

RN

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2017 ideas

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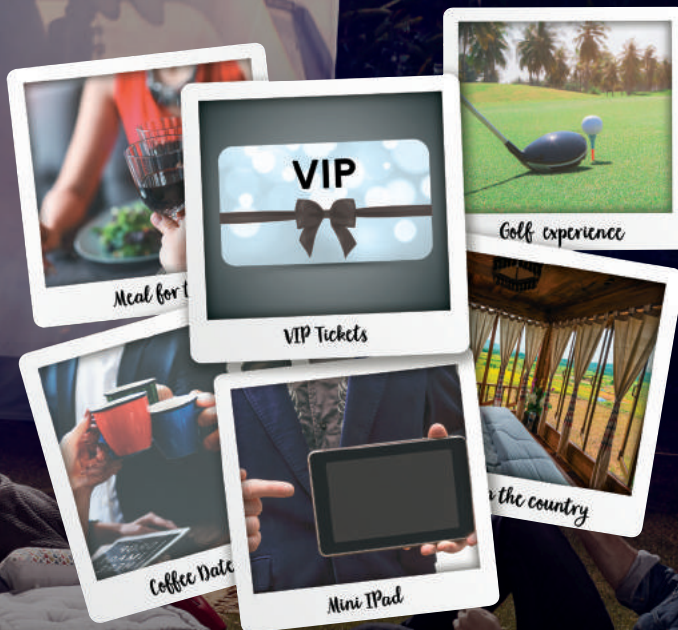
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Redefining convenience

How Mital Morar broke the rules to build a futuristic business

STORE LOOKBOOK

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2017 a year of great ideas

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Shaping the future
of independent retail
since 1889



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**How to
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range
for your
store**

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WELCOME

Each week, the stream of ideas
from retailers to make or save
money in the face of such
change has been
constantly inspiring

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LOYALTY AND
A SENSE OF
COMMUNITY

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Associate editor

Chris Rolfe

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This year began with the surprise
Tesco-Booker announcement that
led to both excitement and concern
about symbol market consolidation in
the industry.

But in a year that has thrown up other
potential threats such as the demise of P&H
and the introduction of EUTPD tobacco leg-
islation, this last issue of 2017 is proof there
is also energy and enthusiasm among inde-
pendent retailers.

Each week, the stream of ideas from re-
tailers to make or save money in the face of such change has
been constantly inspiring.

Of the retailers I've interviewed for RN's Lookbook se-
ries this year, one of my favourite stories came from London
newsagent Nainesh Shah, whose huge specialist magazines
range made one customer, multi-Oscar winner Meryl Streep,
reach for her credit card. His story proves how creating a
point of difference from a traditional category can win you
trade.

Yasmine Mohammed's determination to transform a fail-
ing family c-store into a fully refitted and profitable commu-
nity-focused One Stop was another highlight.

And David Robertson's story of how he had added a café,
food to go and an ice cream parlour to his core impulse range
was a brilliant example of how a traditional format can be
modernised successfully.

To end the year, we've rounded up the best ideas you've
shared with us in our 2017 Lookbooks and hope they spark
some inspiration for your plans next year.

Happy new year from the RN team. We wish you a prosper-
ous 2018 and look forward to bringing you many more great
ideas to help you grow your profits.

BREAKING NEWS

Analyst reflects on the year ahead



David Sands
Retail consolidation expert

To be an entrepreneur, you have to be optimistic. And I'm very optimistic about 2018. Those of us who have been in this industry for a long time have seen many changes. But right now, we're going through a series of major structural shifts, which I expect to intensify next year.

Fresh food is really going to come into its own. In April, Nisa will be taken over by the Co-op. This means Nisa retailers will be able to access the Co-op's formidable fresh food range, transforming the offer they'll have in their stores. It will also enable Nisa to have a far better quality of own-label products.

Another major event is of course the Tesco takeover of Booker. This is another sign that the boundaries between the big retailers and the independent sector are beginning to blur. I don't imagine for one minute that the Tesco team will be running the Booker operation. There's a realisation among the multiples that there are a lot of very effective retailers in the independent sector, and these people are being coveted by the bigger groups. I think we will increasingly see franchise opportunities, and I anticipate groups like Sainsbury's getting involved, too.

Up in Scotland specifically, we also have minimum alcohol pricing coming in late spring and we'll be selling major alcohol brands at the exact same prices as the discounters and multiples.

So I am very optimistic about 2018. My main worry? A Corbyn-led Labour government. I think that would be a disaster for business, large and small.



£3.7bn deal won't affect pricing, says competition authority Wholesalers plan appeal

Indies may gain from Tesco-Booker merger price war

by Alex Yau

alex.yau@newtrade.co.uk

A price war with suppliers following the £3.7bn Tesco-Booker merger could play into the hands of independent retailers, RN has been told.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) announced its approval of the deal on 20 December, with the regulator concluding the merger would have no negative impact on pricing or competition.

A number of wholesalers are now considering an appeal to the decision

and say combined power will result in prices being driven down.

However, store owners have welcomed this prospect. Retailer Raj Aggarwal, of Spar Wigston in Leicester, argued a price war would benefit independent retailers. He told RN: "Tesco isn't the giant it used to be and suppliers follow the shoppers."

"Tesco and Booker don't have the option of refusing to stock goods from suppliers if they can't get them at lower prices. Suppliers will take their business elsewhere and this can only be beneficial

for independent retailers," he added.

Kay Patel, of Global Food & Wine in Stratford said: "If suppliers do get squeezed out, they may try to minimise damage by improving the quality and service delivered by their reps."

"I can imagine the reps will work harder to tell independent retailers how to make the most of promotions and merchandising to boost sales. This is all good for independent retailers."

Among those wholesalers considering an appeal is AG Parfett & Son's chairman Steve Parfett

who called the CMA's decision "perverse and pathetic".

"I'm thinking of appealing to the Competition Appeal Tribunal and I would encourage others to do the same," said Mr Parfett. "Tesco-Booker will have the combined power to demand more goods at a cheaper price from suppliers. Other wholesalers won't be able to keep up and they'll be wiped out. A lot of suppliers have put similar worries to the CMA, but are reluctant to come out because they fear the repercussions from Tesco."

How our Lookbook retailers thrived in 2017

Providing services such as dry cleaning and in-home help to customers has helped independent retailers flourish in a difficult year for the industry, RN analysis has shown.

The top business ideas from RN's weekly Store Lookbook highlight how businesses have relied

upon local knowledge and customer service to unlock new profitable opportunities and secure shoppers' loyalty throughout the year.

Of the 56 stores profiled in this magazine in 2017, more than half (56%) had made a major change directly linked to customer feedback or

insight.

Surekha Patel, of Best-one in Bexhill, introduced dry cleaning after a nearby store closed; Steve Haines of The Broads in Coltishall extended weekend opening by two hours and added £2,000 of turnover per week, while teenage retailer Jack Matthews has changed

lightbulbs and provided deliveries for elderly customers.

Discussing his own customer-centric strategy, John Parkinson of Broadway Premier in Llandudno said: "We're trying to build our business by accommodating requests where we can."

STORE LOOKBOOK



Mital is rewriting the rules

Mital Morar's Ancoats General Store has been recognised for widening the boundaries of what a convenience store can be – but how do you build an operation with innovation at its heart?

Max Liu reports

“We didn't follow any formulas. We run in-store art events and organise lots of tastings. We used wooden sterling board on our walls to create an industrial but warm effect and the result is a unique-looking store.”

Mital Morar is quite a fan of the word 'unique'. And running Ancoats General Store in Manchester – recognised at last month's IAA gala dinner for its innovation – this favoured word makes sense.

Opened 18 months ago, the new 3,000sq ft store serves a “young, urban, independently-minded clientele” according to Mital.

“They're people who have their own way of looking at the world. We have created something that customers will feel loyalty towards, a sense of community. That's what independent retailing is all about,” he says.

The fashionable Northern Quarter area of Manchester is certainly the perfect place to try out this approach. Its demographic is one that yearns for something different.

“Some of the big supermarkets do great things and they know how to sell. In the end, though, the chains are faceless corporations and they can't compete with me when it comes to personality,” says Mital.

So what are the nuts and bolts of Mital's business that help create this unique experience? “There's a coffee shop in store which

is run by trained baristas and is supplied by a local roaster. We serve draught beer which can be drunk in store or taken away in reusable growlers. We're also about to introduce draught wine in reusable bottles. We have embraced the demand for vegetarian and vegan food. We've been bold and stocked a whole range of vegan, gluten-free and healthy products – things like dairy-free cheese. Street-food traders come into the store every Thursday to sell their goods. We're having a monthly art event and a shop quiz – a new take on the pub quiz. The store is a community hub.”

No wonder the IAA judges declared that Mital had “broken all the rules and redefined what convenience retailing means”.

If any readers are getting a sense of déjà vu, this is Mital's second innovative convenience store – he ran a short-lived store-cum-restaurant in the same Manchester area a few years ago. But, after leaving the retail trade, the opportunity to bring something fresh to the market proved irresistible.

“I was born into retail – my parents were both in the business, but design has always been an interest of mine,” he says, “so I was able to bring that to the look of the new store.”

Luckily, his vision has met the approval, not just of his customers, but also those who work with him.



I want to consolidate next year. While it's great to innovate, I want to concentrate on all the background stuff, looking at merchandising, pricing and margins. **MITAL MORAR**



What you can learn

- 1 Modern on the outside, full of innovation inside – Mital has 'redefined' the convenience model
- 2 Mital builds ranges of unique products which he knows customers will keep coming back for
- 3 Local producers can hold tastings and even create events inside Ancoats General Store
- 4 Staff are empowered to run their own promotions in store

INFORMATION

Location

57 Great Ancoats Street, Manchester M4 5AB

Size

3,000sq ft

Staff

6 full-time, 10 part-time

Average basket

£10



STORE LOOKBOOK



"I'm very lucky," he explains. "The people I employ are really engaged with what the new store is about. They are coming up with ideas that can take this store forward. I trust them and want to give them the creative freedom to, for example, run their own promotions. The more you trust your staff, the more you get from them."

In-store innovations, trend-friendly events and offering a whole host of 'unique' experiences is all very well, but businesses, in the end, have to make money. So, how is Ancoats General Store performing?

"We spent £100,000 to kit out the store before it opened and have put in a further £30,000 in the past 18 months," says Mital.

"I will keep putting money in. The store is in a permanent state of evolution. At the moment, we're putting in a sterling-board slat wall so we can hang products from hooks."

"We'll also add more fridges. Growth was rapid for the first year and steadily increased by 50% in the past six months."

Mital is also convinced he is on the right path for continued success.

"I reckon there's another 20% growth in this business and we have to keep investing and innovating to achieve that." ●



Want to see more of Mital's store? Go to betterretailing.com/ancoats-general-store



What you can learn

5 A coffee shop area keeps customers inside the store far longer than the average convenience store

6 Convenience staples are still at the heart of the store's offer

7 Draught beer and street food-style meals are all available to buy at Ancoats General Store

NEWS



Bosses' positive message on staff recruitment 'A chance to learn as a retailer'

Retailer sings the praises of 'superhero' worker Joe

by Olivia Gagan

RNreporter@newtrade.co.uk

Retailers have spoken out about the benefits of hiring staff with learning difficulties and autism and rewarding outstanding customer service from employees who have previously struggled to find work.

Tywardreath Village Shop in Cornwall named staffer Joe Barnard, who has a mild learning difficulty, its Superhero Employee of 2017 this month.

Manager Trudy Thomp-

son said: "It is a massive achievement for someone who was once vastly underestimated and was only offered volunteering jobs before he worked here.

"He's made us extra proud of him by proving how vitally important he is to our shop team. I run the company, but Joe can do lots of things better than I can, such as organising the stockroom, checking delivery notes and fridge temperatures and replenishing shelves."

Meanwhile, Aman Uppal, of One Stop Mount

Nod in Coventry, has employed one autistic staff member for more than three years. He said: "He's 18 now and joined us in his last year of secondary school on a work placement. Initially it was a two-week temporary job, but he really enjoyed it and started working as a Saturday boy. He's now a part-time member of staff working two or three days a week."

Mr Uppal added that the advantages worked both ways. "It's improved his confidence, and we've

learned how to work with people with these needs. If you're thinking about hiring new staff, get in contact with your local council, and see if there are any schemes or placements. It won't be right for everybody, but it gives you a chance to learn as a retailer and give a start in retail to someone else," he said.

The latest government figures suggest that only 16% of autistic adults are in full-time paid employment, even though many of them want to work.

Sobering sales in January

The trend for a "dry" January has led to an increase in non-alcoholic sales for wholesaler Cotswold Fayre.

The company's chief executive Paul Hargreaves told RN sales of Braes o'Gowrie Sparkling Elderflower non-alcoholic drink peak in December and January, making it the wholesaler's most popular product in the period.

"Sales come close to 3,000 bottles. People are healthier and, whether it's during Christmas or January, they just want to enjoy the taste of alcohol at a social occasion without the drawbacks of wine or beer."

Shaun Sykes, of Denmore Premier Food & Wine Store in Rhyl, said: "Sales of our non-alcoholic beers and wines do go up by 5% during January because of the health kicks."

Regional investment

Two regional publishers launched new magazines in one week earlier this month, in a strong sign of investment in the category.

Newsquest's South Wales Argus launched a business magazine, The Business, while the new owners of the Oldham Chronicle began producing a lifestyle title, Signature.

Radio station Revolution 96.2 bought the Chronicle out of administration earlier this year, and is due to relaunch it in the next few weeks.

The company's managing director Matt Ramsbottom said: "We are developing new local media products and services, and Signature magazine is part of our exciting plans.

"We have also made significant headway in recent weeks with the newspaper."

New deals help Asian beers flow in UK

Deals by brewer Molson Coors and wholesaler Dhamecha to distribute new South East Asian beer brands have been announced, as retailers have reported rising sales in the category.

This month, the companies signed agreements to distribute Snow and Goa beer brands respectively.

According to analyst Nielsen, the world beer market in the UK is worth £320m, up 11.5% year on year.

Molson Coors UK & Ireland managing director Phil Whitehead said: "As drinkers become increasingly knowledgeable about beer, they demand greater choice to allow them to

explore a range of flavours and styles."

Kay Patel, of Global Food & Wine in Stratford, has seen demand for Asian beers increase by 20% in the past year. He told RN: "We stock Tiger, Kingfisher and Asahi and they're definitely some of our most popular drinks.

"They make up at least

a quarter of sales in our 600ml beer range and this has been driven by customers wanting to be more adventurous."

Robert Kirkwood, of Premier The Corner Shop Convenience Store in Cowdenbeath, added: "We stock Cobra, which is very popular. We normally go through 24 bottles a week."

NEWS

Community spirited store's festive fare

A community spirited Nisa retailer in Luton helped get the festivities under way by hosting two special events. Molly's General Store in Lewsey Farm works closely with the local community all year round but during the festive period likes to do something extra special. Elderly people in the community were given a special lunch at nearby residential home, funded by the store. Scott Jell, manager at Molly's, said: "We had a great day. We had 46 for dinner and was great effort from everyone involved."



Children's titles and collectables performing well 'Publishers are being nimble'

Exciting year in store for buoyant kids' mags market

by Jennifer Hardwick

jennifer.hardwick@newtrade.co.uk

Sales of children's magazines and collectables look set to continue to be buoyant in 2018, while the World Cup will provide an opportunity for new one shots and special editions.

Marketforce's group circulation manager Rob Humphrey told RN children's titles are still performing very well compared to the rest of the market, and predicted a strong trend for surprise gifts in the

category next year. "There is a big trend for surprise gifts in the toys market, with products like LOL Surprise dolls, and I think that could filter into the magazine sector.

"The idea is you pay for it but you don't know what toy you're going to get. I know a lot of people in the magazine industry are looking at that at the moment," he said.

"Partworks and collectables in general are strong. I know of a lot of launches coming into that sector from publishers like Panini and

Deagostini."

Mr Humphrey predicted the forthcoming FIFA World Cup, to be held in Russia in July, will also be a "big focus" for the industry, inspiring a lot of one shot launches.

"There is now a big emphasis on looking outward all the time and picking up on the things which are popular outside of magazines which could lend themselves very well to our market.

"Publishers are being more nimble and launching smaller products which allow them to test

out new ideas or trends," he added.

Data from Seymour shows the home improvement category was the only one to increase its RSV year on year in the 12 months up to the start of September 2017, while the news and current affairs sector maintained the same level of RSV despite sales falling by 4.7% year on year.

The category which suffered the greatest loss in RSV was computing magazines, showing a 20.3% year-on-year fall.

Partwork finalé falls flat

A Country Antrim retailer has been left "disappointed" with his supply of the final edition of a partwork he has stocked for almost two years.

The final part of The Revolution Papers, which was packaged with a free CD, was due into Eugene Diamond's store on 28 November but did not arrive until 19 December.

"It should have been in three weeks earlier but was delayed because of production issues," said the Diamond's Newsagents owner.

"Also, not only did I not get the extra ones I ordered but I didn't even get my usual allocation. Either Newsprint or The Revolution Papers have let me down."

Neither Newsprint or the Revolution Papers responded to a request for comment.

Thai food's tasty takings

A Nisa retailer is boosting his food to go sales by making his store a destination for locals hoping to pick up Thai takeaways on their way home.

Steve Walters, manager of Nisa Fletton in Peterborough, has joined forces with local catering business Sang-Jun Thai Food Station to offer takeaway food between 5pm and 9pm in a three-month trial that is generating £400 in sales per week.

Mr Walters told RN: "We wanted to make the most of the food to go area and the equipment we have. It would normally be cleaned down and closed by 7pm. It's created a bit of theatre and helps capture shoppers going home after work."

Stores go extra mile for housebound shoppers

Retailers are helping housebound customers brave the wintry weather by going the extra mile to deliver shopping to their homes.

As a cold snap descended on west Scotland, Mo Razzaq set out in his 4x4 to deliver shopping to less-mobile customers unable to travel.

"Over three days we

did a hundred drop-offs," said Mr Razzaq, who owns a Family Shopper in High Blantyre. "We'd put a leaflet through everyone's door who might need assistance, letting them know they can order and we'll deliver for free."

Mr Razzaq also spent one day salting a dangerous stretch of road

near his shop, where there had been 16 accidents the previous week.

"That's the difference between a small store and the multiples," he said. "For us, it's not always about making money."

Mr Razzaq is far from the only retailer going out of his way to support

his customers. Asif Akhtar provides a similar service from his Premier store in Kirkcaldy, Fife.

"It's a community store and we know everybody by name, so they can give us a call and we'll bring what they need round. We do it all year, but we definitely get more requests in icy weather," he said.

BRAND SNAPSHOT



Cats get the cream

Mars Petcare has launched its first snack product in the premium Sheba range called Creamy Snacks. It will be available to retailers from January.



Vodka and code

From January, Glen's Vodka will sport a code which allows smartphone users to scan for prizes in association with music app Shazam.



Sweet move from Boost

Boost Drinks is reformulating all of its energy drinks to 4.9g of sugar per 100ml in advance of next year's sugar tax.



TUC in to minis

Pladis has launched TUC Minis (RRP £1.39) in Original and Cheese flavours to tap into demand for shareable evening snacks.



Furry nice treats

A dog treat product has been added by Mars Petcare into the Pedigree range. Ranchos Originals Treats are available in 70g packs at an RRP of £2.50.



Shell out for a bunny

Mondelez's Cadbury range will include a Dairy Milk Peter Rabbit Easter Egg and Toy pack (RRP £6.99), with a toy of a character from the upcoming film.



Stout and about

Crabbie's is launching its first stout. It features Crabbie's signature ginger flavours and will come in 500ml bottles at a RRP of £1.80.



Ale be enjoying a drink

Lamb & Watt's new ginger ale is available in 200ml bottles at an RRP of £3.99 for a four-pack, and £1.25 as a single.



Vaping is logical

JTI has extended its Logic range with a lower strength e-liquid. The 6mg product is available in Tobacco, Menthol and Cherry flavours.

WHAT'S NEW



Zaytoun

Zaytoun specialises in Palestinian products which have been grown organically and sourced from small-scale farmers. Its Medjoul Dates are available in 250g, 500g, 1kg and 5kg.

RRP £7.99

Contact order@zaytoun.org



Scrubbys

Scrubbys Crisps are made using only the finest root vegetables, and the flavours in the range include Hummus Chilli & Lime, and Jalapeno Cheddar Cheese.

RRP £2.79

Contact crunch@scrubbys.co.uk



Sweet Freedom

Sweet Freedom puts a healthier spin on the syrup category. Each bottle contains only natural ingredients and options in the range include Coconut and Fruit Syrup.

RRP £3

Contact theteam@sweetfreedom.co.uk



Sauce Shop

Products from the Sauce Shop can be used either as a dip or as a sauce for pulled pork or a stir fry. No thickeners are used in the manufacturing process.

RRP £4

Contact info@sauce-shop.co.uk



Wild At Heart

There are three products in Wild At Heart's pesto jar range; Wild Mushroom Pesto, Nettle Pesto and Wild Garlic Pesto. All ingredients are sourced in the UK.

RRP £1.99

Contact info@wildatheartfoods.co.uk



Crosta & Mollica

Only vegetables and fruits sourced from Italy are used in Crosta & Mollica's range of jams. The Italian Cherry conserve is delicious spread on bread.

RRP £2.35

Contact info@crostamollica.com

Alex Yau
 alex.yau@newtrade.co.uk
 020 7689 3358



Imagintave Cuisine

Imaginative Cuisine's jars of Gastropaint garnish are designed to decorate dishes. They are edible with Strawberry, Sweet Beetroot and Vanilla Bean flavours to choose from.

RRP £6.99

Contact



Portlebay Kettlecorn

Portlebay Kracklecorn is made using raw cane sugar to give it a more brittle and crunchy texture than traditional popcorn. Flavours include Wasabi & Sweet Ginger.

RRP £1.79

Contact letspop@portlebaypopcorn.com

Focus

Soups

Shoppers are no longer restricted to tins in convenience stores with the wide range of fresh soups and broths available



Tideford Organics

Tideford Organics' range of products include superfood, miso and traditional savoury soups. All the soups are specially made by chefs in Devon.

RRP £2.99

Contact info@tidefordorganics.com



Watmuff & Beckett

Soups in Watmuff & Beckett's range are made using UK ingredients and are gluten-free. The chefs who produce them are trained by Michelin-star winning chefs.

RRP £2.35 to £2.75

Contact hello@watmuffandbeckett.co.uk



Ossa

Ossa specialises in three different bone broths; Chicken, Beef and Fish. All the ingredients are free-range and slow cooked over a 24-hour period to fully release all the flavours.

RRP £4.99

Contact info@ossaorganic.com

Vicky Singh

Londis, Mitcham

Soup sales increase during the cold months because shoppers want a winter warmer. We normally sell only four cases, but this increases to six in winter. Our most popular products are those from Batchelors

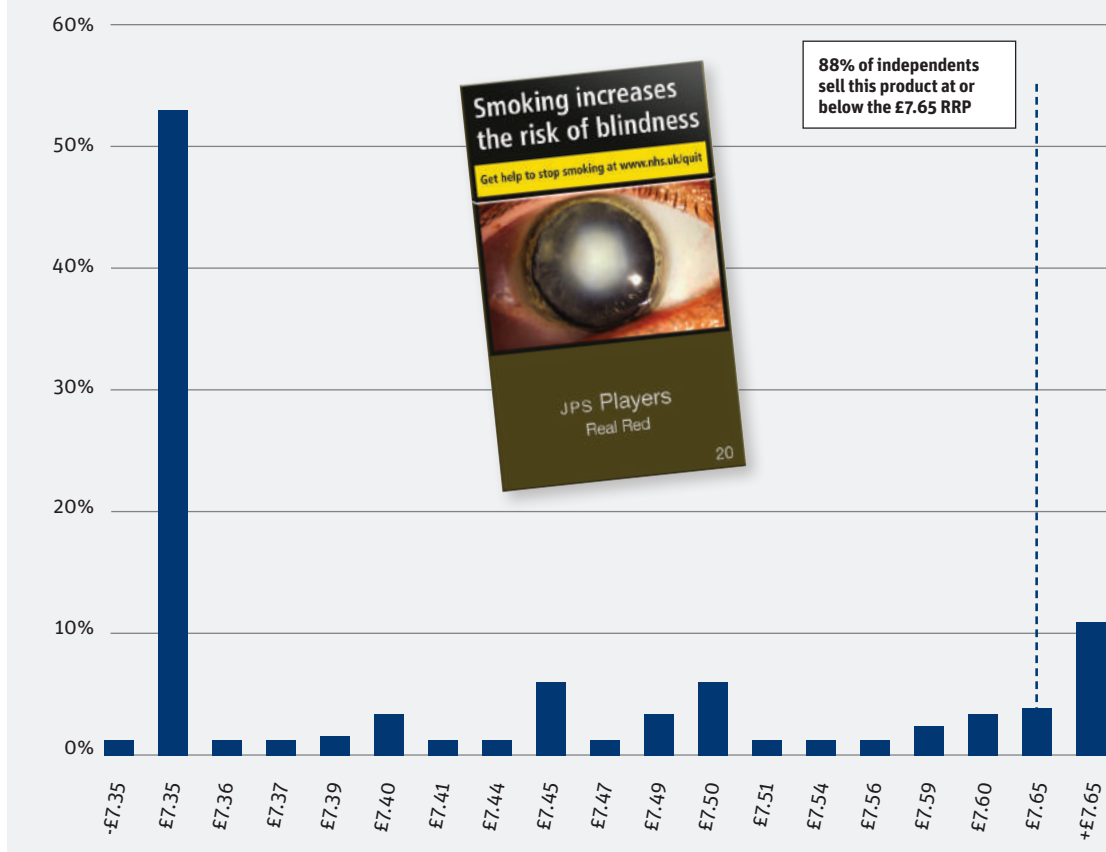


PRICEWATCH

Profit checker Budget cigarettes

Price checker

PLAYERS KINGSIZE REAL RED 20 Price distribution %



Analysis

Since the arrival of EUTPD II and plain packaging legislation in May, the budget cigarette market has become a bear pit for independent retailers. With pricemarked packs gone, supermarket giants such as

Asda have adopted loss-leading strategies which allow them to set prices which are all but impossible to match. Which isn't to say retailers don't try: as our data shows, most are setting their prices below RRP, with

average prices often falling at between 10p and 20p below. With RRP itself already keeping margins tight, it is clear retailers are accepting a real squeeze in order to keep customers coming through the door.

PRODUCT

Sterling Kingsize Dual
20

Players Superkings Real Red
20

Players Kingsize Real Red
20

Carlton Superkings Red
20

B&H Kingsize Blue
20

L&B Kingsize Real Blue
20

Carlton Kingsize Red
20

JPS Kingsize Real Blue
20

Sovereign Kingsize Blue
20

Sterling Kingsize
20

Players Crushball
20

B&H Blue Superkings
20

How we drive our profit

Nainesh Shah

STORE Mayhew's Newsagent
LOCATION Belgravia, London
SIZE 1,000sq ft
TYPE residential

TOP TIP

Cigarettes can be a great footfall driver, so don't obsess over all small margins



We are in Belgravia, which looks like a construction site at present, and there's a lot of workers around. They're often wary of buying cigarettes in Belgravia because they think they'll be really expensive, so I make a point of keeping our budget cigarettes, such as Players Kingsize Red, at or near RRP. It definitely works – word gets around the construction site during breaks, people tell each other they can get cheap cigarettes in our shop, and more and more workers come to get their cigarettes here. It drives footfall and we sell lots of other things to them as well.

Adeil Hussain

STORE One Stop Motherwell
LOCATION Motherwell
SIZE 2,500sq ft
TYPE residential

TOP TIP

Take into consideration the prices being charged by your competitors



Our biggest sellers by a long way are Superking Players. After that it's Mayfair and then B&H Blue. We're a One Stop now, which is a great help with cigarette sales – it means we can get our cigarettes much cheaper and compete with the supermarkets on price, while still getting a near-10% margin overall on the category. For example, we have a small shop next door and its prices on budget brands are 10p more expensive than mine. So plain packaging and the loss of pricemarks has maybe ended up working in our favour after all.

Toby Hill
 RNreporter@newtrade.co.uk
 020 7689 3357

Data supplied by



EDFM is a specialist in helping leading suppliers to the UK's independent convenience channel get value, insights and business benefits from EPoS data. To find out how they could help you call 07976 295094

AVERAGE UK RETAIL PRICE*	BOOKER RRP	RETAILER 1 N'HOOD SHOP ON PARADE IN SOUTH LONDON SUBURB	RETAILER 2 LARGE SHOP ON E. MANCHESTER SUBURBAN ESTATE	RETAILER 3 OFF-LICENCE AND SHOP IN NEWCASTLE SUBURB	RETAILER 4 LARGE C-STORE IN MODERN GLASGOW SUBURB	RETAILER 5 SMALL C-STORE CLOSE TO STATION IN ESSEX COASTAL TOWN	RETAILER 6 SHOP ON PARADE ON EDGE OF CARDIFF CITY CENTRE
£8.62	£8.75	£8.45	£9.25	£8.65	£8.45	£8.74	£8.45
£7.44	£7.65	£7.35	£8.10	£7.35	£7.50	£7.35	£7.35
£7.44	£7.65	£7.35	£8.10	£7.35	£7.50	£7.35	£7.35
£7.59	£7.75	£7.40	£8.40	£7.45	£7.45	£7.85	£7.45
£7.58	£7.75	£7.49	£8.35	£7.75	£7.60	£7.99	£7.45
£7.92	£8.00	–	£8.30	–	£8.05	£7.75	£7.75
£7.59	£7.75	£7.40	£8.35	£7.55	£7.45	£7.75	£7.45
£8.18	£8.30	£8.19	£8.60	£8.00	£8.00	£8.00	£8.00
£7.57	£7.74	£7.49	–	£7.65	£7.69	£7.69	£7.44
£8.26	£8.40	£8.15	£8.90	£8.40	£8.10	£8.10	£8.10
£7.47	£7.65	£7.35	£8.10	£7.35	£7.35	£7.35	£7.35
£7.57	£7.75	£7.50	£8.40	£7.75	£7.60	£7.99	£7.45

* from a sample of 3,500 stores

MY LOCAL HERO

Retailers reveal the most profitable produce on their doorsteps

Robert Kirkwood

The Corner Shop, Crossgates

Puddledub Sausages £7/kg



Where did you discover them?

It's just local knowledge. Puddledub is a local butcher and I've used it in the past, I've always loved its products. When I opened my first shop it was one of the first companies I got in touch with to see if it would work with us, so we've been working together for two years now.

Who buys them?

Anybody who wants sausages in their weekend breakfast or mid-week dinners buys them. They're quite a luxury product, so people will get them for a special meal, like a nice dinner or a big brunch on a Saturday. They're happy to pay a little extra for them. We also do black puddings and bacon from the same butchers, so they can buy other fry-up items at the same time.

Why are they so successful?

They're very popular – I take one large delivery every week, and split it between my two shops. It makes it easier to have just one invoice covering the two stores, and I can then weigh up who needs what at each store, helping cut down on waste. People know of these products and trust the quality. Puddledub has a pop-up shop in Kirkcaldy and a stall in a garden centre nearby. It's a high-end product and has quite a following.

Ben Dyer

STORE Waterloo News
LOCATION Waterlooville, Hampshire
SIZE 1,000sq ft
TYPE neighbourhood

TOP TIP

You can't expect to compete with the supermarkets on price – stick to RRP and keep your range as tight as you can



Ever since the law changed and we had to let go of pricemarked packs and go over to plain packaging, budget cigarette sales in our shop have nosedived. We used to be more competitive because the supermarkets didn't used to do pricemarking, but they are now doing cigarettes as loss-leaders – they're priced much cheaper than we can ever compete with. A lot of people who used to come in for cigarettes aren't coming in at all now. We're already at RRP, not making much more than a 2% or 3% margin, and we still get beaten on price.

Ferhan Ashiq

STORE Day-Today Ashiqs
LOCATION Prestonpans, East Lothian
SIZE 550sq ft
TYPE neighbourhood

TOP TIP

Pay attention to the brands that sell in your area and tailor your range accordingly



My range of budget cigarettes has consolidated since the new legislation came in, with most people transferring onto Players Superkings. It's a location thing – in east Scotland people smoke Players, in west Scotland they smoke Sterling, while Chesterfield and Pall Mall are almost non-existent these days. We sell Players at £7.65, just under a 6% margin, and go through 18 or 19 outers a week at that price. I'm in a very competitive position for pricing, right next door to a Scotmid, which has become very competitive in the pricing of its cigarettes since last April.

YOUR VIEWS

Cash machine installation was a farce

Our cash machine was installed by Cashzone slap bang in the middle of the wall instead of to the side as it conveniently could have been. The gap left inside was then too small for our magazine and newspapers racks to go back in. We finally had to cram our magazines and newspapers into a grocery shelf and have lost 90% of our magazine and greeting cards sales.

There was never any mention of a casing around the cash machine by the rep that came to visit us. Even when the engineers came to view the site, there was no mention of a casing.

The rep and the engineer whom I dealt with both knew the newspaper racking would be going back on the wall for the magazines and the newspapers as well as the greeting cards stand.

Unfortunately, when they came to fit the cash machine my wife and I were away, but we did not think anything of it as everything had been measured and agreed.

However, when we



came back and saw this monstrosity I rang the rep straightaway, who said he would sort this out for me.

This went on for weeks as I chased and chased and chased him.

Finally, he got back to me and said the casing was a safety feature. Then I informed him I had CCTV and our security was second to none as I had just removed a post office from my shop but still had all the security and procedures in place.

So, again he said he would sort out the problem, but I have not heard back from him.

I finally decided to contact Cashzone direct but to this day no one has replied to my emails or calls. Cashzone has been atrocious to deal with and once they had got me to sign the contract and the cash machine was in place they just were not interested.

Gurnam Singh
Quadrant Local
Stretford

A spokesman for Cashzone said: "We regret if any customer has not been fully satisfied with our assistance. We will make sure to look into this and to find the best possible resolution."

VIEW FROM THE COUNTER with Mike Brown



I have a confession to make. On Wednesday 13 December I had a little lie-in until 7.40am, which is a little more civilised than the usual 4.20am start.

Don't worry, it was all in a good cause. I had been invited to the Newcastle branch of the NFRN's Christmas party in my capacity as district president.

My intention was to drive the 60 miles home, but Richard Stoddart, branch treasurer and party organiser, offered to put me up at his house overnight. It was such a relief because the weather was atrocious. Anyway, thank you to the 18 members of the Newcastle branch who showed me such hospitality and warmth – we had a great evening.

In June this year, the HSBC bank I used to use closed. Next year, in May or June, our NatWest branch is closing too. Peter Robinson voiced his concern about this in RN's 8 December issue and he is quite right. My footfall has been hit because older customers used the local branch, then came in the shop afterwards.

From my own point of view, cashflow is critical and I am forced at least twice a week to travel to the nearest branch in Guisborough, 10 miles away, to deposit money, which takes valuable time away from the shop.

With all the official socialising I have done this month, I must be well above the national average for the consumption of turkey dinners. Well "it's all a dream, an illusion now", as the song goes, so it just leaves me to wish all our readers a very happy and prosperous New Year.

See you all in 2018!

YOUR SAY What is the most profitable change you have made in your business this year and how do you plan to build on this in 2018?

Conrad Davies

Spar Pwllheli, Wales
Our most profitable area this year has been food to go because it's helped push our total margins up by 20%. We've had products such as fresh orange juice, pizza and a bakery, which have all been very popular with customers and I plan to drive that further next year. I'll be looking at adding more to our range and asking shoppers what they like and haven't liked over the past 12 months.

Anish Parekh,

Londis Broadoak and Post Office, Ashton-under-Lyme
We've worked hard on merchandising and it's surprising to see how much of a change placing things in different areas of the store makes. We had a problem with thefts of coffee, which we had in a blind spot next to the cereals and milks; people also seemed to expect to find coffee in grocery. So we relocated it, theft dropped, and sales increased by 26%. We'll continue reviewing the store to see what other changes might work.

Luke Mansell

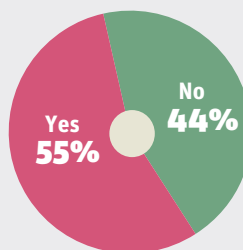
Chalbury Food & Wine, Dorset
Wine prices have increased, so wine sales have tapered off. Because of that, fresh food to go has been the focus. Our most profitable change has been pushing fresh food to go. In our main store (we have two), the sandwich bar has been improved. We've increased the range and improved our hot counter so customers

are offered more choice. We now have someone manning the fresh food to go all day from 8am.

100 YEARS AGO

29 December 1917
Winston Churchill, then president of the Early Closing Association, wrote a letter to RN in the interest of Britain's shopkeepers urging the public to "make their Christmas purchases as early as possible."

RN READER POLL



Have specialist products drawn new customers to your store this Christmas?

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION

What will prompt the best growth in your store next year?

Vote now at
betterRetailing.com

ADVICE CENTRE



How to choose the perfect niche range for your shop

While convenience stores are relied upon to provide the essentials, in a crowded market for everyday items, offering a niche range can turn your business into a destination and provide a lucrative extra revenue stream.

When Meryl Williams's store,

Pike's Newsagents in the Welsh tourist town of Porthmadog, gained extra competition, she decided to find a new niche – jigsaw puzzles.

As Meryl explains, by choosing a niche product tailored to the needs of your local area, your store can become a destination, not just for these products but for your whole range. ●

1

Be aware of your locale

We used to have a small but broad range of toys in the shop – standard items like Bob the Builder toys. We chose to stop stocking toys and focus solely on jigsaws a few years ago after a beautiful toy shop opened on our street. We realised there was no point trying to compete and so developed jigsaws as our niche product range instead.

2

Build on existing demand

We knew there was demand for jigsaws because customers were asking for them. We already had a small range of just eight or 10 different puzzles from a local supplier, Williams of Swansea. Jigsaws work for us because we're near a holiday campsite and they're a fun thing to do when it's raining and you need to keep adults and kids occupied.

3

Be aware of trends

Despite being in a tourist area, there is a move towards people not buying traditional souvenirs anymore, so jigsaws made sense. They appeal to adults and children: our sales split is 75% adults, 25% children and we pick stock accordingly. Kids love film-themed puzzles – Despicable Me and Moana jigsaws are very popular. Choosing the right size is important too: we tend to stock 1,000-piece puzzles because they're popular.

4

Go direct with big names

We deal directly with our primary supplier, Ravensburger. We also work closely with Jackson's of Sheffield. This helps keep prices competitive and through having a direct relationship we can secure good cost prices and gain access to a wider range. Ravensburger is a huge brand in the jigsaw and games market so jigsaw fans know the name and like that we stock their products.

5

Make it a focus

From our first tiny range, we now stock between 150 and 200 jigsaws at any one time. Kids need to see them at eye level, so we have a special corner display for the children's puzzles. We make them a focus of the shop by placing 3D puzzles in the shop window, and mounting finished puzzles on the store ceiling.

If you've had a great idea for your business or would like some advice from other retailers to get started contact Chris Rolfe at chris.rolfe@newtrade.co.uk

2017 LOOKBOOKS

A year of great ideas from amazing retailers

What makes your business special, profitable and the shop of choice for your customers?

RN reporters ask great retailers this question every week. Here, we round up the brilliant ideas we've featured in our 56 Lookbooks this year to spark some ideas for your 2018 business plans. **Helena Drakakis** looks back

20 January

Meryl Streep came in the other day and stood staring at my magazines – I don't think she'd seen so many before. She spent a long time browsing and bought a handful.

Nainesh Shah, Mayhew News, Belgravia, London



17 February

You've got to have a really good, credible range of fresh food. People's expectations have changed and it's a case of working out what your customers want.

Peter Robinson, Londis, Pembroke Dock, Pembrokeshire



6 January

We work with a local bakery that makes amazing breadcakes and a beekeeper supplies local honey, too. We also get some of the best pork pies and sausages you can find from a village butcher near us.

Craig & Zoe Horner Wentworth Village Shop, Rotherham, South Yorkshire



13 January

Through conversations with customers and online marketing, we identified a need for a well-stocked, convenient and cost-effective store to serve our town and surrounding villages.

Wojciech Lorkiewicz
Greylees Convenience Store,
Greylees, Lincolnshire

27 January

When I saw an opportunity to cater for local Polish customers, I introduced a range of dry items, Polish beer, and my biggest seller – Polish bread.

Jimmy Patel, Jimmy's Store, Northampton, Northamptonshire



24 February

A nearby florist sells bunches of flowers for up to £20. We bought more than £400 at cost price at Christmas and sold the lot.

Yasmine Mohammed, One Stop Stoneyburn, Stoneyburn, West Lothian



3 March

When people are earning £9 an hour, they can't just be on the till. They've got to be better trained, have departments to order on, do stock-checking or price-checking.

Nick Fraser, Spar Lower Earley, Reading, Berkshire



3 February

A local florist supplies cut flowers – from £4.50 a bunch – and house plants selling for up to £20 each, which are available on sale or return, so we get margins of up to 30%.

Adrian Thompson, Mace, Filby, Norfolk



10 February

With One Stop, a lot of our orders are generated for us. Compared with three hours' work before, we now spend half an hour checking the order that's been created.

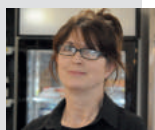
Danny Wilson, One Stop, Scarborough, North Yorkshire



10 March

We have created upmarket area in the shop. We have finer foods on one end and pricemarked well-known brands on the other end.

Daphne Eddington, The Village Shop, Braithwaite, Cumbria



7 April

We taught pensioners who had never used an ATM before how to do this so they could still draw their pensions here. They trust us, and continue to shop here.

Martin Ward Cowpen Lane News, Billingham, Cleveland

17 March
One third of my store is dedicated to food to go, including a Daily Deli hot food counter, ready-made sandwiches, a Costa Express machine, a slush machine, and cakes, cookies, and bread from a local bakery.

Baz Jethwa Rocket Stores, Bolton, Greater Manchester



14 April

Just after buying the business, I saw an oil-free Frymac machine in action. Customers get hot freshly-cooked chips within two minutes of requesting them and I decided it would be perfect for my store.

Ferhan Ashiq Day-Today Ashiqs, Prestonpans, East Lothian



5 May

We make 700 products on-site in total. We started concentrating on this because the products we made ourselves were achieving double-digit sales growth.

Noel HaddenMilestone Service Station,
Rathfriland, Newry

12 May

All of my focus was on how I could improve my store. I was keenly aware most good stores these days are organised by shopper missions, so I based my layout around zones.

Dan Cock Whitstone Village Stores,
Holsworthy, Devon

19 May

We've added coffee, food to go and ice cream. It's a new revenue stream which will help recoup profit lost from traditional news, tobacco and stationery sales.

David Robertson Pozzi, Buckie, Banffshire

26 May

We like to go the extra mile for our customers, so if someone hasn't got a paper we will do everything to get it to them and take the flak if a delivery is late.

Kate Brown News2U, Leeds, Yorkshire

26 May

Our biggest development was the addition of a post office. It was a challenge to fit this in, but with our international customer base, we decided this was the best way to take the store forward.

Stuart Reddish

Londis, Chesterfield, Derbyshire

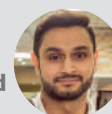
24 March

Our bakery has a £6,000 turnover. We bake fresh Cuisine de France pastries, serve breakfasts, pizzas, sandwiches and have a deli where customers can create their own lunches.

Siva Thievanayagan,
Nisa Local, Peterborough,
Cambridgeshire

31 March

I've developed my store on my own so I'm not dictated to. It's taken time and a lot of research but I can say it is my store and I'm able to run it exactly how I want.

Jag Aytain, The Rural Hub
& Post Office, Swadlincote,
Derbyshire

21 April

We really know our magazines, who writes them and who designs them. That compels people to buy them. They know they can trust us."

Tyler Brule,
Kioskafé, London

28 April

A third of people near us are 'striving shoppers' – people who do regular top-up shopping, spend around £30 per week and want extra services like PayPoint and healthy options.

Suenita Keshwara,
Costcutter, Boston,
Lincolnshire

26 May

News is the core of my business, but I wanted my shop to be more of a one-stop shop so I added £1 products, pet food, bread, soups and other basic groceries.

Muntazir Dipoti, Todmorden
News Centre, Todmorden,
West Yorkshire

26 May

I've started to revamp my forecourt and have put in new pumps. I'm planning to renovate the inside of the store too, to give it a facelift.

Martin Mulligan, Mulligan's
Londis, County Athlone

26 May

We're trying to build our business by accommodating requests where we can and making a note of products people want which aren't in stock.

John Parkinson, Broadway
Premier, Penhryn Bay,
Llandudno

26 May

I've been talking to operators at trade shows and I think the way forward is a confident range of alcohol, a good spread of soft drinks and a food to go range.

Kamal Thaker, Stop Shop
News, Edgware, London

23 June

My standout range is more than 200 locally-sourced products, including gins, craft beers, flowers and chocolate, supplied by firms within a 30-mile radius.

Christine Hope, Hopes of
Longtown, Herefordshire

30 June

I can't compete on fresh, chilled and meat on price or afford wastage like the multiples can, but I can have a bigger household goods range.

Harry Patel, Kwiksavé,
Warlingham, Surrey

2017 LOOKBOOKS

7 July

Instead of running our store as a community enterprise, we persuaded the village's residents to lend us money to buy it via peer-to-peer loans.

Trudy Thompson and Josh Taylor, Tywardreath Village Store, Tywardreath, Cornwall



14 July

There was a time when we'd bring in any new product, but now the margin has to be right. I'm looking for 30% on confectionery and crisps and 40% on chilled products.

Kay Patel, Best-one Global Food & Wine, East London



21 July

I understand deals and their role in store. And I understand how important it is to pass savings on. Yes, you take a hit, but I'm here for the long-term.

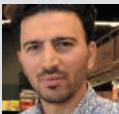
Robert Kirkwood, The Corner Shop Convenience Store, Cowdenbeath, Fife



28 July

Residents wanted to make sure I was going to cater for the local community. So, as well as a range of ready meals and curries, we've got fresh meat and fish.

Mehmet Guzel, Simply Fresh, London



11 August

Mine is a quality store and quality has to run through the whole business – the fittings, service, food, hygiene through to the back-of-house operation.

Raj Bhatia, The Battersea General Store, Battersea, London



18 August

We spent £110,000 on a refit. People want a clean, fresh and well-lit store. When tourists come they want something familiar to the Tesco or Sainsbury's they are used to.

Terry & Carole Birnie, Corfe Castle Stores, Corfe Castle, Dorset



25 August

We've got four metres of fresh fruit and vegetables and more ambient space and we're selling tons every week. It feels more like a Marks & Spencer than a local village shop.

Barry & Ranjeet Chandi, Nisa, Buckden, Huntingdonshire



1 September

We make the most of promotions. We put leaflets through peoples' doors and in the shop too. I make sure staff know about them and talk to customers about our offers.

John Green, Premier Green End Store, Sawtry, Cambridgeshire



8 September

A lot of our customers are mothers who care about how food affects the health of their children. They don't mind paying more if something is beneficial and we've seen an increase in turnover.

Vicky & Mandeep Singh, Londis, Mitcham, Surrey



2 June

Moving our store's closing time from 6pm to 8pm and opening all day on Sunday sparked a step change in turnover, which has increased by £2,000 per week.

Steve Haines, The Broads, Coltishall, Norwich, East Anglia



4 August

I switched symbol to Go Local because I wanted to stand out. There's a Spar and another Premier in the village, so I wanted to offer something different.

Ian Handley, Go Local, Sandiway, Cheshire



9 June

The dry cleaners in the village closed around a year ago, so I take in dry cleaning and contract it out. I've also introduced handmade cakes from Ruby's – a well-known Sussex bakery.

Surekha Patel, Best-one, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex



16 June

I've changed lightbulbs for customers, dragged logs to their cars, delivered to the elderly. You name it, there's not much we won't do.

Jack Matthews, Bradley's Supermarket, Quorn, Leicestershire



15 September

We recently bought a vacuum-packing machine so we can sell meat after the butchers in our concession have gone home. We only use British meat and try to source locally.

Keith Tones, Costcutter & The Food Shop, Swanage, Dorset



20 October

One of my main strengths is that I know all of my staff. I have about 80 to 85 overall and the personal touch is very difficult to maintain as you get bigger, but we work hard on it.

Paul Walker Bargain Booze, Davenport, Greater Manchester



27 October

I wanted to have a more extensive range than symbol groups offer, tap into the growth of vaping and food to go and increase my alcohol range, so I was the first to join the NFRN's Everyday fascia.

Ray Monelle Everyday (Orchard News), Western-super-Mare, Somerset



3 November

It usually costs roughly £100 to have displays set up for different seasons, but it's worth it. The increased footfall raises our sweets sales by 50%.

Anita Nye Premier Eldred Drive Stores, Orpington, Kent



1 December

A sandwich might cost us £1 to make, but we can sell it at £2.40. We started off with a dozen varieties of sandwich, and we now do meal deals which change seasonally.

Scott Graham McLeish, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire



22 September

We've changed our fuel to Jet and sales have doubled. I keep prices competitive – at the moment I'm on £1.17 a litre, whereas my competition is between £1.20 and £1.23.

Chris Wardle, Premier, Norton-in-the-Moors, Staffordshire

29 September

We stock magazines which no other shop in Wales stocks. Last month, we sold more copies of Vogue Collections than we did of regular Vogue – it's priced at £22.50.

Mark Dudden & Dee Gobherdan, Albany Road Post Office, Cardiff

6 October

Students preferred Aldi and the store had been losing money until myself, the university and Costcutter decided to find out why. It turned out there weren't enough healthy options in the store.

Arnaud Leudjou, Costcutter Brunel University, West London

13 October

Our alcohol range means we get customers from five miles away, and even from the other side of Nottingham – we haven't advertised it, it's all word of mouth.

Sarj Patel, Pasture Lane Stores, Loughborough, Leicestershire

10 November

I sell hot dogs and hot drinks from 6.30am and, as I'm selling my coffee at £1.25 and £1.75, I'm offering motorists and workmen a really competitive price.

Shabaz Ali, Costcutter, Falkirk, Stirlingshire



24 November

We replaced Ginsters sandwiches with Urban Eat. They are part of a Budgens-exclusive '£4 or less' meal deal and we've seen a 20% uplift in sales.

Jonathan Fraser, Budgens, Reading, Berkshire

8 December

We created a specific role for social media and marketing and it's given such a lift to the business. I know I can leave our marketing with Imogen and the shop is being shouted about in a targeted and thoughtful way

Dave Hiscutt, Londis Westham Road, Weymouth, Dorset

15 December

When you have affluent customers, brands bring them through the door. I discovered this when I put in self-service ice cream, Slush Puppy and Costa machines, all of which give high margins.

Stuart Mitchell, Costcutter, Newburgh, Aberdeenshire

22 December

When a regular customer became housebound and needed an electric wheelchair, we saved up, my family cut back on Christmas presents, and we presented him with it on Christmas Eve.

Asif Akhtar, Smeaton Stores, Kirkcaldy, Fife

29 December

We have an in-store coffee shop, serve draught beer and wine, and stock a huge range of gluten-free and dairy-free products. Customers will feel loyalty – that's what independent is all about.

Mital Morar, Ancoats Convenience Store, Manchester





PUT YOUR BUSINESS IN THE DRIVING SEAT.

JUST FOLLOW THESE DIRECTIONS.



- 
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DIGITAL MARKETING

The internet and social media has allowed retailers to advertise their stores without breaking the bank, but the sheer number of ways to reach potential shoppers can be intimidating. What are the best ways to use digital marketing? **Alex Yau** reports

New age thinking



HOW DIGITAL MARKETING HELPS ME

Abdul Arain

Al-Amin Stores, Cambridge

Abdul knows how important Google is when customers are researching which store to head to. Listing his store on the search engine four years ago helped increase sales by 5%.

Increased footfall has definitely been a result of listing our store on Google Maps. People, especially the younger generation, are on their phones all the time and seek information quickly. Having your information on Google Maps can have a big impact on who comes to your store, whether it is locals looking for somewhere nearby to top up their

weekly shop or tourists looking for their nearest convenience store.

Store reputation can also be influenced by your Google listing. I advise other retailers to keep their details and respond to comments if they have their shop on Google Maps. You can ensure your correct opening times are there, have pictures to offer a good overall first impression of the store while replying to comments will give customers the positive impression that you are reliable and are willing to respond to any issues they have. The internet has become such a vital tool for retailers now.

Digital tools help businesses reach customers in the right place



The internet has become such a vital tool for retailers now

Supplier advice

Ben Smith

Communications manager, Concha Y Toro



Choose an in-store expert

Digital marketing doesn't have to be expensive, but it can be time consuming. Choose someone from your team who is naturally engaged with digital – a regular contributor to Instagram or Twitter.

Run social media-exclusive deals

Recruit followers by offering digital-only deals at your store in return for retweets and follows. Competitions are a great way of building a social following. Focus on talking about brands that already have a strong social presence, then they are likely to amplify any exposure you give to them, thus giving you a bigger reach. The more engagement (retweets and forwards, for example) you get, the better the search engines will position your posts.

HOW DIGITAL MARKETING HELPS ME

Peter Lamb

Lambs Larder, East Sussex

Peter has become a big user of social media, combining Twitter, YouTube and in-store display boards to tell shoppers about current promotions alongside interesting facts about his store.

The digital display helps because we have a train station right next to the shop. Shoppers who are waiting for a train can see information on



departure times and we also use this as an opportunity to promote certain offers we'll have on during the week. We also use YouTube and post videos of the store, whether that is just general footfall in the day or of certain displays, and it helps create a positive impression. Shoppers know they're walking into a pleasant store after seeing it beforehand on YouTube.

Using a smartphone

We use smartphones in two different ways.

I have several old Android devices and I use them for YouTube videos and social media posts to film and photograph the store in various angles.

I'm developing an app which helps me manage all this together, while posting

on social media at scheduled times.

I recommend only four posts a day as people can become annoyed if you put too much on social media.

Retailers with an online presence should also make sure their website is optimised for mobile. A website on a desktop computer

might be too big or have too much for a smaller phone screen. You can get experts to help you with that for a discounted price if you search the internet.

I use a website called freelancer.com and have found web experts which charge prices 90% cheaper than anywhere else.

HOW DIGITAL MARKETING HELPS ME

Ramsey Hasaballa

Premier Speke, Liverpool

Ramsey relies on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to tell the world about any offers in the store alongside offering giveaways and competitions.

Social media is vital for us and it

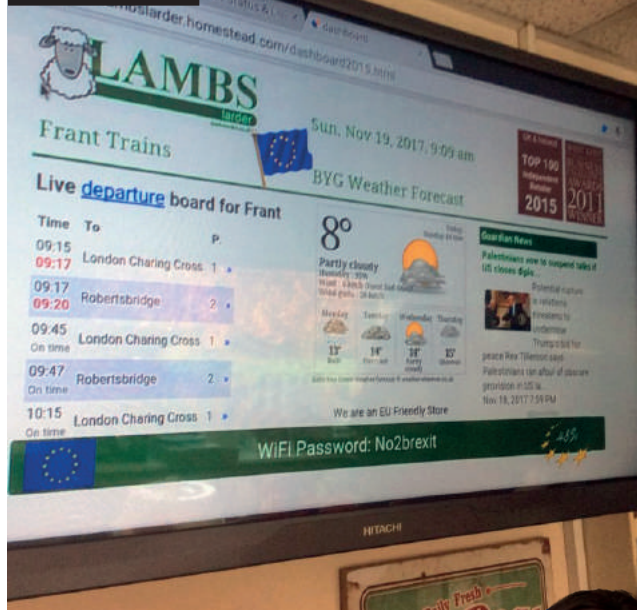


often leads to significant uplifts in sales. For example, I posted a promotion on Fox's Biscuits on Twitter and we ended up selling four cases with a few days. A similar post on Facebook ended up generating 12,000 views. It helps us compete with the multiples and similar rivals because customers will either know we offer the cheaper product, or we're much closer to them when they search for a shop or product online.

We treble the amount we post during Christmas and we expect sales to increase by about 20% as a result of the increased traffic. We find social media also helps attract customers who aren't local either. Liverpool John Lennon Airport is nearby and when taxi drivers or tourists flying in or out search for a store, we normally come up on their search results.



Peter Lamb's website acts as a community information board



Shoppers know they're walking into a pleasant store after seeing it beforehand on YouTube

Engaging in online platforms can have a direct effect on your turnover

Supplier advice

Nelly Khumalo

Digital development manager, Spar UK

**Make sure customers can find you**

Retailers should ask themselves if customers can find their businesses online. If the answer is no, this is where there is the most effective opportunity for growth because many retailers haven't yet realised the value of owning their data.

Engage with responses of all kind

Putting your store in an easy-to-find position online means that you're likely to get feedback – both the good and the bad. This is an opportunity to see what your reviews are, what you are doing well or could do better and it will give you a chance to respond directly.

Encourage customers to "check in" with you

Services like Google and Facebook understand the value of local listings as they are the biggest sources of traffic for them. They also help customers "check in" to locations. If you've never claimed a listing, I can guarantee that someone (who doesn't know your business) would have already created one for you. ●

THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



New year, new you

A LESS STRESSFUL LIFE? IT'S ALL IN THE MIND

Coping with the stresses and strains of modern life has become a profitable area for publishers. This title offers readers practical advice

ANTHEM Publishing brings this in-depth mindfulness guide to market for the 'new year, new you' post-Christmas period – proven to be one of the annual peaks in interest in the practice for the past few years. The one shot is a benefit-led guide to helping readers practice mindfulness and achieve results in their everyday lives. It has three practical sections: Mindfulness Mantra – science, history, philosophy and culture of mindfulness; Coping Techniques – practical techniques and Mindful Living – ways in which readers can adapt everyday living to be more mindful, from how they eat to breathing, meditation and sleeping.



THE POWER OF MINDFULNESS
On sale out now
Frequency one shot
Price £5.99
Distributor
Marketforce
Display with Breathe,
In the Moment

Round up



Jennifer Hardwick

Magazines reporter
jennifer.hardwick@newtrade.co.uk
@jenniferh_RN

TIMES CHANGE BUT YOUR ROLE WON'T

There's no doubt about it – 2017 has been a year of huge change for the publishing industry.

For the first time, more of the magazines on our newsstands are printed outside of the UK than inside it, and one of the biggest three distributors in the country, Comag, closed its doors for good in October.

On top of that, there were the closures of more small distribution centres by Smiths and Menzies and the continuing shift towards a 'super hub' model, which caused a well-documented stream of problems from Smiths' Hemel Hempstead centre in particular – and sparked the NFRN's Enough Is Enough campaign and protest outside the wholesaler's head office in September.

Despite the many twists and turns, what stands out most of all to me is the dedication I have witnessed from retailers – in stores up and down the country from Cardiff to London to Shropshire – to making their magazine category the best it can be and their customers' experience as enjoyable as possible. I, myself, have experienced the frustration of waiting for a wholesaler to pick up the phone to try and get errors rectified, and the dismay when a product for which you have paid a premium for delivery arrives in a condition you would never try and sell to your customers.

All this only serves to strengthen my admiration for the energy I hear from our readers every day on the phone, in the letters you send in and in person at every one of the industry events I've attended. That energy and passion is the most precious resource publishers have to reach their customers and make sure their readers receive the perfect, personalised sales pitch for their products.

More industry change next year is inevitable, but retailers' crucial role in it will not change – in fact, it will become more important than ever before.

THIS WEEK
IN MAGAZINES

WE WANT YOUR INSPIRATIONAL IDEAS!

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Which titles fly off
your shelves? Have
you grown your sales
with a great display
or promotion?

RN

Call ☎ 020 7689 3350 or email ✉ jennifer.hardwick@newtrade.co.uk



COUNTRY WALKING

Country Walking is celebrating the launch of its Walk 1000 Miles 2018 feature in the February issue, which comes with a free 64-page magazine dedicated to the challenge as well as a double-sided progress tracker for readers to record their miles. Distributor Frontline says demand for this annual issue is always high as New Year's resolutions kick in.



On sale 4 January
Frequency monthly
Price £4.50
Distributor Frontline
Display with Trail, Lakeland Walker



INFINITY

Issue 7 of new sci-fi magazine Infinity celebrates Jodie Whittaker taking over as Doctor Who with a look back at how females have been depicted over the years in the classic BBC show. The team take another trip down memory lane to remember such cult TV favourites as Man in a Suitcase, Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased) and UFO, Gerry Anderson's first ever live-action series.



On sale 4 January
Frequency monthly
Price £3.99
Distributor Intermedia
Display with SFX, Doctor Who Magazine

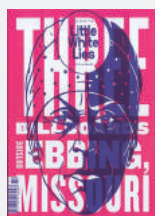


FOURFOURTWO

This special edition of FourFourTwo will revel in the nostalgia for the 1990s with a feature covering 90 things the team loved about 90s football. Included are interviews with some of the decade's biggest names from Fabrizio Ravanelli and Tony Yeboah to Matt Le Tissier. Distributor Frontline says FourFourTwo generated more than £1.4m in the year up to October 2017.



On sale 3 January
Frequency monthly
Price £4.99
Distributor Frontline
Display with Match of the Day Magazine, World Soccer



LITTLE WHITE LIES

Little White Lies is a bi-monthly, independent film focused magazine featuring progressive writing and detailed illustrations and photography to keep film enthusiasts entertained. Designed to give fans a place to absorb the latest critic's opinions, the title also gives a sense of what factors are currently affecting film making and the greatest successes in the industry today.



On sale 6 January
Frequency bi-monthly
Price £6
Distributor Intermedia
Display with Empire, Total Film, Sight & Sound



HUCK

Huck magazine is a bi-monthly lifestyle magazine celebrating people and movements that go "against the flow". Inspired by radical youth culture, the Huck team trawls the globe seeking out artists, activists and creative renegades, with the aim of offering a global map of youth-fuelled social change - from emerging subcultures that challenge conventions to investigative journalism.



On sale out now
Frequency bi-monthly
Price £6
Distributor Intermedia
Display with Dazed & Confused, The Gentleman Magazine



Bestsellers Science

Title	On sale date	In stock
1 New Scientist	06/01	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Nature	04/01	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 BBC Focus	10/01	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Astronomy Now	30/01	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Scientific American	16/01	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 BBC Sky at Night	18/01	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 How It Works	25/01	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Wonderpedia	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 BBC Earth	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Scientific American Special	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 New Scientist The Collection	07/03	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Curious Mind Series	18/01	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Bringing Science to Life	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 Sky & Telescope	13/03	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Discover Space	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 BBC Focus Collection	10/01	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 British Archaeology	09/02	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 Astronomy	30/01	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 Current Archaeology	04/01	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 American Scientist	09/01	<input type="checkbox"/>

Data from independent stores supplied by

SmithsNews



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THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES

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Partworks

Title	No	Pts	£
Amercom UK			
Ships of War	31	40	11.99
DeAgostini			
Build your own R2-D2	52	100	8.99
Enhancing your mind, body, spirit	52	120	3.99
My Animal Farm	47	60	5.99
Jazz at 33 and third RPM	52	70	14.99
Star Wars Helmet Coll'n	52	60	9.99
The Beatles Vinyl Collection	23	23	9.99
Zippo Collection	61	60	9.99
Eagle Moss			
DC Comics Graphic Novel	63	100	9.99
Disney Animal World	98	100	5.99
Game of Thrones	48	60	8.99
My Little Pony			
Colouring Adventures	44	80	3.99
Star Trek Ships	115	130	10.99

Title	No	Pts	£
Hachette			
2000 AD			
The Ultimate Collection	10	80	9.99
Art of Cross Stitch	53	90	2.99
Art of Quilting	105	90	3.99
Art Therapy	146	120	2.99
Assassins Creed: the official collection	23	80	9.99
Dr Who Complete History	61	80	9.99
Draw The Marvel Way	53	100	4.99
Judge Dredd Mega Collection	78	80	9.99
Marvel's Mightiest Heroes	105	100	9.99
Transformers GN Collection	27	80	9.99
Warhammer	35	80	9.99
RBA Collectables			
Real Life Bugs & Insects	71	60	0.99
Panini			
F1 Collection	46	60	9.99

Collectables

Title	Starter	Cards
Panini		
Cars 3 sticker collection	2.99	0.60
Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them Sticker Collection	2.99	0.50
FIFA 365 Trading Cards	4.99	1.00
Football 2017 collection	2.99	0.50
Guardians of the Galaxy volume 2	2.99	0.50
Invizimals Trading Cards	3.99	1.00
Paw Patrol 'A Year of Adventures' Stickers	2.99	0.50
Road to 2018 Fifa World Cup Russia	4.99	1.00
Road to 2018 Fifa World Cup Russia stickers	2.99	0.60
UEFA Women's Euro 2017 Stickers	2.99	0.60
Beauty & the Beast Sticker Collection	2.99	0.50
Magic Box		
Zomlings Series 6		0.50
Star Monsters		1.00

Title	Starter	Cards
Topps		
Journey to Star Wars	4.99	1.00
Match Attax 2017/18	4.99	1.00
Num Noms sticker coll'n	2.99	0.50
Shopkins World Vacation	3.00	0.60
Shimmer and Shine Sticker collection	3.00	0.60
Star Wars: The Last Jedi Sticker collection	3.00	0.60
WWE Slam Attax 10 Trading Card Game	4.99	1.00
DeAgostini		
Magiki Mermaids		2.50
Magiki Ponies		2.50
Hot Wheels Slime Race		2.99
Premier League Sticker collection	1.99	0.50
UEFA Champions League Sticker collection	4.00	0.60

Newspapers

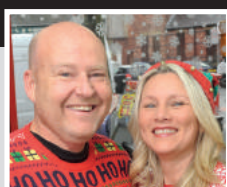
Daily newspapers price/margin pence/margin %			
Sun	50p	11.15p	22.3%
Mirror	70p	14.98p	21.4%
Mirror (Scotland)	75p	16.05p	21.4%
Daily Record	70p	14.98p	21.4%
Daily Star	30p	7.26p	24.2%
Daily Mail	65p	14.5p	22.31%
Express	55p	13.31p	24.2%
Express (Scotland)	50p	12.10p	24.2%
Telegraph	£1.80	38.7p	21.5%
Times	£1.60	34.4p	21.5%
FT	£2.70	54p	20%
Guardian	£2	44p	22%
i	60p	13.2p	22%
i (N. Ireland)	60p	13.2p	22%
Racing Post	£2.30	54.0p	23.48%
Herald (Scotland)	£1.30	29.90p	23%
Scotsman	£1.60	36.0p	22.5%

Saturday newspapers

Sun	70p	14.98p	21.4%
Mirror	£1.10	22.6p	20.6%
Mirror (Scotland)	£1.10	22.6p	20.6%
Daily Record	£1	21.4p	21.4%
Daily Star	50p	12.085p	24.17%
Daily Mail	£1	21p	21%
Express	80p	17.152p	21.44%
Express (Scotland)	80p	18p	22.5%
Telegraph	£2.20	49.5p	22.5%
Times	£1.70	39.95p	21.5%
FT	£3.50	79.1p	22.6%
Guardian	£2.90	63.8p	22%
i Saturday	80p	17.2p	21.5%
i (N. Ireland)	80p	17.2p	21.5%
Racing Post	£2.60	61p	23.46%
Herald (Scotland)	£1.70	39.1p	23%
Scotsman	£1.95	43.88p	22.5%

Sunday newspapers

Sun	£1.10	23.1p	21%
Sunday Mirror	£1.50	31.5p	21%
People	£1.50	31.5p	21%
Star Sunday	90p	19.89p	22.10%
Sunday Sport	£1	24.3p	24.3%
Mail on Sunday	£1.70	35.7p	21%
Sunday Mail	£1.80	37.8p	21%
Sunday Telegraph	£2	45.5p	22.75%
Sunday Times	£2.70	56.7p	21%
Observer	£3	73.5p	24.5%
Scotland on Sunday	£1.70	39.95p	23%
Racing Post	£2.60	61p	23.46%
Sunday Herald (Scotland)	£1.70	35.7p	21%
Sunday Express	£1.40	29.65p	21.18%
Sunday Post	£1.60	33.6p	21%



COMING UP IN NEXT WEEK'S RN

How Paul and Karen Stephenson built a convenience store empire in the north west

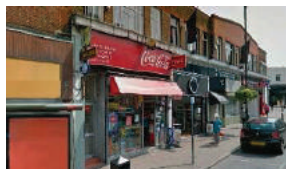
Plus, we interview Budgens brand director, Mike Baker, provide guides on household and laundry and healthier lifestyles, and Anish Panchmatia explains how to organise a stockroom

RN

PROPERTY



Selling or buying a business?
...That's our business!



NEWSAGENTS KENT
Leasehold £145,000 Ref: T33168Z

Town centre location, Greater London
Same owners 30 years, retirement sale
Busy shop, high commission income
Net Profit on accounts, over £85,000

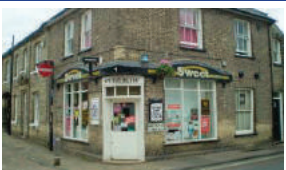


General Store Ebbw Vale
Leasehold £45,000 ono Ref: G32622J

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Rent only £2,000pa & nil business rates
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| ✓ Serve Quickly | ✓ Stock Ordering | ✓ Links to Wholesalers |
| ✓ Gross Profit | ✓ Cash Control | ✓ Non Barcoded Sales |
| ✓ Lottery Sales | ✓ Margin Control | |

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