting

Retailers are being urged to embrace Twitter as a way of highlighting poor service from publishers and wholesalers.

Devon roundsman Andrew White – who regularly topped the NFRN’s now defunct ‘text-to-complain’ service – said tweeting would be too time consuming. However Ralph Patel told him: “The advantage is that everyone can see our problems. All you need to tweet, for instance, is ‘Telegraphs late again.’”

Your say

What’s the best thing you have done in your store this year to take advantage of seasonal trade?



We’re encouraging all regular customers to think about home deliveries. Summer usually sees a fall-off in demand but everyone has visitors. We think we can increase sales – we just need our copies from wholesalers on time.

Bridget McNulty
The Paper Shop,
Honiton



We’re trying to get customers to see us as an aggressive tobacco discounter. We still stock a very wide range of brands but we’re pricing much more keenly on customer favourites. It’s about keeping strong foothold during the summer.

Russell Haynes
Brittox News,
Devizes



We’re keeping right on top of our stock. Customers know we’re rarely, if ever, out of items they need. And importantly they’re not afraid to ask if they want us to get something. As an independent we can use many different supply sources.

Ray Monelle
Orchard News,
Weston-super-Mare

LETTERS

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

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

'Is PayPoint the only provider in your shop who doesn't give?'

Following RN's ongoing coverage of PayPoint's unfair tactics, we shall be glad to see our experience published to draw the attention of PayPoint agents.

History – we gave PayPoint up after 13 years, losing some £7,000, and PayPoint did not bother to ask us why we were leaving.

Earnings – negative, considering the peanuts commission against banking expenses, bank charges, cash insurance, three to four banking errands per week, wages of trained shop assistant to handle PayPoint terminal.

Operation – each transaction consumed a significant amount of time (worn out electronic keys forcing three to four tries, Health Lottery check-ups etc.) exposing our shop to shoplifters.

Footfall – we checked our figures for two months. Footfall gain is a myth. Our sales have not dropped at all since leaving PayPoint.

Contacts – it is impossible to talk to senior PayPoint managers.

Tactics – oppressive... a little change, and PayPoint will insist on a new five-year contract. Beware, PayPoint appointed an agent one shop away from me in the same parade.

Commission – ATM and mobile top-up is far less than other providers. Ask PayPoint and you get evasive answers.

PayPoint vs agents – shareholders, dividends and their pay packets are dominant. PayPoint exploits poor agents who work 12 to 14 hours a day. It's like they toil and tend PayPoint's land and then PayPoint grabs bushel-loads of grain, leaving a few bales of straw for the poor agents.

Action – agents to unite. Don't be happy counting PayPoint notes, just check how much you lose. Is PayPoint perhaps the only provider in your shop who



ARE YOU READY FOR AUTO-ENROLMENT?

When it comes to auto-enrolment, have you buried your head in the sand?

We have received our letters for date of auto-enrolment into pension schemes, and I have got the ball rolling by asking around for the best companies that suit what I need.

I looked into NOW Pensions and TAM Asset Management.

Both have great products and pricing structures and after looking into both, I decided on TAM as its Sharia-compliant and ethical policies both were of interest to me.

I have chosen the 'ethical policy' as this I feel best suits what I want for my business.

I would urge all retailers: do not leave it to the last minute as this auto-enrolment is a big decision

and should not be made in haste.

Remember that if you do not have a pension plan in place, you will get fined.

I chose an ethical plan as after the banking crisis, sometimes "greed" is not always good.

Mo Razzaq

Premier Mo's and Family Shopper,
Blantyre,
Scotland

doesn't give, but takes from you?

Sima Brothers
New Malden,
Surrey

New gantry doors are not an open and shut case

CJ Retail Solutions came to put doors on my gantry, and I have had nothing but problems.

I paid for them in December and they were supposed to be fitted in February, but twice they rang and put the date back.

They finally came at the end of March to fit them, but they couldn't, as they were the wrong size doors.

They came twice more, once again, wrong size!

The third time they came, they just left the doors on and I had to ring and complain as the doors were more for a gantry

twice the size of mine.

They finally came back and fitted the doors, but they were terrible. They did not slide along easy and you couldn't lock the gantry.

They finally washed their hands of it and agreed to refund me for the doors.

I got a local man to come and fit new doors, who had never done anything like it, and they are spot on.

It takes some believing that someone could do that, and yet a specialised firm couldn't.

CJ Retail Solutions came and picked the doors up over three weeks ago, but I have not received any money back.

As a gesture of good will, I think they should pay me compensation!

Judith Milne
A Sockett & Son,
Tyne & Wear,
Newcastle

CJ Retail Solutions marketing director Mike Houghton responds:

"We fitted thousands of gantry doors in response to the dark market legislation and it is always disappointing when we hear of any customer dissatisfaction.

"However, due to the volume of retailers involved in this project, it was only ever possible to offer off-the-shelf solutions with doors coming in one of four standard sizes.

"Unfortunately, in Ms Milne's case, she had a gantry size that did not fit one of our standard door size solutions. We made four separate visits to her store to try and resolve the issue by attempting to manipulate the doors to fit.

"Our final solution was by no means perfect, but it did make her legally compliant.

"When it was apparent that the solution was not going to work long-term,

we visited the store again to remove the doors and a full refund was offered.

"This refund has not been processed yet due to some breakdown in communication, but this will be resolved immediately now the matter has been brought to our attention again.

"It is true we had to cancel the original installation date and a subsequent one.

"This was due to being let down by the manufacturer of the doors. Contingency plans were implemented to ensure there was never any danger of her store being non-compliant.

"I hope you can appreciate we made every effort to find a solution, but the simple fact is the gantry was never suitable to take one of our door solutions and a simple check of the measurements of the unit prior to ordering the doors would have highlighted this."

OPINION

Do you want to see your views in RN?

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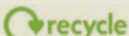
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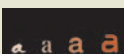
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newtrade

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YOUR SAY Would you welcome a blanket minimum unit price for alcohol for the whole of the UK?

Umesh Bathia

U & S News,
Food & Wine,
Farnham, Surrey

Yes, I would – I think we need it. You always read about teenagers drinking and filling up A&Es in the papers and it would help with that. It will also mean we can sell alcohol at the same price as the supermarkets, putting us on the same level, whereas at the moment they often have deals on 10- and 12-packs and spirit bottles, which we are recommended to sell at a higher price.

Kishor Patel

Nisa Local,
Hertfordshire

I am split on this. If it serves a purpose and stops the supermarkets from under-selling I would be in favour, but if

retailers are going to lose margins by having a blanket price, that's going to be an issue. The government needs to concentrate more on illicit alcohol because minimum unit pricing could lead to more illicit products coming in.

Bay Bashir

Lifestyle Express Belle Vue
Convenience Store,
Middlesbrough,
North Yorkshire

I think it would be a good thing because a lot of people try to get away with under-pricing so it would stop that and create fair pricing across the board. At Christmas and Easter supermarkets have ridiculous prices and we can't buy stock for anything near that amount. A minimum unit price would give everyone a fairer chance to compete.



YOUR STOCK Will manufacturers' support of the Rugby World Cup help you grow sales around the event?

Jeetendra Kanji

Vineyards Food & Wine,
Wembley,
London

Yes, because it will create more awareness. I find a lot of people don't know much about rugby,

so when they start to see it on bottles and cans they become more aware of it. It does bring people in more for beer. I find Heineken sells well during a World Cup; I can go from selling one case a week to about three.

Mark Dudden

Albany News,
Cardiff,
Wales

I will do a display around Rugby World magazine to promote it, and if there are brands like Coca-Cola with high-profile sponsorship deals I will put them in the window as well. I remember more than a decade ago I did a Rugby World Cup window and sold around 54 copies of Rugby World, whereas before that I was selling two or three. Promotions in the window do work.

Sandy Sarwar

Pricecracker,
Dundee,
Scotland

Yes, it will – there's no doubt about it. When Coca-Cola and other major manufacturers support the football and tennis it does help because it highlights certain products and we get more impulse buys. During the World Cup I will be putting special offers on which also helps.



YOUR ISSUE

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BOXED-IN AFTER COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN

Should the terms and conditions of a contract be relinquished when one of the parties locked into it feels they have been misinformed or misled?

Problems can arise from a simple miscommunication of information or details not being made clear at the beginning of a sales pitch, leading to the specifics of a contract being discovered once it's a done deal.

RN has received calls from various retailers over the years who have found themselves in this situation, with the company they are in the agreement with telling them they have to abide by the terms and conditions of their contract.

This is an issue Paul Cheema, of Malcolm's Nisa in Coventry, has faced for the last couple of months, but the problem was finally resolved at the end of last week. After reaching a resolution, both parties say they have shared ways of preventing the same situation arising in the future, which other retailers and suppliers can learn from.

When Mr Cheema first contacted RN he told us his store was



“

All I wanted them to do was pick up the stock, refund it, and when they're selling the promotion to retailers in future, make it clear they are not part of Smiths News

Paul Cheema

signed up for a box-out promotion, featuring laser tattoos and playing cards, after an assistant from product sales and distribution company Innzone called his store several times, mentioning Smiths News at the beginning of the call.

Mr Cheema said the call was taken by his mother, who did not realise it was a different company and gave the go-ahead for the deal. He grew increasingly frustrated after receiving the order and making several calls to Smiths News and Innzone, who he says told him he could not send the stock back until August.

He said he paid around £500 for the stock and had nine boxes sitting under the counter waiting to go back.

“All I wanted them to do was pick up the stock, refund it, and when they're selling the promotion to retailers in future, make it clear they are not part of Smiths News, but are a different company so retailers don't think, ‘Oh it's Smiths’,” he said.

However, following a call from RN, Innzone's managing director

Phillip Glyn called Mr Cheema at the end of last week and arranged for the stock to be collected.

Mr Glyn says there was a miscommunication, which has now been resolved, and Mr Cheema's feedback has been taken on board.

Mr Cheema says he told Mr Glyn that when running promotions like this he would recommend a flyer is sent out with Smiths' weekly bulletin giving details of what it is, as well as the RRP, cash margins and the sale and return procedure, prior to a call being made to the store.

He also told Mr Glyn: “Always make sure you ask for the store owner, not just a member of the team, and then run through everything properly. Say how you are running the promotion, making it clear that you're using Smiths as an invoicer, so there is total clarity and transparency.”

In addition, he told RN: “It took your publication to get the matter resolved for us. I think there is a lesson for Smiths in this as well.

“If they're letting an outside company work through the Smiths banner they should make

sure they're cooperating with retailers. Smiths need to play an actual role in this as well and not just say ‘It's not our problem, go back to the wholesaler.’”

Mr Glyn says: “We have since spoken to the customer and resolved all his issues to his satisfaction, and taken on board his constructive advice about marketing our products.

“All our calls are recorded to ensure full transparency and accountability, for instances like this, which proved, contrary to the customer's initial perception, that our employee had initially introduced himself using the company name and not that of the news wholesaler.

“The terms of each product offer are explained in full on the call and all products arrive at the stores with buy-back guarantee certificates stating the specific dates for the four-week window of return, so we urge all customers to keep a copy of the paperwork for their records and call the telephone number on the certificate, in the return month, to arrange their free collection of goods.”

JOHN EASTWOOD

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Multipacks, pricemarks and new products are having a positive impact on ice cream sales in independent stores, but ultimately the weather and effective distribution systems are the biggest influences on your profits writes John Eastwood

Keep one eye on the sky

Sales figures from the first half of this year show a major growth of pricemarked ice cream packs in independent stores, which now account for 20% of all sales in this market.

Within impulse products, Cornet-to-pricemarked at £1 has made a substantial contribution to this trend. Meanwhile, in the first 28 weeks of this year, 11 of the top 20 multipacks were pricemarked, up from seven in the equivalent period in 2014.

The figures also show sales of multipacks have soared by 72% year on year. But they still account for only 3% of the total ice cream market, so there is room for further growth here.

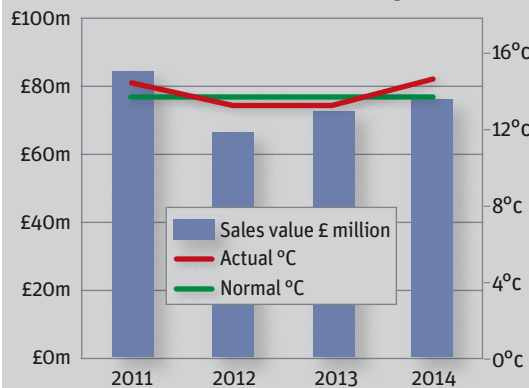
Several newcomers have had a strong impact on the market this year. Big launches include Magnum Pink Raspberry, Magnum Black Espresso and Oreo sticks. The two new Magnums have pushed the brand's share of the ice cream market up from 26% to 29% and Pink Raspberry has become the third bestseller in independent stores behind Magnum Classic and Magnum White. The Oreo stick, meanwhile, has helped push Oreo's market share up to 1.7% and is selling as much as the Oreo ice cream sandwich.

But while pricemarked packs and launches are having a positive impact on sales this year, one factor continues to have an incredibly significant influence on impulse sales – the weather.

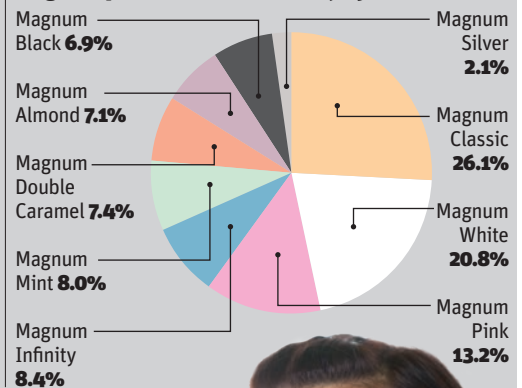
It goes without saying that sunshine has a positive effect on sales, but a look at 2011 proves the extent of this. This was the highest-value calendar year for ice cream, when sales were an estimated £84m. This was driven by temperatures that were well above normal in late spring and early summer. Following a typical summer, average daily maximum temperatures in the last week of September soared almost 7°C above normal to 22.5°C. Ice cream sales rocketed in tandem and achieved

Ice cream sales in independent stores

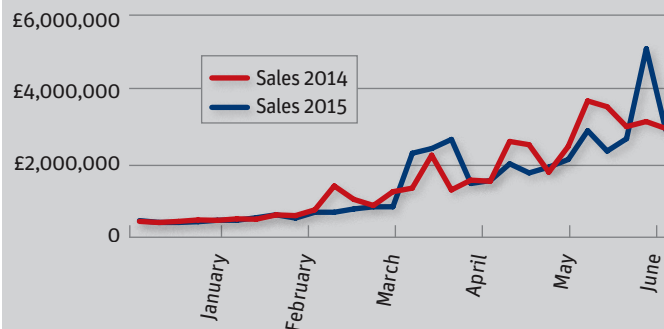
Ice cream annual sales value £m/temperature °C



Magnum profile 28 weeks to 11 July 2015



Weekly sales 2015 compared with equivalent 2014 weeks



Are you taking a bite out of this seasonal opportunity?



Sales of multipacks have soared by 72% year on year

typical July levels at what is usually the tail end of the season.

But the situation in 2014 was rather different. The weather was slightly warmer than 2011, yet sales were 9% lower by value. The main reason behind this was a breakdown in distribution following a heatwave in the last two weeks of July. In many stores, freezers were empty and the situation was bad enough to attract national press coverage. In the week ending 2 August, sales were more than 40% lower than the previous week, even though temperatures were warmer than normal.

Back to 2015, and we have yet to

see such a situation being repeated. Mid-April was mild, but there was no indication of any supply problems. The first week of Wimbledon was the first where we experienced very hot weather and temperatures have been relatively normal since then. The net result of this is a fall of sales value of 3.3% and 3.6% by volume.

The weather is not forecast to be spectacularly hot in August so it is unlikely that there will be a supply crisis this year, yet if we get an Indian summer we could easily see ice cream sales for the year in growth. ●

John Eastwood is a data analyst for EDFM

INDUSTRY PROFILE

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MarketHub

With so many firms collecting data on the convenience sector, MarketHub's managing director Roy Horgan knows he needs a point of difference to stand out. Offering retailers tailored merchandising and pricing advice via email is, he believes, a very good start



RETAIL NEWSAGENT Tell us about MarketHub.

RH There's so much data available at the moment that retailers can be overloaded by it and it can cause confusion. We want to simplify using data for retailers. For example, we'd look at a retailer's sales data and see that over the past two years on every day that it's rained, certain products have sold well. We would then send them a list of 10 things they could do on a day when it's raining via email.

RN How does this get implemented in store?

RH We work with a company called Store Electronic Systems which makes electronic shelf labels. That means we can put on promotions remotely and easily if a retailer wants them.

RN Does remotely changing prices create challenges for retailers in maintaining their customers' trust?

RH This is an advisory tool so we don't make any changes unless the retailer wants it. In reality we actually see customers' trust increase because, with our insights, retailers are giving them more relevant promotions rather than boasting about a price match with a supermarket that might be 40 miles away.

RN In what other ways can technology help retailers communicate these offers?

RH The next generation of shelf-edge

labels produced by SES allow us to link to digital screens that mean we can advertise promotions around the store.

RN Is this the kind of information that is available to larger retailers already?

RH The problem for larger retailers is that if one lightbulb is changed in a Tesco then it has to roll out to 2,000 stores. They are hamstrung by their size. Independents should have an advantage thanks to their flexibility – we want to help them take advantage of this.

RN Can you give another example of the kind of insights you're able to give retailers?

RH We realised that, within convenience, one in three customers only buy one product. If we can convince them to pick one extra product up then it doesn't matter



Indies should have an advantage thanks to their flexibility

if you've got Tesco down the road threatening your business. We did some analysis with one retailer on this and isolated which products are bought alone. In a three-week period, when the weather was nice, the product that was being bought by itself the most was ice cream. We can then recommend that retailers put caramel or toffee sauce by the till to encourage an extra purchase, for example.

RN Who are you working with at the moment?

RH We're working with a number of Spar stores, including Spar Hackney, and one major multiple too. Outside the UK we're working with retailers in Ireland and France. We rely on partnerships with symbol groups and organisations like that because doing this with individual retailers wouldn't be scalable.

RN What experience does MarketHub have of the independent sector?

RH Our whole team has experience of retail which is a huge advantage over other data companies. Our IT team were all part of a major FMCG group, for example and understand creating systems that provide relevant products to retailers.

RN What's the next step for the company?

RH For the rest of the year we'll be rolling out MarketHub to symbol retailers. Our ultimate goal is for retailers to be addicted to using it every day.

** Company CV **

Company MarketHub

Chief executive Roy Horgan

Profile MarketHub helps retailers to create relevant promotions and provides tailored advice based on their sales data. By working with electronic shelf-edge label manufacturers SES they are able to implement price changes remotely.

Latest news The company is working with Spar stores this year and hopes to roll out to further stores in the coming months.

**

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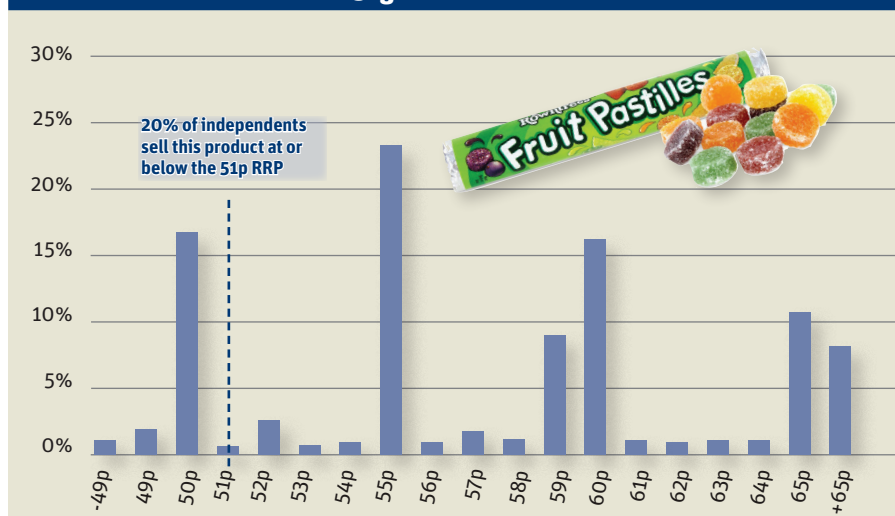
PRICEWATCH

SUGAR CONFECTIONERY

BEST-SELLING SUGAR CONFECTIONERY PRICES AROUND THE UK

PRODUCT	AVERAGE	RRP	RETAILER 1	RETAILER 2	RETAILER 3	RETAILER 4	RETAILER 5
Maynards Wine Gums 130g	£1.00	£1.00 (PM)	£1.00 (PM)	£1.00 (PM)	£1.00 (PM)	–	£1.00 (PM)
Rowntree's Fruit Pastilles 52g	57p	51p	£1.00 (PM/3 for £1)	£1.00 (3 for £1)	55p	60p	55p
Bassetts Liquorice Allsorts 130g	£1.00	£1.00 (PM)	£1.00 (PM)	£1.00 (PM)	£1.00 (PM)	–	£1.49
Rowntree's Randoms 50g	57p	51p	79p	–	55p	65p (3 for £1.20)	52p
Vimto Fizzy Rip Roll 38g	45p	–	49p	35p	35p	–	45p
Maynards Wine Gums 52g	59p	51p	£1.00 (3 for £1)	50p (PM)	–	55p (3 for £1.20)	55p
Bassetts Cherry Drops 49g	59p	51p	69p	–	–	60p	55p
Skittles Wild Berry 55g	57p	49p	–	50p	52p	59p (3 for £1.20)	57p
Skittles 55g	57p	49p	–	50p	52p	59p (3 for £1.20)	57p
Polo Fruits 37g	55p	50p	–	52p	55p	55p	60p
Starburst Original 45g	56p	49p	–	–	55p	–	55p
Fox's Glacier Fruits 130g	£1.00	£1.00 (PM)	£1.00 (PM)	£1.00 (PM)	–	–	£1.00 (PM)

ROWNTREE'S FRUIT PASTILLES 52g Price distribution %



Pricing strategies

RETAILER

1



NAME PARESH VYAS

STORE Vyas Foodstore

LOCATION Manchester

SIZE 1,500sq ft

TYPE urban

I've cut my confectionery countlines right down to a select few, mainly because of the amount of discounters that were opening up near us who are able to sell them a lot cheaper. Another reason is the multibuy promotions available – why buy a single packet of sweets for 75p when you can buy three for £1? That said, own brand confectionery countlines are selling very fast because we can sell them at a much lower price. Although discounted multipacks produce very poor margins, I'd rather lose out on margin than customers.

RETAILER

2



NAME HELEN DREW

STORE Wright News

LOCATION Wem, Shropshire

SIZE 450sq ft

TYPE high street

I get pricemarked packs where I can, and where I can't, I round prices up or down a few pence. Quite often the RRP is 47p or 49p, so I'll just round it up to 50p. I find it's clearer for customers if I standardise prices, and generally this helps inspire confidence in my pricing. Some confectionery lines sell far better on multibuy promotions, but it also depends on the customer and what they want. We put sweets right at the front of the shop where people first walk in. This helps encourage customers to buy them on impulse.

➡ **Nadia Alexandrou**
 ✉ nadia.alexandrou@newtrade.co.uk
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RETAILER

3

NAME STANLEY MIDDLETON**STORE** Stanley Newsagents & Post Office**LOCATION** Stanley, Perthshire**SIZE** 300sq ft**TYPE** village

We normally adjust prices to get margins of between 26% and 30%. We don't do too many promotions in this category, except on new products to encourage customers to try them. We'll also put them on the counters by the till to make them as visible as possible and to get people to buy them on impulse. There has been a slowdown in the countlines sales, but at the same time multipacks don't work for us. Customers want just one pack of sweets as a small snack, not three. My customers don't appreciate the value they get from those multipacks.

RETAILER

4

NAME VIP MEASURIA**STORE** The Prior Way**LOCATION** Borrowash, Derby**SIZE** 2,000sq ft**TYPE** housing estate

We switched over to One Stop a few weeks ago, so we're in the middle of adjusting all of our range and prices. One Stop gives us a price bracket which we have to stay within, but we still have an element of freedom to fluctuate our prices. Our confectionery has changed drastically – we used to have 6.5 metres of sweets but we're now trying to get that down to just three bays. And we're now selling bigger bars, which previously I had thought would never sell. We now stock Dairy Milk 200g, for example, whereas before we used to sell the 110g pricemarked blocks.

RETAILER

5

NAME USHI VITHANI**STORE** The Front Page**LOCATION** Thamesmead, London**SIZE** 2,200sq ft**TYPE** town centre

All the big brands are bestsellers, as they dominate most of the market. I have a balanced mixture of countlines and multipacks and sometimes run multibuy promotions, but this is quite an impulsive market anyway so I don't really need to offer an incentive for people to buy. I put all my confectionery on a shelf, then second site the top sellers by the till. Pricemarked packs tend to sell faster throughout the year, while sweets do better during the summer and chocolate always does better during the colder winter months. Sales of confectionery countlines are down slightly.

THE ENTREPRENEURS

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



JUSTIN KING

Justin King's career has largely consisted of heading up several manufacturing companies and supermarket chains, the most recent being a 10-year stint as the chief executive of Sainsbury's. Raised in Solihull, King graduated from the University of Bath with a degree in business administration. He went on to work for Mars – sponsored by automotive electrical manufacturer Lucas – as production shift manager for Galaxy chocolate. King joined PepsiCo in 1989 and was based in the Middle East, before moving to the now-defunct brand conglomerate Grand Metropolitan where, as managing director, he helped launch Häagen-Dazs ice cream in

the UK. He moved to Asda's hypermarkets division in 1994 again as MD before taking on Marks & Spencer's food division. Joining Sainsbury's in 2004 as chief executive, King succeeded in growing the company's sales year after year. He stepped down in 2014 and now works as interim chairman of the Manor Marussia Formula One motor racing team.

Key achievements

- Awarded an honorary doctorate in business administration from the University of Bath.
- Appointed a CBE for services to the retail industry.
- Overseeing a record 12 consecutive quarters of growth at Sainsbury's.

Lessons for your store

- 1 Experience is key – King took on jobs that no one else wanted and worked in several positions that gave him a broad spectrum of experience.
- 2 Network with people who do a similar job to you – King said he found this invaluable.
- 3 Have a good work/life balance – King spends time with his brothers and close circle of friends outside work.



RETAILER PROFILE



It's all about rapprochement

Having traded in his Pizza Hut franchise to have a shot at running a convenience store, Myjinder Braich worked with Lifestyle Express to open Fairfield General Stores. **Steven Lambert** finds out how he and his son Harpreet are getting on

Serving up pizzas and selling groceries may appear like two completely different jobs on paper, but not to Myjinder Braich.

Having traded in his Pizza Hut franchise to take on his first convenience store in May, Myjinder says the lessons and skills he learned in his previous job have helped him make a winning start in his new career in independent retailing.

He says: "I'm from a corporate background so I am conscious of brand, presentation, consistency of service and adhering to a model when running a business. These are all the things I have tried to bring to the shop and it has been working well so far."

Following a suggestion from his business partner to take on his own shop, Myjinder signed up with the Lifestyle Express symbol to set up Fairfield General Stores, located in the Worcestershire village of the same name.

Working alongside his son, Harpreet, Myjinder says everything about the 750sq ft business is geared around catering to the local community, consisting primarily of families and "mature" residents, as Myjinder puts it.

"With the customers we have, we've been conscious about the type of products we stock. For example, we stock half loaves and offer single bananas for older custom-

ers who don't always want to buy larger items.

"We also make sure we stock essential products such as bread and milk at height level because older people don't want to keep bending down to pick these up. It's little details like this that make the difference."

To build an early rapport with shoppers, Myjinder had the novel idea of keeping some of his shelves completely bare, and encouraged his shoppers to choose their own products to put on them.

"Customers asked why we hadn't finished and we said we wanted them to tell us what we should be putting there. This way they know that this truly is their shop. We put a piece of paper by the till for people to leave their suggestions and if we had enough requests for something, I went and bought it.

"For example, we had a mother who wanted a particular type of sterilised milk, which we now stock. We filled the shelves up within 10 days of opening."

Despite only being in business for two months, Myjinder has also moved quickly to get involved in a number of local incentives, including supplying fresh samosas in a fund-raising drive at the local school and making donations to the church.

He adds: "We're now looking to hold a fun day, maybe around September time,



I think as an independent retailer your personality needs to shine through. Anyone can sell groceries but if a customer remembers you positively, they will keep coming back”

MYJINDER BRAICH



Myjinder Braich and his son Harpreet have worked hard to meet the needs of their elderly customers



“I’m from a corporate background so I am conscious of brand, presentation, consistency of service and adhering to a model when running a business”

VISIT MY SHOP

Fairfield General Stores

81 Stourbridge Road,
Fairfield,
Bromsgrove B61 9LY



where we will invite the whole community to come and meet and take part in some games.

“That to me makes more sense than chopping down trees and making posters for us to send out.”

In regards to future plans, Myjinder says he will put up pictures of how the shop used to look like to celebrate its heritage and “pay homage” to its previous owners.

He is also looking to add more groceries and introduce fresh flowers outside the store to give the business a more “village store feel”.

And he adds that he is already looking to take on extra staff members at the store over the next two to three months, and has even set his sights on a second store in a similar village location.

He says: “With my Pizza Hut business, I used to have a great relationship with customers, but that changed as things became more automated and we started getting more online orders.

“Part of the reason I took on this new challenge was because I wanted to be more involved with the community again. Now, I’ve really caught a bug for this sector and want to do even more.” ●



Want to see more of Myjinder's store? Go to betterretailing.com/myjinder-braich

NATIONAL LIVING WAGE

With Labour in crisis and five years governing ahead, Conservatives were overjoyed by the chancellor's announcement of a new National Living Wage. For many retailers, however, this will present yet another burden that threatens their survival.

Tom Gockelen-Kozłowski reports

Can you afford it?

The political genius of George Osborne's 'National Living Wage' policy, announced in this month's Budget, is now widely accepted. The Labour Party promised in its manifesto to raise the minimum wage to £8 per hour by 2020 just three months ago. In the first Conservative Budget since 1996, the chancellor of the exchequer trumped it with the promise of a higher 'National Living Wage' of up to £9 by 2020. Aping the slogan of a recent trade union campaign, he announced the measure with the words: "it's time Britain had a pay rise".

Yet, while this Budget pledge saw many low paid workers cheer (and Iain Duncan Smith punch his fists in delight), the news has been less warmly greeted by many retailers.

"It's making us think about what we're going to have to do," says Bintesh Amin of Blean Village Londis in Kent. "I'm all for paying my staff a good wage, but at the moment wages are about 7.2% of turnover and it will jump to 9.2% and even 10% after the changes." This equates to 40% of costs for his business.

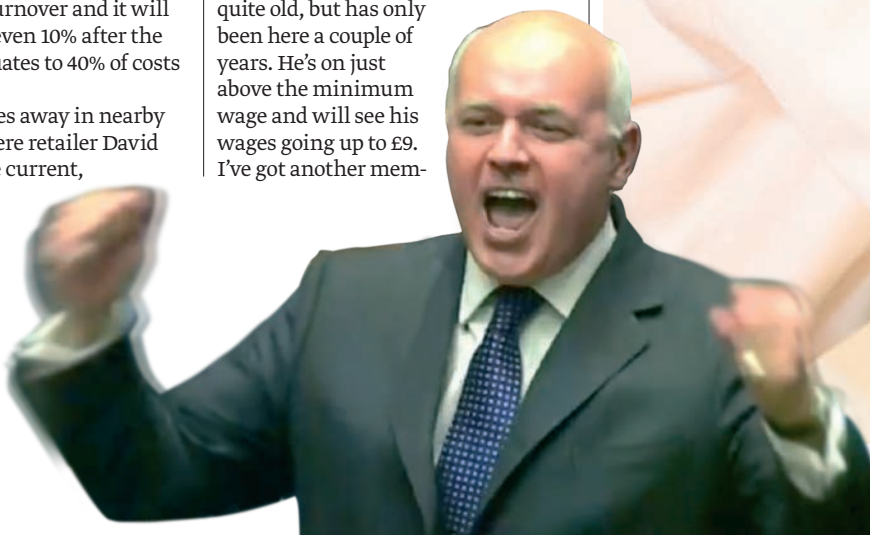
Just over 30 miles away in nearby West Malling, where retailer David Charman pays the current,

voluntary, living wage (as calculated by the Living Wage Foundation) of £7.85, his costs are closer to 50%. It's an intimidating gap to have to bridge in just a few short years.

Retailer groups have been quick to join the chorus of disquiet. James Lowman, chief executive of the Association of Convenience Stores, says the National Living Wage will hit independent retailers particularly hard. "Small businesses often have less space financially to manoeuvre. We know from our research that retailers have to take tough decisions when wages increase including reducing staff hours in their business, delaying investment decisions and taking on more hours themselves."

As the policy details have become clear, other concerns have also been raised. Bintesh is particularly worried about the effect of the age restriction on the new National Living Wage – it will only be enforceable for those over the age of 25.

"I've got one member of staff who's quite old, but has only been here a couple of years. He's on just above the minimum wage and will see his wages going up to £9. I've got another mem-



Former Tory leader Iain Duncan Smith punches the air as the National Living Wage is announced



Staff over 25 years old must earn a minimum £9 per hour by 2020

NATIONAL LIVING WAGE IN NUMBERS

1999

The UK's first minimum wage (£3.60 per hour for those aged over 22) is introduced

£6.50

The current minimum wage, rising to £6.70 in October

11%

The increase from the current minimum wage to the £7.20 wage which comes into force next April

£9

The full National Living Wage figure to be reached by 2020

88%

The number of retailers who, according to the ACS, consider reducing hours to mitigate minimum wage increases

1 in 5

The number of c-store employees who are aged under 25 and will therefore not be eligible for the National Living Wage according to the ACS

GLOSSARY

MINIMUM WAGE

The minimum hourly rate employers must pay all staff over 21

THE LIVING WAGE

An independently-calculated voluntary wage rate based on the cost of living

NATIONAL LIVING WAGE

A higher minimum wage rate for workers over 25 announced by George Osborne this month

ANOTHER VIEW Why I pay the Living Wage



David Charman runs the Parkfoot Convenience Store and forecourt in West Malling in Kent. He already pays the Living Wage.

We're a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week business and we haven't closed our doors for nearly 30 years. This means I can't work in the store myself all of that time and I need people to be here to represent me during those times. Over the past five years we've created a business model which means we pay them the living wage.

As a country we need to be more productive and that's what we expect from our staff. Because we don't have the turnover of staff we don't have constant training commitments. I need people who I can 100% rely upon to do their job and to do

things out of the ordinary. When a department like our butchery area has someone that goes sick I don't even need to think about how I'm going to staff that because, between them, my team will deal with the problem. This is what you get when you start to employ people who are happy what they're doing and want to work more.

A lot of our staff have been with us for 30 years.

The problem for retailers now faced with paying the National Living Wage is that it's coming in too quickly, but there is also the fact their staff won't give them the credit for their

rising income. Their staff will think in their heads, "I'm only getting paid this because he's being made to pay it". It's not going to make them feel any better, make them think that they really want to work hard at this job and make it successful.

I'm sure other retailers' staff don't resent working for them because I'm sure they really appreciate the full-time job that they've got, but they are still thinking about their top-up from the government, how it's reducing, and how they're going to manage. I like to think that our people worry about that slightly less.



David Charman already pays his staff the higher Living Wage

ber of staff who has been here a lot longer and he can run the shop and may even become a manager even though he's under 25. Because of their ages the older guy will get the higher wage, unless I raise the younger guy's wage too. It's going to have a knock-on effect."

So what of the arguments in favour of the new wage? "There should be some improvement in productivity as a consequence of adjustment in the National Living Wage," the Bank of England governor Mark Carney told

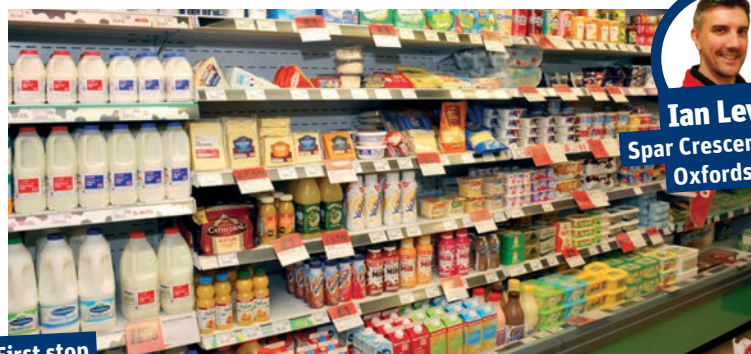
the Treasury Committee. As Britain's productivity is 27% lower than that of the much-maligned French economy, anything which boosts this will be welcomed by many.

Yet Bintesh doubts employees will be able to ask staff to work longer and harder to match their higher wages. "How would you feel if you were told you had to do something extra because the law states you've got to be paid a higher wage? The chances are you'd look for a job somewhere else," he says. ●

BACK TO SCHOOL

Lunch boxes, stationery, snacks – when children head back to school in September, convenience retailers have a huge opportunity to profit from last-minute shoppers. To help you get prepared, RN takes you on a whistle-stop tour of the parts of the store to focus on

All set for a new term?



First stop

Chiller

As school starts and parents get back into the routine of packing lunch boxes, the chiller – with its cheeses, butters, sandwich fillers and yogurts – is the prime location that fulfils most of their needs.

Retailer Ian Lewis makes sure that every parent browsing his chiller sees these items by stocking well-known children's brands – Dairylea, Baby Bel and Petit Filou – across every category. "Even if they've just gone to pick up a pint of milk, when term



Big brands remind customers to buy

starts it's these brands that catch their eye and remind them to pick up food for their children's lunch," says Ian.

The right format and good value are also things

to remember as much as brands according to Amy Fisher, central shopper marketing manager at Dairy Crest. "Top-up shopping is the key mission in smaller convenience stores, so having a convenient size and affordable option available is crucial," she says.



Ian Lewis
Spar Crescent Stores
Oxfordshire



When term starts it's these brands that catch their eye and remind them to pick up food for their children's lunch



Brands increasingly are focusing on younger customers

suppliers' shift towards naturally-sweetened and lower-sugar alternatives. This month, for example, Vita Coco Kids underwent a packaging redesign to emphasise its all-natural lower sugar content. Children drinks brands Jucee (owned by Princes), meanwhile, has made its range 100% 'no added sugar' earlier in the year.



Second stop

Soft drinks cabinet

This is a popular after school and break time pit stop for many children, making it one of the areas that sees the most dramatic change when term starts again.

For Baz Jethwa, promotions and meal deals play an important role in encouraging children to buy soft drinks, who are often limited by the amount of pocket money they can spend. "Including soft drinks

in meal deals and two-for-one promotions is a great way to get children to increase their spend and still give them the best value for their money," he says.

It's just as likely to find parents here, torn between indulging their child's sweet tooth and ensuring they maintain a healthy diet. This balancing act has inspired



Baz Jethwa
Costcutter,
Farnworth, Bolton

Kellogg's

PICK ME
UPS

WE'RE GIVING AWAY
CASH EVERY 5 MINUTES

Sales need a
pick me up?

From **3rd August - 25th November** Kellogg's are on a mission to spread a little joy with our **Pick Me Ups** on-pack promotion. Between 7am-5pm we're giving away £5 every 5 minutes* across all our best-selling SKUs. That's a whopping **£72,000** and **14,400** very happy customers!

Be on to a winner, stock up today!



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BACK TO SCHOOL



Third stop

Darren Craig
Today's
Londonderry

On the aisles

Busy parents, after work or the school run, are likely to need to top up on a few term-time basics from cereal for breakfast to a box of juice cartons for lunchboxes.

To make their lives easier, one retailer decided to dedicate an entire aisle to his most popular 'take-home' back to school items. Darren Craig, who runs a Today's store in Londonderry, positions multipacks of

children's squash, soft drinks, juice cartons, ice pops and cereal on one aisle after picking up on the shopping habits of his customers during the school term.

Highlighting the importance of licencing to even the biggest brands, Coca-Cola Enterprises launched a Minions promotion on multipacks of its Capri-sun brand this spring, which was supported with in-store displays.



Parents today know exactly what bread product they're looking for

Fourth stop

Bakery

Whether it's for sandwiches or toast for breakfast, bread is a daily essential for any parent.

Knowing your customers is the key to understanding the range that you need to stock, according to Londis retailer Bimal Patel. "Parents today know exactly what bread product they're looking for, all you need to do is have the right price and display to point it out to them," he says. With a mostly wealthy customer base, Bimal focuses on a variety of healthy option breads - from fresh to sliced - and uses clearly labelled signs to guide his customers.



Bimal Patel
Londis Ferme Park Road
Harringey, London

Soft white bread may still be a core staple for many (Kingsmill Soft White Medium 800g is the best-selling bread in convenience), however market reports are showing the decline of traditional bread sales, which are slowly being replaced with thins, wraps and other

sandwich alternatives. "Parents want to provide their children a healthy and balanced diet, and are looking increasingly towards 50/50 breads, wholegrain and wraps as healthier and tasty alternatives to traditional bread," says Martin Garlick, category director at Allied Bakeries.

Ben Dyer
Debbens News,
Waterlooville
Hampshire



Last stop

By the till

As the place where both children and parents pay, it has long been best practice for retailers to tempt them with impulse items to add to their purchases at the last moment.

Ben Dyer, who runs Debbens News with his mum Debbie in Hampshire, places novelty and limited edition sweets alongside his core range, as well as a range of confectionery sharing bags opposite the till in a 'pound zone'. "This works particularly well during the after school rush hour, and parents and children who are

queuing up will often grab a bag or chocolate bar as they wait," he says.

While suppliers compete for a place on the so-called 'hot-spot', Matt Collins at KP Snacks cautions retailers against too much variety. "We have seen a raft of different products and formats hitting the market, but instead of adding to consumer choice, they have in many cases created confusion and diluted the offer," he says. Stocking a core range of best-selling brands should be the first priority, he says.

POINT OF DIFFERENCE

Four sections that will set you apart from the competition

While the whistle-stop tour touched on the basic areas for children and parents, here are four things that could set you apart and keep you thriving throughout the whole school year

Impulse ice cream

What better reward for a great mark or a glowing report than soft-scoop ice cream? Offering parents a convenient way to treat their children during hectic school runs can encourage regular custom.



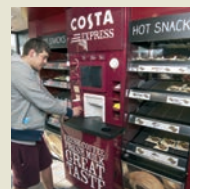
Stationery

Pens run out, rulers get lost and maths exams need calculators - offering

an alternative to a trek to the supermarket or the high street can confirm your store's position as a go-to place in an emergency.

Hot drinks

Older children on their lunch break can be loyal customers if you've got their favourite hot drink available, especially if it's offered in a meal-deal with a hot, tasty snack.



Pick and mix

Bring back the magic of the sweet shop for young children and nostalgic adults. Being

able to choose your own sweets is a thrill that doesn't diminish with time.

Hot Dogs

Food to go is becoming essential to many stores and school kids will appreciate the chance to pick up a hot snack as the nights draw in. ●



COMING UP IN

RETAIL NEWSAGENT

21 AUGUST: MAGAZINE ABCs

The only guide to UK sales worth reading



14 AUGUST: FOODSERVICE

Restaurant-quality meals for your store



Hot food makes hot profits



28 AUGUST: HOT DRINKS

The category where customers are trading up

14 AUGUST: NEW TERM

GUIDE TWO Make the perfect start with this year's freshers



PLUS

- Six months on: The tobacco display ban's effects analysed
- Bring your craft magazine sales to life this autumn
- Get planning early to profit from Halloween and Christmas

PREVIEW



Rugby balls giveaway

Coca-Cola is giving away up to one million rugby balls in an on-pack promotion supporting the Rugby World Cup.

RRP various

Outers various

Contact 08457 227222



Birra Moretti's new look

Birra Moretti is receiving a packaging update as part of plans to drive sales this summer.

RRP £1.49

Outers 24

Contact 0845 301 0330



Halloween favourites

Cadbury Scream Egg and Cadbury Crunchy Spider return as part of this year's Halloween line-up from Mondelez.

RRP various

Outers various

Contact 0870 191 7343



Limited edition JTI

JTI has revealed the latest limited edition pack designs running on its Mayfair King Size and Sky Blue 19s packs.

RRP £7.65

Outers 10

Contact 0800 163503



Heavenly John Smith's

John Smith's is giving shoppers the chance to claim their own star from the brand's 'pint constellation' in its latest digital campaign.

RRP various

Outers various

Contact 0845 301 0330



Strawberry Fruit Shoot

Britvic has launched limited edition 'Strawbrainy' Fruit Shoot, a combination of apple, grape and strawberry flavours.

RRP £1

Outers not given

Contact 0845 755 0345



Boost Bites added

Cadbury is expanding its range of chocolate bags with the launch Boost Bites next month.

RRP £1.99

Outers 10

Contact 0870 191 7343



Kids' favourites

SpongeBob SquarePants and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles are getting their own fruit chews courtesy of Tangerine Confectionery.

RRP £1.49

Outers not given

Contact 01253 603 613



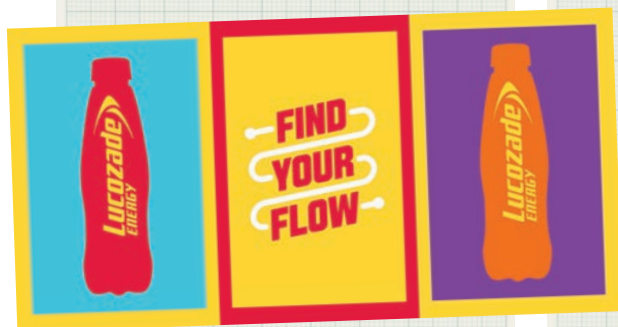
Party with Smirnoff

Smirnoff is hosting 'the ultimate house party' at the Creamfields festival next month to raise awareness of the brand.

RRP various

Outers various

Contact 0845 7515 101



Lucozade re-energises

Lucozade Energy is being supported with TV ads as part of the second phase of its £14m 'Find Your Flow' campaign.

RRP various

Outers various

Contact 0800 096 3666



Ginsters, plus two

Ginsters has unveiled two limited edition savoury snacks – Steak & Cornish Blue Cheese Pasty and Pulled Pork Slice.

RRP £1.99

Outers not given

Contact 01579 386 200



Spar's sweet side

Spar is adding Strawberry Bon Bons and Fruity Chews to its range of confectionery sharing bags this month.

RRP £1

Outers not given

Contact 0208 426 3690

THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES

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020 7689 3358
@NicolaStewartRN



Dynamic duo

LEGO AND STAR WARS? OUT OF THIS WORLD

Truly a marriage made in a galaxy far, far away, this magazine tie-up is bound to be a mega success with six-to 11-year-olds

COMBINING TWO of the most popular children's brands of all time, Lego Star Wars Magazine is expected to become a fast favourite of children aged six to 11. Each issue comes covermounted with an exclusive Lego toy, with the first issue including a free Lego X-wing Starfighter. The magazine will also be the only place to find the new Lego Star Wars comic, and there will be hundreds of Lego Star Wars sets to be won. This is complemented by the usual children's magazine mix of puzzles, stories, posters and more. Retailers are advised to display this issue at the front of the children's section and near the till or on secondary displays.



**LEGO STAR WARS
MAGAZINE**
On sale 29 July
Frequency monthly
Price £3.75
Distributor Seymour
Display with Star Wars
Rebels, Star Wars
Adventures, Lego
Legends of Chima

Round up



NICOLA STEWART
Magazines
reporter

SPORTING CHANCES

There are an exciting couple of months coming up in sport, with the return of the Premier League next month and the hotly-anticipated Rugby World Cup in September.

Retailers should be on the lookout for special issues and one shots along with the latest sporting collectables, which are continuing to smash sales forecasts. Topps' Match Attax football trading cards have topped Smiths News' collectables bestseller list week in and week out since their launch last season, and the 2015/16 collection, on sale on 24 September, is going to be the biggest collection so far.

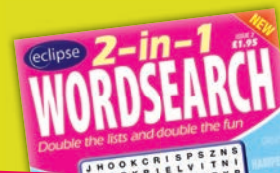
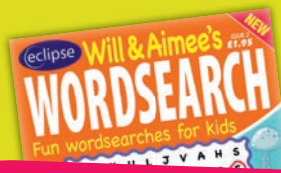
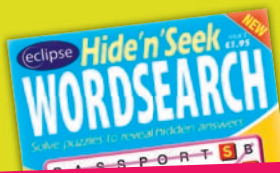
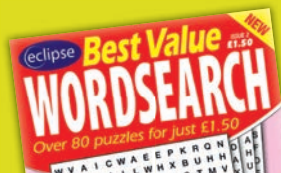
It will have 490 cards to collect, with even more special sub-set cards, including brand new club crest cards, updated duo and man of the match cards, and 100 club cards. Along with regular starter packs, retailers also have the option to order multipacks or collector tins that retail for a premium £5 and £5.99 respectively.

Then, switching codes, Topps is also launching Rugby Attax, the only official England Rugby card collection, on 13 August, to capitalise on the heightened interest that comes with a home tournament.

Kicking off on 18 September, the Rugby World Cup features 48 matches, played in 11 host cities across England and in Cardiff, and is expected to be watched by millions of people on television and digital media.

Other publishers are also looking to benefit from the event, and there are at least three one shots in the pipeline, with the first, from Ardent Media, an official travel guide for Rugby World Cup supporters.

NEW THIS SUMMER: ECLIPSE WORDSEARCH RANGES



ALREADY SELLING WELL: PLEASE DISPLAY TOGETHER



CREATIVE COLOUR SPECIAL

In response to the popularity of monthly colouring in title Creative Colour, Puzzler has produced this special issue for the summer holidays. The one shot features more than 45 designs to colour in, including original artwork from the Puzzler illustration team, and comes with perforated pages allowing people to tear out and keep or share their finished artwork. It also offers readers 30% off on all Stabilo products.



On sale 5 August
Frequency one shot
Price £4.75
Distributor Marketforce
Display with Creative Colour, Relax with Art, Zen Colouring



FOOD HEAVEN - CUPCAKE HEAVEN

Food Heaven benefits from a refreshed design and an extra supplement in the next issue, to coincide with the return of the Great British Bake Off. It includes extra features and interviews, on top of the regular 101 recipes, along with a 28-page supplement on the Best British Bakers, featuring past winners from the show. The highly-rated show delivers some of the biggest sales of the year for Food Heaven, stretching from August to October.



On sale 6 August
Frequency monthly
Price £5.99
Distributor Marketforce
Display with Delicious, BBC Good Food



DOWN YOUR WAY

Down Your Way, Yorkshire's monthly 'nostalgia' magazine, is relaunching with a new look and feel, but mindful of its demographic, much of its regular content and traditions will stay the same. Content-wise, the issue will reveal a 1920s granny who was 'way ahead of her time', a trip of a lifetime on Concorde, DIY remedies used in the past to beat doctors' bills, plus a quiz on the 'swinging 60s'.



On sale 27 July
Frequency monthly
Price £2.70
Distributor Country Publications
Display with People's Friend, Evergreen, The Oldie



HEAT & CLOSER MULTIPACK

Offering added value through multipacks is becoming increasingly commonplace on the newsstand. This Heat and Closer bundle offers customers two of the top celebrity titles for a discount price of £1.99. Retailers are advised that there are no standalone copies of Heat and are asked to use Heat facings on the fixture, and to display in any additional space where possible.



On sale 4 August
Frequency fortnightly
Price £1.99
Distributor Frontline
Display with Closer



PERMACULTURE

Green-living title Permaculture has returned from being on tour with veteran rocker and activist Neil Young, as he promoted his new album The Monsanto Years and highlighted human and environmental issues in North America. As well as featuring the star on the cover, the issue includes exclusive photos and reviews of both the tour and the album.



On sale 30 July
Frequency quarterly
Price £4.95
Distributor Comag
Display with National Geographic, Geographical



Bestsellers Air, boat & rail

Title	On sale date	In stock
1 Railway Modeller	13.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Rail	05.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Hornby Magazine	13.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Railway Magazine	05.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 FlyPast	31.07	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Airliner World	12.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Model Rail	27.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Steam Railway	14.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 British Railway Modelling	13.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Aeroplane Monthly	31.07	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Practical Boat Owner	13.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Heritage Railway	27.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Steam World	21.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 Air Forces	20.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Modern Railways	27.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 Rail Express	20.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 Railways Illustrated	06.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 Today's Railways	11.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 Steam Days	20.08	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 Flight International	04.08	<input type="checkbox"/>

Data supplied by **Menzies** DISTRIBUTION

BRAND NEW!

DREAMWORKS

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STARTER PACK:
£2.99^{RRP}

STICKER PACKET:
50P^{RRP}

THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



ZEN COLOURING BOTANICALS

After the success of Zen Colouring Flowers, the third issue of Zen Colouring again focuses on nature, with a specific focus on plants. The quality title offers even more refined and intricate designs to colour in, allowing readers to 'cultivate their inner calm and let their creativity bloom'. One of the more premium colouring titles, Zen Colouring offers strong revenue and should be displayed prominently.



On sale 4 August
Frequency six per year
Price £5.99
Distributor Seymour
Display with Relax with Art, Colour, Creative Colour



THE ESSENTIAL ACOUSTIC GUITARIST

From the team behind Acoustic Magazine comes this premium one shot, The Essential Acoustic Guitarist. The special features interviews with 10 of the greatest acoustic guitar players of all time including Eric Clapton and Andy McKee. It also includes reviews of 10 guitars under £1,000 and six 'dream' guitars, along with 12 pages of tutorials by experts.



On sale 30 July
Frequency one shot
Price £7.99
Distributor Comag
Display with Acoustic Magazine, Guitarist, Total Guitar



BASSES YOU MUST PLAY!

Bass Guitar Magazine has collated the best reviews of basses – from guitars that cost a couple of hundred pounds to an £11,000 Fodera – to create this special publication. Following the success of last year's The Essential Bass Guide, Bases You Must Play! fits perfectly into the collection and is expected to be popular with regular readers of Bass Guitar Magazine as well as new audiences.



On sale 30 July
Frequency one shot
Price £7.99
Distributor Comag
Display with Bass Guitar Magazine, Bass Player, Guitarist



IMPROVING WITH THE EXPERTS

Drummer Magazine presents this special publication that is dedicated to helping drummers of all skill levels to develop their playing. Bringing together expert tuition from some of the world's most famous drummers and educators, the issue includes tips and advice from drummers such as Thomas Lang, Steve Smith, Stanton Moore and Bob Armstrong.



On sale 30 July
Frequency one shot
Price £7.99
Distributor Comag
Display with Acoustic Magazine, Guitarist, Total Guitar



RECIPE COLLECTION

Dedicated to a specific theme each issue, the latest Recipe Collection is called 'Make it Healthy' and features 100 of the magazine's most popular recipes collected over the past two years. Split into three sections of weight loss, heart health and dairy-free diets, the magazine was produced by the team behind the Healthy Food Guide and comes with full nutritional information.



On sale 30 July
Frequency five per year
Price £5.99
Distributor Comag
Display with Healthy Food Guide, Delicious, Jamie

Industry viewpoint Susan Hefferon

Senior sales development manager, Frontline



GET THE BEST OUT OF YOUR DISPLAY

Do you know the value of the magazine front cover?

On your magazine fixture today, there are many impulse sales opportunities. How do I know that?

Over the years, I have seen the amount of research, focus and creativity the publishers place in deciding exactly what will be on the front cover – what image, what headlines, what colours, and how that all comes together to become the very best formula for their magazine. The front cover is ultimately a great sales tool to encourage impulse sales.

So, what formula would I recommend to you to grow your magazine sales using the value of the front cover?

Firstly, display your top sellers fully faced and front of fixture.

Secondly, look out for titles that can grow your sales such as seasonal issues, promoted issues or those with exceptional lead stories which could double your sales.

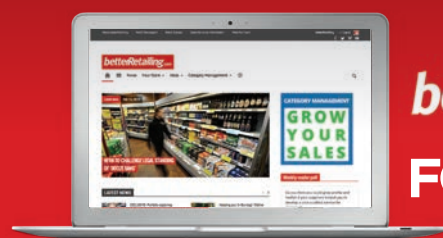
What's hot now? Four Four Two is soon to celebrate the start of the football season (on sale 1 August), while Take a Crossword is the number one puzzle title for independents and is offering great prizes on every issue (on sale 30 July).

And, thirdly, display launches front of fixture and highlight to customers.

Want to boost your sales now? Look out for children's title Furchester Hotel launching on 29 July and try the new 'Eclipse' wordsearch puzzle titles, next on sale 31 July.

Top tip

Look out for seasonal issues, promoted issues or those with exceptional lead stories which could double your sales.



betterRetailing.com

FOCUSED ON INDEPENDENT RETAILING

THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES

Partworks







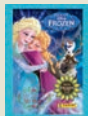



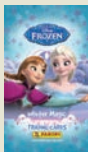




Title	No	Pts	£
Amercom			
Great British Locomotives	38	48	8.99
Amermedia			
Military Vehicles	42	48	5.99
DeAgostini			
Build the Millennium Falcon	30	100	8.99
Cake Decorating	176	180	2.99
Cake Decorating Relaunch	125	165	2.99
Dinosaurs & Friends	23	60	5.99
Official Star Wars Factfile	79	120	2.99
Something Sweet	81	90	2.99
Eaglemoss			
3D Create & Print	28	90	6.99
Batman Automobilia	68	80	10.99
DC Chess Collection	92	96	8.99
Disney Cakes & Sweets	100	120	4.50
Doctor Who	51	70	7.99
Knit & Stitch	133	176	5.00
Marvel Chess Collection	43	64	8.99
Marvel Fact Files	124	150	3.50
Military Watches	38	80	9.99
Star Trek Off. Starships Coll.	51	70	9.99
Hachette			
Art of Knitting	27	90	2.99
Art Therapy	19	100	2.99
Black Pearl	81	120	5.99
Build the Mallard	48	130	7.99
Build the U96	48	150	5.99
Classic Pocketwatches	77	80	8.99
Judge Dredd Mega Collection	14	80	9.99
Marvel's Mightiest Heroes	42	60	9.99
My 3D Globe	30	100	5.99
Your Model Railway Village	88	120	8.99
RBA Collectables			
Amazing Dinosaur Discovery	22	80	5.99
Precious Rocks, Gems & Minerals	27	100	5.99
Real Life Bugs & Insects	45	85	5.99

Collectables

Topps

	Disney Frozen Activity Cards Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00		Merlin's Official Premier League 2015 Starter £2.00 Cards £0.50
	Disney Frozen Fashion Pack Packets £1.00		Minions Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	Hero Attax Marvel Avengers Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00		Minions Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00
	Lego Friends Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		Skylanders Trap Team Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00
	Match Attax 2014/2015 Starter £3.99 Cards £1.00		World of Warriors Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00
	Match Attax Extra Starter £3.99 Cards £1.00		WWE Slam Attax Rivals Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00
	Match Attax SPL 2014/15 Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00		

Panini

	Avengers 2: Age of Ultron Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		Inside Out Starter £2.99 Stickers 50p
	Big Hero 6 Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		Road to UEFA Euro 2016 Starter £4.99 Stickers £1.00
	Disney Cinderella Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50		Sofia the First Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	Disney Frozen My Sister, My Hero Starter £2.99 Cards £0.50		UEFA Champions League Adrenaln XL Starter £4.99 Cards £1.00
	Disney Frozen Photocards Starter £3.99 Cards £1.50		UEFA Champions League Starter £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	Disney Frozen Winter Magic Starter £4.99 Cards £0.75		2015 FIFA Women's World Cup Album £1.50 Stickers £0.50
	Dragons Starter £2.99 Cards £0.50		Ultimate Spider-Man Album £2.99 Stickers £0.50
	Jurassic World Starter £2.99 Stickers 50p		



COMING UP IN NEXT WEEK'S RETAIL NEWSAGENT

MARGARET McNICHOL ON GROWING SALES FROM DELI AND HOME MADE PRODUCTS

Plus, RN's columnist Neville Rhodes on the implications of the National Living Wage for the newstrade, and retailers top pricemarking strategies revealed



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 over the past 20 years that they have been our stocktakers." (Peter Wagg)

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How can RN help you?

RN wants to hear about the everyday challenges our readers face so we can put a team of experts on the case to find solutions to them. Whether you're struggling to find a point of difference, need help with staff training or don't know how to make the most of your core categories, we want to hear from you. If you would like to appear in our 11 September special issue, please:

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Call **020 7689 3361** or

Tweet **@TomGK_RN**

with details of the challenge
 you face by 7 August.



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 - Digital Temperature Display
 - Fully Automatic Operation

Temperature Range -12/-24 C

No. of Shelves 5 Per Door



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Back in the day

101
YEARS AGO

1 August 1914

The Cumberland Education Committee are about to introduce by-laws limiting the hours of employment of school boys. The age limit is to be 12, and the hours 6.30am to 8am and 5am to 8pm. There is also a suggestion that children under 14 shall not be employed on Sundays.



50
YEARS AGO

31 July 1965

A customer entering your shop saying he has found a briefcase marked "top secret" in the train should not be advised to take it to the nearest police station. For the case will almost certainly be part of Corgi Books' latest promotion campaign - The Liquidator Jack-botch.



25
YEARS AGO

4 August 1990

Nottinghamshire police have launched a purge against top shelf magazines which has resulted in titles being confiscated from several retailers and a wholesaler. Earlier this year a retailer in Cotgrave, Nottingham, had Escort and Fiesta magazines removed.



Disgruntled bacon fan hogs headlines after rasher rip-off

Tesco was back in the headlines last week - but this time for the right reasons following its witty response to a 'complaint' from a bacon-mad customer.

Ben Roberts posted a

tongue-in-cheek message to the supermarket chain on Facebook after

discovering only six slices of bacon in a seven rasher pack he had bought from one of its stores in Derby.

But he was shocked when he received a response to his plight from Tesco mimicking his jokey style.

In his post, Ben spoke about the "truly horrific" moment he discovered the packaging error.

"SHUT THE FRONT DOOR! There was only 6 rashers of bacon. 6. I could not believe it! Mortified! I called my



other half into the kitchen but quickly dismissed her as she did not seem to understand the problem."

Soon after, he was contacted by 'Jamie' from Tesco customer care, who agreed

that Ben had "gone through a whirlwind of emotions for a Sunday morning."

Jamie went on: "As a fellow bacon fan I can fully understand your shock, disappointment and unadulterated anger at finding only six rashers in the packet." He then offered to refund the customer his purchase price for his troubles.

The exchange has since racked up more than 45,000 Facebook likes. Ben told the Daily Mail: "It's amazing that it's touched that many people and the comments have just been hilarious."

Smoking farmer sparks a row

A farmer in Northern Ireland was left fuming after being charged for smoking in the workplace - his tractor.

The unnamed farmer was having a cigarette break while parked on the side of the road when he was spotted by a tobacco control officer.

The officer claimed the worker was in breach of smoking regulations, since his tractor was big enough to carry more than one person.

The incident could cost the unfortunate farmer a maximum fine of £1,000 under the Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order.

But Barclay Bell, deputy president of Ulster Farmers' Union, branded the whole affair "bizarre", adding: "Regardless of where you stand on smoking, in tough financial times, is it justifiable to ask whether this is the best possible use of time and money?"

AROUND WITH THE ROUNDSMAN with Blanche Fairbrother



I don't think that anyone on the editorial staff of the Sun have got a conscience at all.

How can they live with themselves knowing they have scraped the bottom of the barrel by printing the picture of our wonderful lady, Her Majesty The Queen, on the front page of Saturday 18 July's edition, allegedly giving a Nazi salute?

Are they so worried about falling sales they needed to create some sort of sensation to persuade people to go out and buy the paper? I wonder how they would feel if we pried into their family archives and made public what they got up to as children. I wonder if they will have the decency to at least offer an apology.

Our local paper, The Staffordshire Newsletter, is now coming out on Wednesday. It has been a Thursday paper since Mr Kipling baked his first cake but now the powers that be have decided to bring it out a day earlier to try and improve sales.

Maybe if they didn't put it online (right) they might sell more physical copies in the shops but, let's face it, if people can read what they want by pushing a button they aren't going to go out and spend 85p on the paper are they? Why can't they see they have shot themselves in the foot?

My little car has had to go into the day ward at the garage for a minor operation so now my cheque book is in the sanatorium with a nervous breakdown.

May I offer a warm welcome to Mike Brown now he has joined our merry band at Retail Newsagent.



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