

RN

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Academy is back in action

Your 12-part store improvement plan begins with merchandising

INDEPENDENT ACHIEVERS ACADEMY

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The model for millennials

- How Hong Kong's flagship Circle K store could have the format to meet the needs of young UK shoppers
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Shaping the future
of independent retail
since 1889



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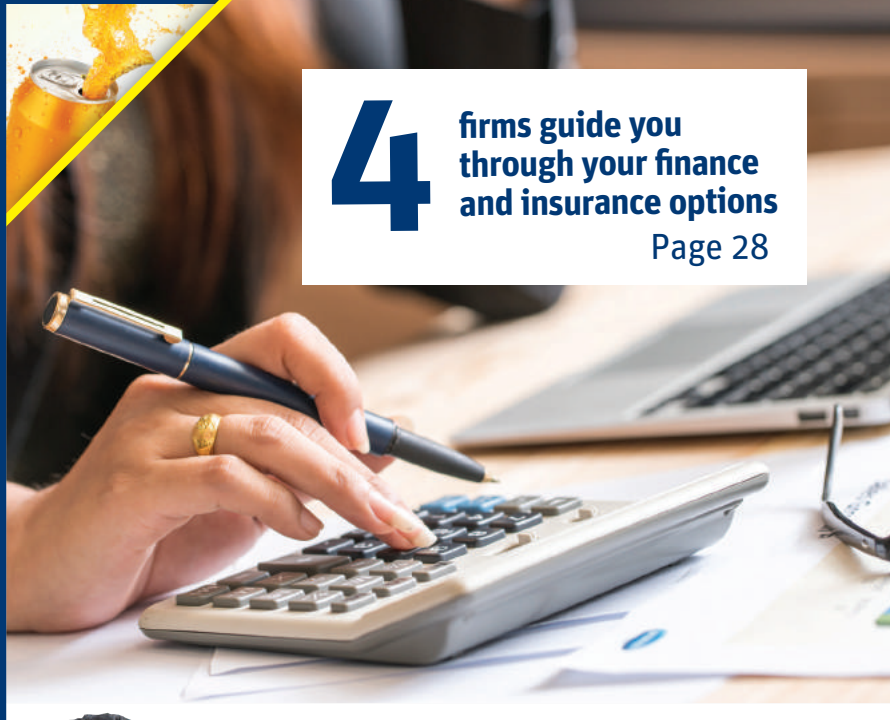
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to increase the frequency of
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WELCOME

His call to create
community hubs can be
answered by making sure
your business is run to the
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Editor

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In an interview with RN this week, former Wickes and Iceland boss Bill Grimsey outlines his proposals for his second high street review. Five years after his first study, the review will aim to help town centres adapt to secure their long-term future by putting subjects such as business rates and parking charges under the spotlight.

Revitalising high streets, he says, is also about transforming them into footfall-attracting community hubs centred on socialising, health and entertainment.

Retailers can play their part here. Bill Grimsey is asking store owners to tell him their stories via RN or his LinkedIn group. His call to create community hubs, meanwhile, can be answered by making sure your business is run to the highest standard and attracts loyal custom by offering modern services that align with shopper trends.

Happily, in this week's issue, we have two great examples to help you do this. Our profile on Hong Kong's flagship Circle K store provides ideas on how UK retailers can cater for young, tech-savvy shoppers. Meanwhile, as this year's IAA's Academy in Action visits kick off, Dave Hiscutt provides a great example of a retailer who has improved his business by applying guidance on the IAA's core categories and feedback from its in-store assessments.

Over the next three months, each week we will help you identify ways to improve your store standards through our 12-part Academy in Action series. There may be many more challenges in our industry, but this week's issue shows there are many opportunities, too.

BREAKING NEWS

Menzies sale 'huge shake-up'

The potential sale of Menzies' distribution arm will cause one of the biggest shake-ups the trade has seen in recent years, a newstrade expert has told RN.

RN columnist Neville Rhodes made the comment as the company announced it wanted to concentrate wholly on its aviation arm.

"45% of shops are supplied by Menzies and the big question will be how publishers are going to respond," said Mr Rhodes.

Last year, Menzies's distribution arm had a stable operating profit of £24.8m, while its aviation arm's operating profit rose 72% to £58.8m.

Data reveals opportunities 'Using loyalty schemes and AI, I can predict the future for myself'

Basket size boosted by artificial intelligence

by Nick Shanagher

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A leading Scottish independent retailer is using artificial intelligence (AI) to drive repeat sales and grow basket size.

Mo Razzaq, who runs a Family Shopper store in Blantyre, has launched an app to build on the success of his Privilege loyalty card.

Working with tech company Velocity Worldwide and its Darius for Retail program, Mr Razzaq is able to combine five items of data to identify selling opportunities.

For example, his data identified that Booker's pizza and alcohol meal deal works better with a soft drink from Monday to Friday.

AI also helps Mr Razzaq to predict demand for his fast-growing delivery service, which is underpinned by his Subway franchise.

"My average basket is £7.99," he told RN at the NFRN Scottish conference in Inverness this week. "For loyalty customers, it is £12.59. For delivery, it is £16.69.

"Technology is helping me to increase the frequency of shopping visits and basket size."

The process starts by offering customers free WiFi in-store. He uses data from this, Zapper transactions, delivery orders, Privilege card users and social media interactions to predict what shoppers will buy.

His confidence in AI is such that he has invested £11,500 in new chillers to improve his chilled offer, which he says is essential for a successful delivery business.

He is also opening a dessert bar in-store to add higher margin food to go to his mix.

"Charles Wilson told me four years ago food to go was the future," said Mr Razzaq. "I took his word for it. Today, using loyalty schemes and AI in partnership with Velocity, I can predict the future for myself."

His Privilege scheme, set up with Velocity, has paved the way for launching an app in partnership with city search platform CityVago.

"I see delivery as being a great niche for independent retailers," said Mr Razzaq. "We can deliver in an hour and Asda cannot match that."

Bargain Booze's troubles

Conviviality chief executive Diana Hunter has stepped down from the company's board amid financial difficulties.

Ms Hunter will remain with the Bargain Booze owner for a period of time to offer transitional support. Conviviality non-executive chairman David Adams will act as executive chairman until further notice.

It comes as Conviviality announced an £5.2m decline in annual profit, alongside an outstanding £30m tax bill.

Bob Gakani, of Bargain Booze in Essex, told RN: "Bargain Booze was too ambitious with its expansion plans. The company is great, but it does create worries about how my business will be affected in terms of future investment and the stability of the company."



Easter display sets customers hopping to Scaffog Spar

This Easter, one retailer has put a creative spin on his soft drinks selection by stacking Coca-Cola 8-packs in the shape of a bunny. Damien Wardman, of McBride's Scaffog Spar in Northern Ireland, said the display worked well last Halloween when

he stacked Coca-Cola cans to make a pumpkin, prompting him to build a similar display this Easter. "We're gradually growing our year-on-year sales during Easter and displays like this always get conversations going online," he said.

Card payments 'cheaper than cash'

Retailers say contactless payments have become cheaper than cash, as the future of 1p and 2p coins comes under scrutiny.

Prime minister Theresa May moved to dismiss claims that the copper coins might be scrapped as part of the Treasury's review of cash and digital payments.

However, retailers told RN it now costs them less to accept debit card payments than cash because of rising bank charges.

Bal Singh, who owns a Nisa Local in Birmingham, said that while debit card fees were 0.35% of the value of a transaction, banking cash costs him between 25p and 50p per £1,000 – the equivalent of 2.5% to 5%.

"Banking charges are ridiculous compared to what they were two or three years ago," he said. "I'm en-

couraging our customers to spend on their debit cards. I wouldn't have said that two years ago."

Chris Noice, head of communications for the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS), said it was seeking members' views for the Treasury consultation, but cash was still the method used for 75% of transactions.

He added the provision of ATMs was its most pressing concern, since the proposed increase in interchange fees by Link could mean cash machines are removed or charges introduced.

"Free cash machines are extremely important, not just for the convenience sector but for local areas, the markets and stores that rely on cash. Losing those would have an enormous effect, particularly in isolated areas," he said.

Cheltenham Festival helps provide 20% boost in newspaper sales

A retailer has reported a 20% increase in sales of newspapers during the Cheltenham Festival 2018 last week.

Clare Hutchings, of Prestbury Post Office & News in Cheltenham, said racegoers were rushing in from 11am to 12pm during the festival week.

"We mainly sold the Sun, Daily Mirror, and Racing Post," she said.

Ms Hutchings was also one of the three Cheltenham retailers to win £20 from the Daily Mirror after winning a mystery shopper competition during the festival for displaying Daily Mirror PoS to promote sales.



ACS paints shocking crime picture 7p in every pound is lost to assault, theft or cyber-crime

Retailers paying a high price for business crime

by Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski
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The impact of business crime is costing retailers £3,873 per store, according to a new report released by the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) this week.

The figure, dubbed by ACS chief executive James Lowman as "the crime tax", comes from findings that show 7p in every pound is lost to crimes such as assault, theft or cyber-crime every year.

Among the other statistics highlighted at the ACS Crime Seminar

were the more than 600 firearm (real or imitation) incidents last year; that 39% of violent incidents retailers experienced resulted in injury; that meat, cheese and alcohol are the top three categories for shop theft, and that fraud – including credit and debit card fraud and use of counterfeit notes – costs the average store £483 per year.

In terms of gun crime, the figure suggests around one in 10 firearm offences are directed towards retailers.

Alongside the data, Mr Lowman said the organisation's focus was

also on "understanding and deterring crimes" and the ACS is working with the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) to develop a better understanding of the issues that lie behind shop crime.

Rory Geoghegan, head of criminal justice at the CSJ, unveiled research showing its own slew of figures from the past 12 months: 383,000 shop thefts (ONS), 21,000 fewer police constables, 6,000 fewer PCSOs and 19,000 more crack cocaine addicts.

Responding to both sets of figures, James Lowman, chief executive

of the ACS, said: "We're seeing more robberies for less gain. This isn't just a business crime issue, it's a human issue because these crimes can act as a gateway to other crimes."

Underlining the importance of retailers reporting their experiences, Mr Lowman added: "This report brings together a survey of more than 7,000 retailers and quarterly telephone surveys of 1,200 retailers. They provide a picture to government and police and crime commissioners which highlights the massive scale of crime and is difficult to ignore."

JTI raises tobacco prices

Retailers are counting the cost after JTI raised prices across its portfolio of tobacco brands this week.

The company added 35p to the wholesale price of 20-packs of cigarettes and 50p to rolling tobacco pouches.

Joe Williams, of The Village Shop in Hook Norton, Oxfordshire, said: "With the relatively low margin retailers are experiencing, I know a lot of retailers are already going above RRP. To customers, it's only going to turn more people towards e-cigarettes."

A JTI spokesman said the company was unable to comment on the price rise. But he added: "We would remind retailers that they are at all times free to sell JTI's products at whatever price they choose."

Bestway boosts pre-tax profits

Bestway Wholesale has seen its pre-tax profits for the year ending 30 June increase by 83% from £12.7m to £23.2m.

Annual revenue, however, declined by 2.2% to £2.13bn. Monthly sales across Bestway's online business averaged £26m.

Meanwhile, the wholesaler's Best-one fascia saw growth in the same period as sales excluding tobacco increased by 12.9%.

Bestway managing director Martin Race said: "These latest set of results puts Bestway Wholesale back on track after a year of investment in 2015 and 2016.

"While market conditions continue to be challenging, we are seeing fantastic growth in our Best-one symbol offer."

Shop owners 'should only be paying for local authority services that they use'

Retailers should only pay for local authority services they use in the running of their business, a senior industry figure has suggested ahead of a new report.

Bill Grimsey, former Wickes and Iceland boss, made the comments in an exclusive interview to RN in the week he announced

a sequel to 2013's Grimsey report on the future of the high street.

Mr Grimsey said: "This time we're going to hit the big subjects like business rates. Businesses should only be paying for the additional services that, being a business, they demand. Instead, rates are being used as a tax to

bolster budget gaps."

The new review is due to be released in July to coincide with the Local Authority Annual Conference and Exhibition and Mr Grimsey is once again bringing together a team of experts in planning, funding and local government to complete it.

Although a number

of ideas gained some political traction when the original report was released, Mr Grimsey said favoured policies such as a widespread 2hr free parking policy and support for a taxation system that recognises a business's contribution to local communities was now "sorely needed".

STORE LOOKBOOK



Look to the future

Everything needs to be easy, fast and simple for shoppers, chief operating officer Pak Chi Kin explains in an overview of the factors that make Circle K's 322 company stores successful in Hong Kong. **Nick Shanagher** reports

Positioned at a premium against the densely populated Hong Kong's many family-owned independent c-stores and rivals such as 7-Eleven, Circle K is chasing a new generation of consumers who have grown up using smartphones as their interface with the world.

High rents limit growth and the size of the average shop is 600sq ft, but chief operating officer Pak Chi Kin (known as CK) says success in the past year has been driven by one-to-one marketing using a loyalty app, OK Stamp It, which entices consumers back to its stores.

The flagship store in central Hong Kong has a self-service coffee bar over a compact c-store and shows the company's determination to be a trendsetter for busy higher earners. Its coffee is priced at HK\$25 (£2.29) compared to HK\$32 (£2.93) in Starbucks and HK\$14 (£1.28) in rival 7-Eleven.

Customers pick their beverages from a display on a cashless till and then sit at small tables by the window to watch trendy shoppers in the street outside or to meet contacts or friends.

More than seven million people live in Hong Kong, mostly in small flats with basic cooking facilities, so they often eat out. C-stores are not the cheapest option – you can buy a filling meal for HK\$40 (£3.66)

at a restaurant in central Hong Kong – so speed of service is the differentiator.

Its shops are designed around shopper missions, with Hong Kong managers taking inspiration from the visual merchandising and space optimisation excellence of c-stores in Japan and the US.

The path to food-for-now is clearly visible to shoppers entering a suburban Circle K and queues at tills are swiftly managed. Most shops include tables so shoppers can eat in-store and most dishes are recognisable to Western consumers.

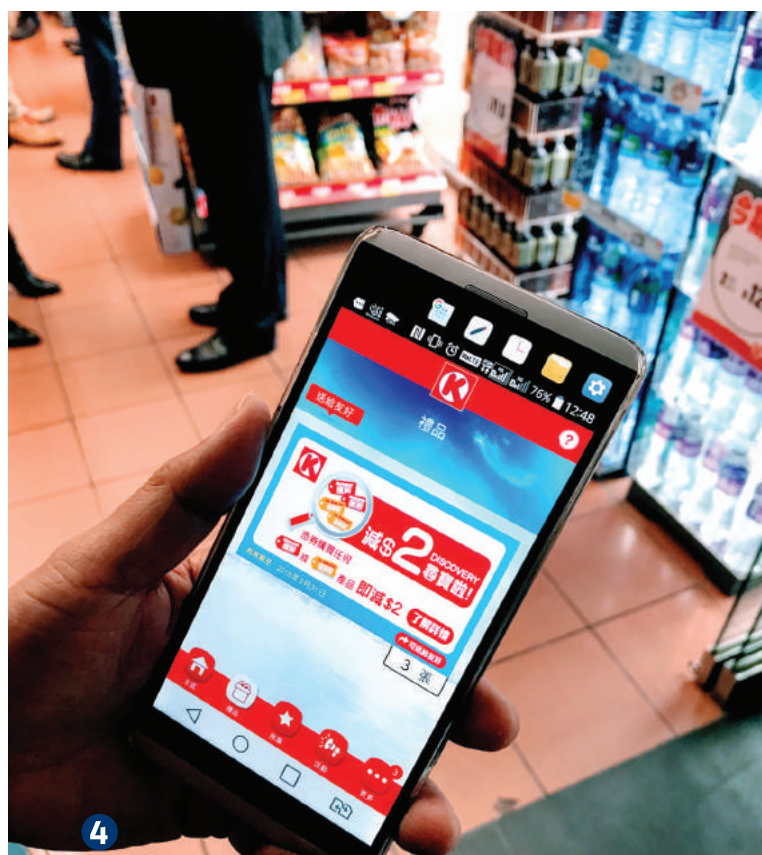
Bakery is an important driver of business and Circle K acquired its own chain of bakeries to ensure quality. Window displays are used to attract passers-by and customers can help themselves when they enter the store. Where space allows baking in-store, this is visible to shoppers, adding to the theatre.

In-store PoS has also been adapted to provide a visual link to promotions on the company's 18-month-old OK Stamp It app, which has been downloaded more than a million times. Some 90,000 regular users spend 18% more per visit.

As well as money-off offers and collectables such as small toys, the app is used to target shoppers with free samples of new products from major brands.

Low-level shelving is partly a result of the height of many local consumers but

Getting a meal in a c-store is faster than doing so in a fast food restaurant. You can get a meal in less than a minute **PAK CHI KIN**



STORE TOUR

- 1 Circle K's flagship store has a coffee shop on the second floor, amplifying the core convenience offer at ground level.
- 2 The food-for-now offer is designed around the 'easy fast simple' mission
- 3 Great bakery products are displayed in the window so that customers can serve themselves inside
- 4 The OK Stamp It app drives loyalty with money-off offers

INFORMATION

Location

322 stores in Hong Kong

Size

From 200sq ft to 2,000sq ft (average: 600sq ft)

Average basket

HK\$25 (£2.29)

Number of staff

Average 6-8 full- and part-time



Pak Chi Kin: "Online is about execution, execution, execution"



STORE LOOKBOOK



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7

This visit was organised by The Independent Retail Owners Forum for 11 leading UK and Ireland retailers

Keith Lee, general manager, says shelves have been raised by 15cm in the past year to extend range and availability. The shelves are 25cm deep and have 60cm gondola ends, with big brands renting space for periods from one month to a quarter. While it requires good daily deliveries to maintain product availability, the narrow shelves make it easy for shoppers to navigate busy stores.

Some front-of-store units have wheels to adjust displays and, as in Japan, heated display cabinets sit alongside chillers to serve ready-to-drink hot coffee.

While Circle K is working hard on its quality coffee offer, the big consumer trend in beverages is tea-based drinks, as consumers stop drinking sugary carbonates for health reasons.

More than 50% of transactions are made on pre-paid cards or by using touchless technology such as Apple Pay. As stores are doing upwards of 3,000 transactions a day, the focus on speed is a big driver of store design and product selection.

The convenience store estate provides a uniform offer on busy high streets where shoppers have lots of choice. The Circle K shopper knows what to expect and this is delivered well in every store I visited. ●



Want to see more of Circle K?
Go to betterretailing.com/circlek-hong-kong

STORE TOUR

5 Smaller transit stores are open to the concourse to maximise available space

6 Suppliers buy special merchandised units on compact shelf displays

7 Wheels on displays add to flexibility

8 Circle K is driving coffee sales with self-service machines, demonstrated by Keith Lee, general manager sales and operations



8

Lucozade **SPORT**

NEW

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SPORT
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SPORTS DRINK BRAND***

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BRAND**

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STOCK UP NOW

Magnesium contributes to electrolyte balance and calcium contributes to normal muscle function. Sodium and Chloride to help replenish what you lose in sweat.

Sources: *IRI 52 w/e to 23/04/17. **Marketing Sciences research for Lucozade Sport May 2016, with IRI Marketplace, Total GB, L52W 02/03/18. LUCOZADE FITWATER and FITWATER are registered trade marks of Lucozade Ribena Suntory Ltd. All rights reserved.

SYMBOL NEWS

IT glitch leaves Nisa retailers unfazed

Nisa retailers are unconcerned following an IT glitch which caused availability issues in Co-ops across the south-east.

The glitch on 12 March affected Co-op's Thurrock depot and disrupted deliveries in the region. A Co-op spokesman confirmed the warehouse is now fully operational, with "products being delivered to stores as quickly as possible".

Siva Thievanayagan, who runs five Nisa shops in Peterborough, was not worried his supply could be affected by similar issues in the future.

He told RN: "Everyone has IT glitches and I've experienced this myself when my till has stopped working."

Hancocks expands click & collect

Hancocks has made its click and collect service available across all its 20 cash and carry sites.

The service was initially available in the north of England, but now covers areas including Glasgow, Watford, and Coventry.

Harj Gill, of Select & Save the Windmill in Rubery, West Midlands, said: "It makes the whole ordering process easier because you can see what's in stock from a screen."

Wayne Beedle, chief executive of Hancocks' parent company IB Group, added: "A visit to our depots to collect their order will give our retailers access to additional offers and a chance to see the latest innovations."

Paul Stone's 8th store 'This will help food to go sales outperform my other stores by at least 10%'

New Spar first to offer Clayton Park Deli food

by Alex Yau

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Manchester-based retailer Paul Stone has opened his eighth Spar store and expects food to go to make up a quarter of overall sales in the next year.

The 2,000sq ft store, located on Oxford Road in the city centre, opened on 15 March and cost £380,000 to develop over the course of 18 months. It is the first Spar store in the country to offer food to go services from food-

service provider Clayton Park Deli.

Mr Stone told RN he expected sales from the deli to make up 25% of the shop's overall takings, making it his most successful for food to go.

"We're in an area with extremely high footfall and, based on the success of food to go in my other shops, Spar and wholesaler James Hall & Co chose the new store to be the first for Clayton Park's services."

He added that the oven supplied by Clayton Park

Deli has features designed to help handle peak times such as breakfast and lunch more efficiently.

"This will help food to go sales outperform my other stores by at least 10%," he said.

Staff can use the oven to heat up products such as protein pots, ciabattas and wraps in an average time of 40 seconds. The deli will have 30 products available, with prices ranging between £2 and £3.50. Other features of the store include a seating

area, free wi-fi, exposed brick walls and a wooden ceiling.

"There are a lot of busy professionals and students in the area," Mr Stone added. "This means speed is the key to the food to go service. You can heat the food straight from frozen which will reduce waiting times."

"Labour costs will also be reduced because we'll only need a maximum of two employees on the deli, which will help maintain overall margins."



Impulse 2018

The Impulse category guide for the independent retailer

Today's relaunches Plan for Profit

Today's Group has re-launched its Plan for Profit guide as three separate booklets compiled in partnership with suppliers, wholesalers and industry experts. The first part is

available to retailers now and focuses on improving sales and profit from impulse purchases. The remaining parts of the guide will be released in summer and autumn.

Tesco Booker can be beaten using 'community spirit'

Community spirit will be key in challenging Tesco Booker, JW Filshill retail director Craig Brown has told RN.

Mr Brown's comments come as Tesco's £3.7bn takeover of Booker was approved this month. He argued the scale of the two companies would reduce the quality of communication with customers.

"Other retailers can expect their directors to answer the phone when there's a problem," he said. "Booker retailers won't be able to do that with Charles Wilson or any other bosses."

"The fact our business is smaller means we're much more nimble, and we can resolve any issues and introduce new products much faster."

Mr Brown added the expansion of Filshill's Keystore fascia will be

driven by sales of local products and community events.

For example, Keystore shops will hold fundraisers with local organisations and Filshill will match-fund donations made.

Garry Haigh, of Keystore Peterhead Motors in Aberdeen, has increased his sales by 24% since switching from Spar to Keystore last year.

"The products in my store were previously dictated to me, but now I have more freedom. I get more local alcohol and I can rely on head office to answer my calls should I have problems."

"Customers have also said the refurbished store looks a lot more appealing. The entrance stands out more, which has helped attract more passing trade, and the interior is much brighter."

NEWS & MAGS

Former broadsheets lead year on year Financial Times also up, while red-tops post biggest overall annual declines

Switch to tabloid format boosts Guardian and Observer sales

by Chris Rolfe

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The relaunch of The Guardian and The Observer as tabloids has paid dividends in sales, the latest figures from the Audit Bureau of Circulations show.

In the first full month of data since the titles switched format on 15 January, sales of the Saturday edition of The Guardian rose 0.2% and The Observer 1.1% month on month.

While both titles once again posted year-on-year sales declines, these reduced to 3.8% on the weekday edition, 2% on the Saturday edition and 2.7% on The Observer, compared to an average fall of between 7% and 8% last year.

Guardian News & Media said the results showed the papers 'lead the quality market for year-on year percentage sold copy'.

"We're pleased that both the Guardian and the Observer are leading the quality market as the best performing newspapers year on year. This is testament not only to our readers' response to our new format but also to our agenda-setting, independent journalism," a Guardian, News & Media spokesperson said.

Meanwhile, the Financial Times posted month-on-month rises of 2.3% for its daily edition and 2.8% for its Saturday issue.

The red-tops posted the biggest annual declines overall, with sales of the Sunday Mail down 16%, the Daily Record down 14.7% on Saturdays and the Sunday Mirror down 14.6%. However, the Star once again posted February sales rises, its weekday and Sunday editions increasing 0.1% and 0.3% month on month.

No refund from Menzies despite failure to deliver

Seventeen retailers have expressed their anger at Menzies, after the publisher refused to refund carriage charges following a spate of no deliveries earlier this month, despite neighbouring stores having received theirs.

Suresh Patel, of Premier Upholland in Skelmersdale, said he didn't receive his magazine delivery from Menzies Maidstone two weeks ago and hasn't been given any explanation as to what happened.

"Menzies could have sent an email to explain the situation, but they didn't. I assume the issue was bad weather, but they didn't confirm that. We haven't been refunded

our carriage charge - no one has actually offered anything," he added.

Brian Murphy, NFRN head of newspapers and magazines, said: "This is a significant disappointment. Menzies are due to attend NFRN national council next month and I am sure retailers won't hold back with their displeasure."

Menzies communications manager Rosie Sawicz said: "Menzies Distribution was open for business throughout the severe weather. We made every attempt to deliver where possible, despite the additional operational costs, and so we decided not to refund any charges."

February Monday to Friday newspaper sales

	Core sales ¹	Monthly change	Yearly change	Estimated retail margin (000s) ²	Total sales ³
Daily Mirror	528,931	-0.6%	-12.5%	£84.9	528,931
Daily Record	127,676	-0.3%	-14.1%	£20.5	127,676
Daily Star	394,280	0.1%	-11.2%	£28.6	394,280
The Sun	1,259,790	-4.3%	-10.4%	£140.5	1,378,124
Daily Express	338,628	-0.2%	-7.8%	£45.1	338,628
Daily Mail	1,115,863	-0.6%	-7.2%	£161.8	1,115,863
Daily Telegraph	338,265	-0.6%	-10.4%	£130.9	338,265
Financial Times	29,381	2.3%	-13.6%	£15.9	62,547
Guardian	122,606	-2.1%	-3.8%	£53.9	122,606
i	191,512	-0.3%	-9.2%	£25.3	251,854
Times	303,197	-1.4%	-5.9%	£104.3	393,139
TOTAL	4,750,129	-1.6%	-9.4%	£811.6	5,051,913

February Saturday newspaper sales

	Core sales ¹	Monthly change	Yearly change	Estimated retail margin (000s) ²	Total sales ³
Daily Mirror	681,647	-4.8%	-13.2%	£168.5	681,647
Daily Record	152,409	-2.7%	-14.7%	£34.4	152,409
Daily Star	370,154	-0.5%	-9.5%	£44.7	370,154
The Sun	1,715,512	-3.4%	-7.6%	£257.0	1,833,846
Daily Express	433,731	-0.6%	-6.6%	£74.4	433,731
Daily Mail	1,873,919	-2.8%	-6.6%	£393.5	1,873,919
Daily Telegraph	509,015	-1.4%	-8.4%	£252.0	509,015
Financial Times	69,664	2.8%	-1.9%	£55.1	69,664
Guardian	284,115	0.2%	-2.0%	£181.3	284,115
i	205,081	-1.6%	2.0%	£35.3	265,423
Times	473,979	-1.0%	-4.4%	£173.2	563,921
TOTAL	6,769,226	-2.5%	-7.5%	£1,669.4	7,037,844

February Sunday newspaper sales

	Core sales ¹	Monthly change	Yearly change	Estimated retail margin (000s) ²	Total sales ³
Sunday Mail	139,636	-0.8%	-16.0%	£52.8	139,636
Sunday Mirror	476,210	-4.2%	-14.6%	£150.0	476,210
People	188,745	-0.3%	-14.4%	£59.5	188,745
Daily Star Sun.	235,621	0.3%	-8.3%	£46.9	235,621
The Sun	1,232,705	6.9%	-2.1%	£284.8	1,351,039
Sunday Express	306,417	0.4%	-6.8%	£90.9	306,417
Sunday Post	122,532	-0.2%	-13.5%	£41.2	123,070
Mail on Sunday	1,041,472	-2.2%	-9.2%	£393.7	1,041,472
Observer	178,660	1.1%	-2.7%	£131.3	178,660
Sunday Telegraph	291,750	-0.6%	-7.7%	£132.7	291,750
Sunday Times	635,037	0.2%	-6.8%	£360.1	720,081
TOTAL	4,848,785	0.8%	-7.8%	£1,743.69	5,052,701

¹ Core sales are newtrade sales and pre-paid subscriptions in the UK and Ireland; ² ERM is the total income to retailers for one day's sales, calculated using margin statistics printed in RN; ³ Total sales includes bulk sales

PRODUCT TRENDS

Alcohol to join free-from club

As interest in dairy-free diets grows, retailers must ensure their alcohol range also includes options for specific lifestyles.

This is according to Laura Pearce, marketing director at Baileys Europe, who added that within the dairy-free category, almond milk is currently the fastest growing product for retailers to capitalise on.

Her advice comes as Baileys introduces a new dairy-free Baileys Almande with an RRP with £20.

Jack Patel, of Westhorne Stores in Goring-on-Thames, said with an expected upcoming store extension, he is looking into investing in categories such as free-from.

"It would be worth stocking dairy-free alcohol, especially since gluten-free beer has done well," he said.

Less sugar in sweets

With the health agenda showing no signs of slowing down, independents can tap into the trend by offering shoppers more lower- and no-sugar confectionery, supplier Perfetti Van Melle has advised.

Matthew Navier, brand manager at Fruittella, said 92% of consumers are now consciously buying reduced-sugar products across all categories, and its new sugar-free Fruittella Fruit Drops is designed to help retailers cater to this market.

"Stocking a range of lower- and no-sugar confectionery options can drive sales for retailers by 73% on average. Fruittella hopes to help retailers grow confectionery sales with our first ever hard-boiled variant," he added.



Premium biscuits offer great gift opportunities

by Priyanka Jethwa

priyanka.jethwa@newtrade.co.uk

Independent retailers must offer shoppers a selection of premium biscuits as demand for artisanal varieties increase in popularity, suppliers have told RN.

Teoni Payne, owner of premium biscuit brand Teoni's Biscuits, said more shoppers are buying premium biscuits as gifts.

"When people buy biscuits as a gift, they want something special. Therefore, they are looking for premium labels that are

high quality and have handmade credentials," she said.

She advised retailers to stock at least four flavours of premium biscuits, with chocolate and ginger being the most popular.

Louisa Mayor, sales and new product development manager at Farmhouse Biscuits, said when shoppers come to independents, they are looking for something they can't find at the multiples.

"Stocking artisan biscuits offers a point of difference, and we're finding premium dessert flavours,

like red velvet, are doing increasingly well," she added.

Simon Lunn, of Simply Fresh Weare in Axbridge, said he stocks around a dozen varieties of artisan biscuits by premium biscuit brand Border Biscuits.

"People buy them for special occasions and for gifting, so we have dedicated a stand to the brand to help highlight it in store. I recommend stocking at least four to five varieties of premium biscuits – the dark chocolate with ginger flavour

is particularly popular in our store," he said.

Shane Woolston, of C T Baker Budgens Aylsham in Norwich, said he stocks Border Biscuits and Farmhouse biscuits, with dark chocolate and ginger also the most popular flavours in his store.

"In every category, we practise the 'good', 'better' and 'best' model to cater to all shoppers. We have dedicated one block to premium biscuits and during the Christmas period we sell a lot of premium biscuit gift sets," he said.

Trend grows for low RRP cigarettes

As more consumers look for 'ultra-value' cigarettes, retailers can capitalise by selling packets that have a low RRP, a supplier has advised.

Andy Stevens, head of sales at Japan Tobacco International (JTI), said demand for high quality cigarettes with low price points is continuing to

grow, so retailers should invest in brands that fit this description.

To help retailers tap into this trend, JTI is updating its Kensitas Club King Size pack by reducing the RRP from £10.65 to £7.65.

The company has also introduced Kensitas Club Superkings to the port-

folio carrying the same RRP.

"This will help retailers offer a competitive product range that we're confident will help drive incremental sales," Mr Stevens added.

Kam Singh Nijjar, of Spar Meriden in Coventry, said he has noticed more shoppers asking for

the cheapest 20-packs of cigarettes.

"Economic brands like Benson & Hedges Blue do really well, especially since the EUTPD II legislation came into force. Premium lines used to be the most popular, but now people can't see the brand as clearly so they go for the cheapest," he said.

BRAND SNAPSHOT



Top Gum

Mars Wrigley Confectionery is expanding its portfolio with the launch of Starburst Chewing Gum, which is available to all independents now.



Join the club

Havana Club has launched Havana Club 3 Years Old "By Hand", a limited edition bottle with a design created by three Cuban artists.



Hot stuff

Old El Paso has launched three new cooking sauces: Smoky Chipotle, Fajita Honey & Chillies and Chilli Con Carne Fire Roasted Tomatoes.



Sugar cut

Supermalt UK is launching new Supermalt Less Sugar in a 330ml bottle, with a sugar reduction of more than 30% compared to original Supermalt.



Pure and simple

Purity Soft Drinks has rebranded and reformulated Juiceburst's £1 price-marked packs. The selection includes Orange, Apple, and Orange & Carrot.



Birthday surprise

Unilever has introduced a new flavour to its Ben & Jerry's portfolio, Birthday Cake, supported by a £3.5m marketing campaign.



Dressing up

Unilever has relaunched its salad dressing portfolio and brought in two new variants: Sesame & Soy and Coconut & Lime salad.



Water sports

For its functional water brand Fit-water, Lucozade Ribena Suntory has launched a campaign with boxing world champion, Anthony Joshua.



Nutty but nice

Mars Chocolate Drinks and Treats has launched M&M's Peanut Ice Cream, which is available to independent retailers with an RRP £1.76.

WHAT'S NEW



The Primal Pantry bars

The Primal Pantry's bars contain 15g plant protein and superfoods, and are available in four flavours: Double Espresso, Cocoa Brownie, Cocoa Orange and Mixed Berry.

RRP £1.99

Contact nathan@primalpantry.com



Raw Halo bar

Raw Halo bars are gluten-free premium impulse snacks that are suitable for vegans. They are available in three flavours: Pure Dark, Mylk & Vanilla, and Dark & Salted Caramel.

RRP £1.39

Contact hello@rawhalo.com



Squirrel Sisters bars

Squirrel Sisters bars are suitable for vegan and gluten-free diets. They are certified by Sugarwise, because whole dates alone are used to bind them.

RRP £1.99

Contact gracie@squirrelsisters.com



Peppersmith mints

The winner of a Great Taste Award, Sugar Free Peppersmith Mints are made with real mint oil. Peppersmith says the mints help keep teeth healthy in between brushing.

RRP £1.49

Contact lizzie@peppersmith.co.uk



Moose Maple butter

Moose Maple Butter taps into the 'clean eating' trend among those who want more wholesome, natural foods. It can be cross-merchandised with crumpets, croissants and pancakes.

RRP £3.99 (150g)

Contact farrah@moosemaple.co.uk



Well & Truly snacks

Well & Truly's Gluten Free Tortilla Chips are made with natural ingredients, and contain 40% less fat than regular tortilla chips. They are available in 125g sharing bags.

RRP £1.99

Contact hello@wellandtruly.co.uk

📞 Priyanka Jethwa

✉ priyanka.jethwa@newtrade.co.uk

☎ 020 7689 3355



The Protein Ball Co. snacks

The Protein Ball Co.'s two new vegan flavours, Peanut Butter & Jam and Raspberry Brownie, are designed to appeal to consumers looking for a protein snack.

RRP £1.99

Contact info@theproteinball.com



Beckleberry's sorbet

Beckleberry's sorbets in a 500ml tub come in four flavours: Blackcurrant & Kirsch, Sour Cherry & Amaretto, Blackcurrant & Martini and Passion Fruit & Tarragon.

RRP £4.99 (500ml)

Contact info@beckleberrys.co.uk

Focus

Alternative snacks

Consumers are increasingly looking for snacks on-the-go, and retailers can capitalise on this trend by offering healthy options in both sharing and portion sizes to cater to all



Taking the Pea Wacky Wasabi

These portion-sized 40g packets are designed to appeal to health-conscious consumers. They contain 140 calories and are high in fibre and protein.

RRP £1.50

Contact mike@ttnsnacks.com



Quibbles Salt & Vinegar Almonds

Targeted at consumers looking for a healthy alternative to crisps, these nuts come in a single-serve 30-35g option and a sharing 100g pack.

RRP 99p to £1.25 (30-35g)

Contact nuts@quibblesnibbles.com



Mr Filbert's Really Interesting Snacks

Mr Filbert's Marrakesh Spicy Peanuts are flavoured with honey, chilli and cumin, and can be cross-merchandised next to crisps and popcorn.

RRP £1.99

Contact marketing@filbertsfinefoods.co.uk

Harvinder Singh Thiara

Marty's Convenience (Lifestyle Express), Birmingham

We stock KP Nuts and Cofresh nuts. We have two pubs near us, and people regularly come in to buy them and the Bombay mix to take back to the pub

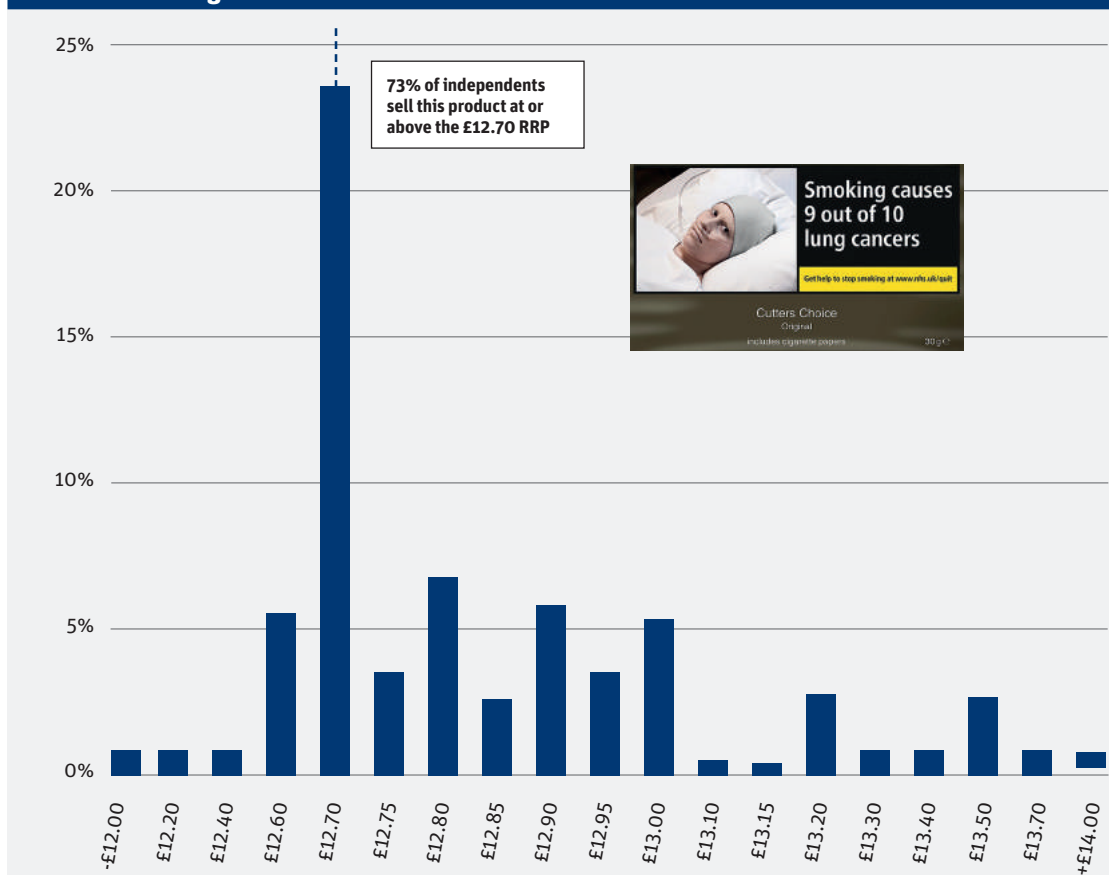


PRICEWATCH

Profit checker Rolling Tobacco

Price checker

Cutters Choice Original Price distribution %



Analysis

Less than a year after the government outlawed smaller rolling tobacco packs and pricemarking, the majority of retailers have chosen to price above or stick to RRP. In the case of Cutters Choice, the split is 24% at Booker's

£12.70 RRP and 48% above, with most who price above venturing between 5p and 30p higher. In the wider category, 52% of the products sold by the six featured stores on the Price Checker table are priced above RRP, although one

third of these are less than 10p higher. The retailers interviewed this week cite lower sales volumes, awareness of competitors' pricing and a need to retain loyalty as their reasons for sticking to RRP.

PRODUCT
Amber Leaf 30g
Gold Leaf Quality Blend 30g
Golden Virginia Original 30g
Amber Leaf 50g
Sterling 30g
Cutters Choice Original 30g
Golden Virginia Bright Yellow Pocket Plus 30g
Golden Virginia Original 50g
Gold Leaf 50g
Cutters Choice Extra Smooth 30g
Amber Leaf 2 In1 30g
Pall Mall Fine Cut 30g

How we drive our profit

Dave Hiscutt

STORE Londis Westham Road
LOCATION Weymouth
SIZE 2,200sq ft
TYPE town centre

TOP TIP

Take note of regional preferences and ask customers which brands are popular among them and their friends and colleagues



People are still buying rolling tobacco, but as with the tobacco category in general, they're buying less than they were before. Amber Leaf and Cutters Choice are both popular in my store. We price our tobacco at RRP, which keeps customers loyal. They tend to know exactly what the various prices are at different shops in the town and will notice any change from these. My shop is in a seaside town and the beach-front shops tend to price their stock above RRP, so we try and retain customers by setting our prices lower than theirs.

Adam Vincent

STORE Dike & Son
LOCATION Stalbridge
SIZE 4,200sq ft
TYPE rural town

STOP TIP

Buy your stock strategically. We stockpile tobacco just before the Budget, because prices will invariably go up afterwards



Tobacco isn't generally one of our biggest sellers, but sales of rolling tobacco have increased over the past couple of years, perhaps because it works out cheaper for smokers than buying packets of cigarettes. Our sales took a dive, though, when the economical 12.5g pouches were outlawed. Now the 30g pouches tend to be our bestsellers across our range of loose tobacco. We use Nisa's RRP to set the prices for all of our rolling tobacco products. We're in a rural location, so we don't have much competition, but we like to look competitive in our pricing.

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

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 C-STORE IN RESIDENTIAL AREA OF IPSWICH	RETAILER 2 SMALL NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOP IN SOUTH WALES TOWN	RETAILER 3 HIGH STREET C-STORE IN SMALL SCOTTISH BORDER TOWN	RETAILER 4 HIGH STREET NEWSAGENT IN LARGE NORTH EAST TOWN	RETAILER 5 POST OFFICE AND C-STORE ON OUTSKIRTS OF WIRRAL TOWN	RETAILER 6 C-STORE ON OUTSKIRTS OF SUSSEX SEASIDE TOWN
£12.71	£12.50	£13.39	£12.50	£12.99	£12.50	£12.50	£12.55
£10.56	£10.40	£10.89	£10.82	£10.45	£10.40	£11.30	£10.40
£13.06	£12.85	£13.89	£12.85	£13.39	£12.85	£12.90	£12.85
£21.26	£21.32	£21.99	£21.50	£21.25	£21.32	–	£21.35
£10.75	£10.60	£10.60	–	£10.60	£10.60	£10.60	–
£12.84	£12.70	£13.89	£12.70	£12.96	£12.70	£12.49	£12.70
£12.56	£12.35	£13.55	£12.45	£12.95	–	£12.42	£12.36
£21.62	£21.40	£22.89	£21.40	£21.99	£21.40	£22.14	£21.40
£17.40	£17.20	£17.40	£17.20	£17.28	£17.20	–	£17.20
£10.70	£10.50	–	£10.79	–	£12.50	£10.50	–
£12.79	£12.50**	£13.65	£12.62	£12.99	–	£12.50	–
£10.71	£10.50	£10.99	–	–	£10.50	£10.50	£10.50

* from a sample of 3,500 stores **Bestway RRP

MY LOCAL HERO

Retailers reveal the most profitable produce on their doorsteps

Sophie Towers

Hillingdon Spar, Burnley

Haffner's pies,
£1.30 - £3.90



Where did you discover them?

Haffner's are a local butcher and bakery with a long history, so they're well known in the area. We sell their pies in a range of flavours, both hot or cold, and people can order them for next day collection from us too.

Who buys it?

Everyone - that's why they're such a great range of products to stock. We get a real mix of buyers, from builders who want them hot on their lunch breaks, to older people who buy them to heat up at home for their evening meals.

Why is it so successful?

Haffner's offer a good range of traditional, well-loved flavours like cheese and onion and meat and onion. We sell a pie with claret in it, which customers love - it's the colour of our local Burnley FC football team. Haffner's are also good to work with. We order at 6am each morning, and the pies are with us by 9am.



Suleman Khonat

STORE Burnley Road News
LOCATION Burnley
SIZE 500sq ft
TYPE main road

TOP TIP

Stay alert to tobacco trends and note what people ask for, so you don't miss out on opportunities to stock bestsellers



We don't sell that much rolling tobacco - we tend to concentrate on our cigarette range instead, and it's been that way for several years now. With all our rolling tobacco products we stick to the RRP because I can't see any benefit in adjusting it. Our turnover on tobacco is so low that I don't think we'd make great gains by pricing higher or lower. We actually sell more accessories, such as Rizla papers and lighters, than rolling tobacco itself. I think people are moving more towards vaping and e-cigarettes instead, and often buy their loose tobacco from abroad.

Anita Nye

STORE Premier Elded Drive
LOCATION Orpington
SIZE 1,200sq ft
TYPE residential area

TOP TIP

Watch what other local stores charge. We often gain or lose tobacco customers based on what other local stores are doing



Our sales of rolling tobacco have stayed fairly steady over the years, but the way people shop has changed. Customers used to have a brand which they stuck to, but with the steep rises in taxes, price and value are now key over any personal preference and they tend to come in and ask for whichever product is cheapest instead. Amber Leaf is very popular, but we only have a handful of customers who are loyal to more premium brands like Golden Virginia. We go with Booker's prices, which tend to be a few pence higher than other suppliers.

YOUR NEWS

ShelfHelp iPad Pro contest

Retailers are in with a chance of winning an iPad Pro if they sign up to Procter & Gamble's (P&G) newly launched category advice portal.

The existing ShelfHelp members' area has been updated with the latest planograms, case studies and category insights, as well as content to use on social media feeds.

Retailers who sign up can enter a competition to win an iPad Pro.

Sandeep Hegde, channel sales director for convenience, wholesale & club at P&G, said ShelfHelp had already helped retailers boost category profits by more than 60%.

He said: "Content will be updated regularly, including seasonal tips and advice, helping convenience stores increase sales all year round."

TLM EPOS is 'future proof'

A new EPOS system has launched this month that is intended to offer retailers future-proof payment techniques.

TLM Technologies' evoPOS promises to be tailor-made for the market, and includes a smartphone app, self-scan, mobile pay and promotions functions.

Chief executive Lee Papper said convenience retailers have "become entrenched on legacy systems that are no longer being developed for the future needs of the sector".

The system has been designed to accept third-party apps and coding so retailers can quickly add services such as loyalty, social marketing and customer feedback.



Sniffer dogs teach consumers about illegal tobacco sales

Oxfordshire County Council is taking sniffer dogs to the streets to educate consumers about its clampdown on illegal tobacco selling and direct them towards licensed sellers. The drug sniffer dogs are also being deployed by Trading Standards to find illegal tobacco stashes. Joe Williams, of The Village Shop in Hook Norton, Oxfordshire, said: "It's tough for honest retailers so anything that helps shoppers realise the consequences of buying illicit tobacco is a good thing."

£5,000 raised online 'Our business development manager stayed into the night to help clear up'

Community unites to help ram-raided store

by Olivia Gagan

RNreporter@newtrade.co.uk

An Oxfordshire convenience store hit by three burglaries in a month is overhauling its security measures after locals rallied round to raise cash for its owners.

Sally and Stuart Reed's Spar Bodicote was ram-raided by burglars in a stolen Land Rover, just weeks after thieves broke in twice in February.

In the first attacks, the criminals stole scratchcards, cigarettes and

charity collection boxes. The shop's ATM was targeted in the third raid last week. However, it was empty.

Mr and Ms Reed opened up for business two days after the third raid, despite having no windows or a sales counter.

Ms Reed told RN: "We reopened yesterday once my husband had built a temporary counter.

Spar has given us a lot of support - our business development manager came straight away and stayed into the night to help

clear up and help us make the temporary counter. Other Spar members turned up to help, too."

One villager set up an online fundraiser to support the store. The fund has beaten its £1,500 target, with locals donating more than £5,000 to rebuild the shop.

"We've got older customers without internet access coming in wanting to help and donate money, too," Ms Reed said. "The support has been amazing."

She added the funds would be used to ramp

up security. "We're going to have roller shutters, which cost £2,500, and we will install CCTV and bollards outside - all the things we didn't think we would need in a village and haven't needed for the past eight years we've been in business."

NFRN national president Linda Sood told RN: "We do not believe that many police forces give priority to retail crime offences and if incidents go to court, the sentences given often do not fit the crime."

Forward-looking retailers must lead

Award-winning retailers who focus on tomorrow's issues must provide a way forward for the NFRN, Scotland president Gail Winfield said at its annual conference this week.

"We need to revitalise local stores. We know that people like local shops but we need to be alert to the trends, to stock what they want to buy," she said,

mentioning entrepreneurs including Shahid Razzaq and Ferhan Ashiq.

Meanwhile, guest speaker Lord Thurso, chairman of Visit Scotland, said he wanted more support from NFRN members to attract visitors to the country.

"In a world where more people shop more often using algorithms and

smartphones, local retailers provide much-needed human contact," he said.

Tourism was about attracting high-spending visitors to spend money locally, he added, linking this to retailers' desire to attract footfall.

Jim Maitlan, from the Aberdeen branch, said one of the NFRN's jobs was to help identify new business

opportunities to replace categories in decline.

Insiders praised Mrs Winfield for an excellent year in which the federation has won the ears of decision-makers in Edinburgh and London.

"She has reset the way we run things," said one. "She's put the right people in the right jobs and let them get on with it."

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YOUR VIEWS

YOUR LETTERS

■ Readers can't afford the Mirror

Who would have thought this day would arrive? The Daily Mirror, which was once the champion of the working man and Labour through-and-through, is dearer than the Daily Mail and the Express – and too expensive for the people who put it top of the red tops. Why should the readership, who have supported the newspaper from boy to man, be expected to pay for the acquisition of Express Newspapers? 75p is way too high a price. Readers are letting go and The Sun is shining.

Graham Doubleday
Doubleday Newsagents
Ashton-under-Lyme

■ West Midlands to give £100 funds

At our last council meeting, the West Midlands district voted to give £100 back to each member who pays into our voluntary fund. With lots of shopkeepers struggling or facing challenges such as the end of the ability to charge for card payments, the idea is to help them fund things like CCTV or insurance.



Sugar is addictive and raising the price won't deter people

Anish Parekh



Revenue from credit card payment charges needs to be replaced

Even a small amount of money can make a difference, so any district member who qualifies for this payment should look out for the money in their wholesale account soon.

Manjit Samra
NFRN West Midlands district president

■ Education is better than a levy

The soft drinks sugar levy is expected to raise £520m in its first year. I don't want to sound too cynical, but not a lot of that will be spent to the benefit of the public.

Sugar is addictive and raising the price won't deter people. Coke in my store outsells water, which is 40p

cheaper. Sugar is a price-inelastic ingredient and customers will still buy soft drinks if they tickle their taste buds.

Education will be a better deterrent. It's not just soft drinks that are filled with sugar – sweets and confectionery are, too. The government's attention should be focused on improving awareness of and healthy living across all products. If not, the sugar tax is a hollow ploy to con the public.

Funds could be raised to subsidise healthy food and drink companies. They can reduce their costs and charge cheaper prices.

Anish Parekh
Londis Broadoak Post Office
Ashton-Under-Lyne

YOUR SAY Are you concerned about the effects of illegal products once the sugar levy comes in?



Sophie Towers

Premier Hillingdon, Burnley
We only buy stock from major wholesalers, so I'm not concerned about buying illegal products. We've had plenty of bulletins from Booker, keeping us updated on the changes. I think the industry needs to focus its efforts on educating consumers. They seem unaware of the sugar levy and I don't want them to be surprised when the prices go up, because we've decided we won't be absorbing them as a retailer. On a positive note, zero-sugar drinks have gone down really well with our customers.

Abdul Arain

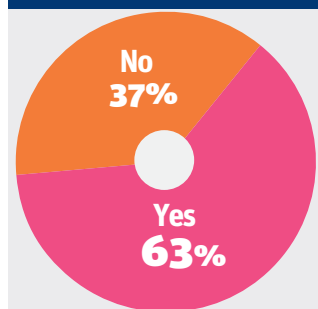
Al Amin Stores, Cambridge
Like cigarettes, it's all about how it's enforced. The manufacturers are the same for the UK and for

the European market, and every manufacturer will be working to make sure that illegal products don't get sold here. I believe the system will work. Unlike the cigarette market, the amount of tax on each soft drink is quite small, so it probably won't be worth people importing illicit drinks.

Vim Odedra

Nisa Local West Chiltonington, West Chiltonington
Retailers need to make sure they stick to the code of conduct. I haven't come across illicit trade myself, but it's more a question of how those supplying it are getting a hold of it in the first place. I worry if there is illicit trading near them, a law-abiding retailer's sales would suffer. This is because illicit traders will be able to sell stock cheaper than us.

RN READER POLL



Would you offer customers discounts on hot drinks if they bring reusable cups in-store?

NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION

What is having the biggest impact on the sustainability of the high street?



Vote now at
betterretailing.com

THANKS TO ALL MY STAFF WHO DELIVERED IN THIS WEATHER

I would like to thank my early morning staff team for carrying out their newspaper deliveries in this adverse and inclement weather, with ice and wet slushy snow and cold winds challenging them these past few days. My particular thanks to my lad Aaron Hunt who singlehandedly did all my deliveries yesterday.

This photo (right) was taken upon his return just before noon. And, was he glad it was all done! We had phone calls from gushing customers about our sterling service.

That, to us, is testament to the professional and personal service we offer to our customers. Roll over, multiples!

Kamal Thaker
Stop Shop News, Edgware



100 YEARS AGO

23 March 1918

Newspaper price rises due to paper shortages were the order of the day, but Sunday newspaper publishers' decision to increase price but not terms meant many Sunday sellers were refusing to handle them

VIEW FROM THE COUNTER with Mike Brown



The Beast from the East rolled in bang on cue on 27 February, the same day as our NFRN Northern district AGM. Despite heavy snow, I managed to attend the meeting at the Ramside Hall hotel in Durham 38 miles away. Defra, which had booked two suites at the hotel for their meeting, cancelled.

Mind you, my efforts pale into insignificance compared to one of my customers, who skied to work at James Cook Hospital six miles away - now that's dedication.

I have been invited to Buckingham Palace on 17 May - well, Mary, my middle daughter has, to receive her Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. It might be timely to thank the Carl Bridgewater Fund, which supported Mary throughout her awards journey from bronze to gold through its Empowering Young People Programme.

Later this year, she is using the skills she acquired from the scheme at Camp America in Massachusetts to help disadvantaged children from New York.

We now have lost three banks in 12 months: Barclays, NatWest and HSBC. The high street has become littered with empty premises for lease or sale. It is a worry - after all our efforts to maintain the vibrancy of our market town, we now seem to be on a downward spiral.

As usual, the racing papers went up in price for the Cheltenham Festival but there were plenty of grumbles from my customers at the hike in the price of the Racing Post by 50p to £2.90. My worry is the frequency of purchase of my regular customers has now declined and once the habit is broken, it is very difficult to reinstate those lost sales.

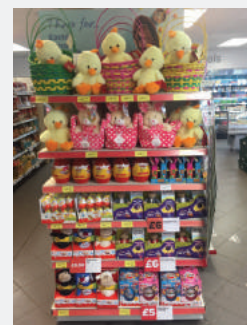
YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENTS THIS WEEK

contact us facebook.com/ThisisRN and @ThisisRN



Easter is fast approaching (although the weather doesn't seem to know that). We have got some cracking eggs this year for all ages

Spar Oswaldtwistle
@spar_ossy



An interesting morning for newspaper delivering... but we got to all of our customers (just). A and B roads all passable with care. Lanes a different matter!

Chard Newsagent
@Chard_News



A customer brought me a Creme Egg from Canada... No foil wrap and smaller. Could this be the future or could we accept our eggs with no foil?

Eugene Diamond
@EDiamond136

Another step towards #plasticfree... we have reintroduced paper bags in our fruit and veg department

Dike & Son Ltd
@dikeandson



RN INTERVIEW



High streets must become thriving community hubs to survive long-term, says Bill Grimsey

Bill Grimsey

The retail landscape is as challenging as ever and with high street stores shutting week by week, former Iceland boss Bill Grimsey has decided to do something about it. He tells **Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski** about his new review



Bill Grimsey's second review of the high street will ask how town centres can adapt to today's retail and shopper trends



We're staring down the barrel of a country where high streets are deprived places

What should we be doing to help town centres and the high streets adapt to a different world?"

Few questions seem quite as timely in an age when much-loved, once-ubiquitous retail chains, from Toys R Us to BHS, continue to fail.

It is this spate of crises, plus the imminent arrival of the fifth anniversary of his first analysis, *The Grimsey Review*, that has prompted Bill Grimsey to provide an answer to that vital question – and release a sequel to his original review.

The former Wickes and Iceland boss has spent a lifetime in retailing and is, famously, a passionate and outspoken champion of the industry. It was this zeal that provided the impetus for his first review, a document produced in response to a government-commissioned review

Interview by **Tom Gockelen-Kozlowski**
 email tom.gk@newtrade.co.uk
 tel 020 7689 3361

by celebrity retail expert Mary Portas.

"When Mary Portas was given the review I thought: 'At last!' But then I was horrified to see how she did it. At the time, I felt the industry was let down and it wasn't a comprehensive review – it didn't identify the structural changes that were going to take place, while the massive impact of technology was barely mentioned.

"As a consequence of my complaining, I decided to put a team together to write what we thought should have happened. It got some traction but it didn't get the kind of political will and leadership it needed then and which is sorely needed now. So we're going to try to do it again."

And while five years may be a long time in retailing, Mr Grimsey sees the same issues that inspired the last review still rearing their heads.

"Disposable incomes are falling, austerity is biting local authorities' budgets in a big way this year and there's a series of high-profile retailers going bust. It seemed like a good time to take a look at this again," he says.

Indeed, some of these issues have hardly gone away. Did Mr Grimsey, for example, expect wage stagnation – the worst since Napoleonic times – to last so long when he completed the previous review?

"I didn't quite realise the severity of it. I had my doubts that austerity would work and, sure enough, it hasn't. Despite the chancellor talking about 'the light at the end of the tunnel' in the Spring Statement, none of the targets have been met during this process. We have a fall in real disposable incomes, a fall in public service budgets and we're staring down the barrel of a country where high streets are deprived places."

So what should be done? Much of the detail will be looked at by the team behind the review, most of whom worked on the first review in 2013 and include property, local funding, regeneration and technology experts. But Mr Grimsey has a good idea of some of the areas it needs to look at.

"This time we're going to hit the big subjects such as business rates big time. We need to review this whole thing. Businesses should only be paying for the additional services that, by being a business, they demand. Instead, rates are being used as a tax to bolster up other local authority budgets and that's not the



Parking charges and business rates are two key issues for the second Grimsey review



It's going to be about creating a community hub – when you have that, you are going to get footfall

Do you have an idea or an experience you wish to share with the review? Search for the Grimsey Review 2 group on LinkedIn or email tom.gk@newtrade.co.uk

way to use businesses.

"In parking, we have to stop the messing around and it has to be two hours' free parking all round – stop using it as a revenue generator."

Mr Grimsey knows his arguments for investment and lower tax will be met by an instant rebuttal in our austerity-minded era, but he believes it is a matter of priorities.

"My proposals beg the question: where do local authorities plug their budget gaps? Central government is starving them of funds after all. I don't know the answer yet, but we can't spend all our time avoiding proposing what should happen because a lack of money stops us. We should say: 'This should happen so this is what we need to do about the money.'"

Providing credible answers will be one of the tasks given to the team that Mr Grimsey has assembled.

Importantly, despite his many roles in British chain stores, Bill Grimsey is a passionate supporter of independent retailers and as part of the review, he wants to hear experiences and ideas from independent retailers, either through the group's Grimsey Review 2 LinkedIn group (www.linkedin.com/groups/8655019/ profile) or via RN.

"I'm a champion of independent businesses in as much as independents tend to generate money for the local economy – they don't take it out as national chains do," he says.

Yet, in Mr Grimsey's mind, not

even the best-supported independent retailer or best-performing chain store will be able to ensure the survival of the high street.

"What is going to make it attractive for people to congregate in areas where shops can market their wares? It's not going to be driven by shops anymore – we said that five years ago. It's going to be about creating a community hub centred around health, education, leisure, entertainment, pedestrianisation, street food, arts and crafts – when you have that, you are going to get footfall."

It's a big subject and it will take months for the team to report their findings. When they do, The Grimsey Review 2 is planned to be released when its main intended audience will be listening: at the Local Government Association's Annual Conference and Exhibition in July.

And with Mr Grimsey admitting that the last review only had a "limited effect", what happens if, once more, the report's proposals are mostly ignored by local and central government?

"They will need to stand up in front of their constituents and say they are knowingly going to continue sleepwalking through the 21st century, not shaping our places for social gatherings and social benefits, and, because of market forces, we will continue to get empty shops and rundown places. That's not a good legacy for my children and grandchildren." ●

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ACADEMY IN ACTION



Always room for improvement

This week RN publishes the first Academy in Action category focus of 2018. **Dave Hiscutt** – the retailer behind last year's IAA overall best shop – tells us why this recognition isn't stopping him benchmarking again this year

“You can't be complacent in this industry,” says Dave Hiscutt, who manages two Londis stores and helps support six stores in Devon. After 12 months of high profile store closures, mergers and sluggish wage growth, this truism has never been more apt.

Having just flicked through the benchmarks behind this year's Independent Achievers Academy process, this nationally-recognised retailer is ready to take a critical eye to his business once more.

And Dave believes his attitude helps him get the most out of the in-depth analysis the IAA's

benchmarks are based upon: “It's about the 1% stuff. If you can find 10 areas where you can improve your business by 1% then suddenly you've made a difference of 10%.”

Over the next 12 weeks RN readers will be able to go through this process with our Academy in Action features, looking at different categories where stores can develop. Areas include: marketing to customers, availability, retail innovation and this week's focus, merchandising.

To kick the process off, however, we asked Dave to take a look at a few of this year's benchmarks and explain how he's developed, or plans to develop, his business in these areas.

Customers like to shop in successful shops

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Benchmark Reviewing and developing staff to fulfil their potential

Do you review staff performance and provide feedback every six months?

Dave says: “We're looking into running regular appraisals with staff, which isn't something we've done before. This way we can measure improvements, set targets and gain insights into the business from staff.”

RETAIL INNOVATION

Benchmark Recognising the opportunity

Did you see a brilliant idea, find evidence to support it and make it your own?

Dave says: “One member of my team is vegan and since ‘Veganuary’ we've been looking to expand our range of foods. She recommended it and it's working well. We're currently building a range with wholesaler Tree of Life.”

MARKETING TO CUSTOMERS

Benchmark Communicating your offer to your target shoppers

Do you advertise in the local paper, community newsletter or website etc?

Dave says: “When we were recognised as Overall Best Shop at the IAA we got a lovely write-up in the local press and they previewed the final too. We took out some advertising – customers like to shop in successful shops.”

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

Benchmark Enhancing the shopping experience

Do you use interactive technology like screens or electronic badges to showcase offers?

Dave says: “We had in-store screens before but we've now started working with a company called HTEC. With them we can better tailor our messages in-store. I've also been looking at software which will allow us to sync all our screens and offer things like time-of-day offers.”

RESPONSIBLE RETAILING

Benchmark Obeying legislation so staff and customers are protected

Do you have written records of regulations you comply with like accident books?

Dave says: “To make our processes more efficient, we're piloting a system called Retail Guardian which is a cloud-based system designed by retailers to bring together information on temperature checks alongside staff clocking in times and staff profiles.”



ACADEMY IN ACTION



Merchandising

In part one of a 12-week programme, the IAA – and its category partner Mars Wrigley Confectionery – helps retailer Wendy Knight improve her in-store merchandising



Name	Wendy Knight
Shop	Premier Knights Convenience
Location	Gosport, Portsmouth
Size	700sq ft
Staff	2 full-time, 3 part-time

The Independent Achievers Academy is a learning and development programme that helps to increase sales and profits. Academy in Action shows how retailers like you are working with our partners to use the Academy's advice.



At the start of our week-by-week guide to improving your business with the IAA, our first focus area is merchandising.

A great approach to merchandising can draw customers into your shop, influence purchasing decisions and make your business easier to shop in.

Before completing the benchmarks for your shop on the next page, find out how category partner Mars Wrigley Confectionery has helped Wendy and Steve Knight develop an action plan based on the IAA benchmarking criteria to improve their business.

The couple's 700 sq ft Premier Knights Convenience in Gosport, near Portsmouth, transformed from a news and magazine specialist to a convenience operation three years ago and focuses on cakes and biscuits, food to go and confectionery. How can the IAA help them improve?

Want to see more?

For more on how to improve your store and to see more of Wendy's shop, go to betterRetailing.com/Academy-in-Action



WHY I TAKE PART

“Developing our merchandising, by working with the IAA and Mars Wrigley Confectionery, will hopefully mean we can get our core range right, while also putting our big deals in positions that attract the people who come and dock in the marina and spend more in the summer. It's great to have an expert in who can give us some new ideas.”

IAA ADVICE

Wendy's challenge: Ensuring the shop's pricing strategy is consistent

Most of the year, Wendy's shop caters for customers on a budget. In summer, however, the nearby marina fills with boats, bringing in more affluent customers. How can Wendy capitalise without alienating her regular trade?



Sean says: "Think about the key opportunities in the seasonal calendar so you're ready for each one. As soon as one event ends – or maybe even a week before – start planning the next one. In summer, add premium products into the most visible areas while keeping a core range for locals. You've got the display areas – it's just about maximising them."

Action Start planning for future opportunities such as Easter and the arrival of summer tourists.

Wendy's challenge: Arranging products to guide purchasing decisions

Wendy uses her till to quickly sell through discounted slow sellers. She also uses PoS from a number of suppliers to fill her counter. But is she presenting her shop in the right way?



Sean says: "Don't try to quick-sell short-dated products at the till. It can confuse customers and gives a negative, untidy impression. If the front of the shop looks good and professional, it will draw people in. There's also a half-filled confectionery stand in a prime position. If it isn't selling, remove it – if it is, keep it fully stocked."

Action Remove slow-selling products from the counter and only use PoS if you are going to keep it fully stocked.

Wendy's challenge: Reviewing, researching and improving the shop

Wendy's shop is filled with opportunities to transform shoppers' in-store experience and increase sales, but finding the time to develop these and then implement them is challenging. How do you build a plan for success?



Sean says: "Wendy and Steve should walk the shop every day as if they were customers. There can be a risk of complacency when running a business and fresh eyes can identify opportunities. Using their son Matt's computing skills, they will also be able to bring in EPOS data to this discussion and they should hold monthly meetings to share their ideas."

Action Walk your shop as your customers would once a day and organise a monthly team meeting to share ideas.

PARTNER ADVICE

Getting merchandising right means being flexible, looking professional and adapting your shop to customers' needs. Wendy and Steve run a fantastic shop and have done a great job in getting the basics in place but there are opportunities to improve.

Sean Thacker
Field Sales Representative
Mars Wrigley Confectionery UK



YOUR ACTION PLAN

1 Walk your shop

This is designed to be used to help you think like a customer



2 Benchmark your shop

Use the checklist below, ticking all you see evidence of



Tick all that you see evidence of

Arranging products on the shelf to guide purchasing decisions

- ☐ Do you group products so shoppers can make quick decisions on what to buy?
- ☐ Do you use planograms or guidelines to ensure you have the right products in the right places?
- ☐ Do you put high margin items at eye level to maximise profit?

Ensuring everything is priced in a consistent way

- ☐ Does every product in your shop have an easy-to-read price or shelf edge label?
- ☐ Are price tags up-to-date, professional and tailored to your customer base?
- ☐ Do you have a strategy to ensure every price makes sense to shoppers?

Promotions to encourage additional purchases

- ☐ Do you use supplier promotional materials to highlight offers?
- ☐ Do you have secondary sitings for items on promotion?
- ☐ Do you cross-merchandise categories to gain linked sales?

Having appropriate checks in place to ensure excellence

- ☐ Do your staff face up products and check sell-by dates at least once a day?
- ☐ Do you have merchandising guidelines for staff to follow?
- ☐ Do you or a supervisor conduct checks so you know standards are being upheld?

Research, review, and improvement

- ☐ Do you watch what shoppers do in-shop and adapt displays to grow sales?
- ☐ Do you adapt the number of facings you allow products based on sales reports?
- ☐ Do you check which adjacencies are working and make adjustments?

3 Pick one thing to improve

Write it down, implement it this week and let us know how you get on using #IAA18



CREATE YOUR OWN SHOP REPORT

Call us on 020 7689 0500 to find out how to create your own shop report or to see how you can take part in a future visit.

Next week: Marketing to Customers

MONEY

Securing your store's future

Retailers risk losses in the thousands if they are not properly covered against theft or equipment breakdowns. Alex Yau investigates what to look out for when taking out finance or renewing insurance cover

Insurance providers

The provider

Rikul Patel

Mutual manager at
The Retail Mutual



Run by the NFRN, The Retail Mutual specialises in providing insurance to independent retailers of different sizes. The provider is owned by its customers, and retailers, rather than shareholders, will get a share of its profits at the end of each year.

The customer

Naresh Purohit

Marseans Newsagents,
Dartford



Newsagents like us have had to expand their businesses to become more like convenience stores so they can compete with supermarkets. Petty theft of low-value stock used to be the extent of our problems. Now claims can be for anything from assault to high-value theft of goods in transit. I've claimed from the Retail Mutual and the experience was reassuring and professional.

The advice

Don't wait until something happens before taking out insurance cover

We find a lot of retailers don't take out insurance because they think nothing is going to happen to them, but this is the wrong mind set. More than a third of claims we receive are for shop theft, but a lot of retailers don't consider the long-term impact. Shop theft is our most common claim and can happen when least expected. A retailer might lose £2,000 worth of tobacco, but there are additional repair costs for the gantry and till area. They also have to try and recoup the lost stock themselves. This could be the livelihood for a small newsagent and they might suddenly find themselves out of business.

The frequency of insurance claims overall has remained the same over the past five years, but the value has increased. The combined value of stock and fixtures any retailer has now averages more than £50,000, a figure which has doubled during that time period. Store owners have more sophisticated EPOS systems, food to go areas and modern shop fronts. One retailer refitted his shop front at a cost of £20,000, but a drunk driver without insurance crashed through it. The cost was on the retailer.



A lot of retailers don't take out insurance



The provider

Katie Aston

Head of insurance
services at SME
Insurance Services



SME Insurance Services works as a broker on behalf of more than 21,000 small businesses in the UK to find cover for issues such as accidental damage and stock stolen in the middle of a delivery. Providers it works with include AXA and Liverpool Victoria.

The advice

Make sure your employees are covered

According to recent research, more than 4.9 million small businesses in the UK don't realise they're illegally running their company without the required insurance cover. Retailers are by law required to have employers liability insurance (ELI), which provides protection against compensation costs which may arise from a staff member falling ill or becoming injured. Store owners can be fined up to £2,500 for each day without ELI.

Another potential problem is not keeping your insurance up to date with the changing needs of your business. Too often, a business will set up cover at the start and simply renew it every year, without checking and updating it. Retailers will have made changes to their businesses since first taking out cover, which includes expansion or holding extra and more expensive stock. It is changes like these which might not fit in with the agreed terms of your original contract, and could lead to a claim not being paid in full or in part if you are underinsured.

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Finance providers

The provider

Rob Orme

Marketing manager,
Franchise Finance



Franchise Finance helps independent retailers with funds of between £5,000 and £500,000 to help with their business growth, which includes investment in a new convenience store or the equipment needed to create a chilled section.

The advice

Be honest with your provider

Some applicants for funding think that holding information back, such as previous missed loan payments, will enhance the likelihood of successfully arranging finance. This is not the case. Lenders go to great lengths to understand applicants and their businesses. When the truth comes out, the applicant can find themselves on the back foot.

You can gain a provider's trust by providing financial projections based on evidence and not guesswork. Lenders need to be confident they can make back any investment within the agreed terms.

Applicants need to show a lender that sanctioning their application is a viable risk to take. Retailers should provide the lender with full personal details, including directors of the company, readily available business financials, management accounts and information, costs and supplier information. It is a case of being as prepared as possible and providing as much of the requested information as you possibly can at the first time of asking.



Gain a provider's trust by providing financial projections based on evidence

The provider

Alex Afek

Director,
Got Capital



London-based finance provider Got Capital has since 2007 assisted with the investments of more than 12,000 businesses across the UK – 20% of which are retailers.



Make sure you do your research into your provider

The advice

Establish a personal relationship with your provider

We've found that more than 90% of businesses we speak to haven't established a personal relationship with their provider. A lot of retailers will traditionally go to bigger and more well-known banks, but there can be an absence of flexibility compared to smaller, local providers who can provide a more personal service. Whether it's a shop theft or environmental damage, retailers might suddenly be in need of investment very quickly or need a change to their terms and it can be much easier to get this done through other finance options rather than traditional banking.

Another tip is a simple one, but still essential. Make sure you do your research into your provider rather than basing your judgement on hearsay and rumour. Compared the prices of different providers and have a proper financial plan which covers you against the unexpected. ●

GOT CAPITAL'S FIVE TOP TIPS FOR FINANCE

1

Don't be drawn in by larger banks. The process of getting finance from these institutions can sometimes take months.

2

Don't jump into a deal immediately. Take time to think about whether it's right for you.

3

Speak to other business owners in your own industry about finance as they have the most relevant experience.

4

Have all your business documents ready when meeting a potential provider because this will make the process easier.

5

Get to know your finance provider more personally as this will make emergency cover easier to obtain should you need it.





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23 March 2018 • RN

BREAKFAST

BREAKFAST AT THE COUNTER

Belvita Breakfast Biscuits Milk & Cereals

John Parkinson

Broadway Premier
News, Penryhn Bay



How important is the breakfast category?

The category has recently grown and we now stock a few breakfast bars like Belvita at the till, when at one time we used to keep bags of sweets there. It's popular in the morning, but also during lunch when I notice a lot of young women pick them up.

Why do you stock this product?

It's the kind of product that brings in new customers and it also encourages sales when we have it on offer for three for £1. Normally, we sell it at 55p per single packet.

WHAT THE SUPPLIER SAYS

Susan Nash

trade communications
manager, Mondelez



Retailers must offer convenient formats which cater for consumers' busy lives, and as breakfast is far more impulsive, retailers should site the range in high-traffic locations.



Profits that rise and shine

One shopper mission stands out as providing the biggest opportunity for convenience retailers. **Priyanka Jethwa** finds out how there are sales to be had all over your store

BREAKFAST ON THE SHELF

Weetabix Original

Josh Taylor

Tywardreath Village
Store, Tywardreath



How important is the breakfast category?

It's important to offer consumers a range of breakfast foods, such as cereal bars, but we find that traditional foods like porridge and muesli sell particularly well.

Why do you stock this product?

We have a lot of elderly customers, who like to stick to 'classic' cereals like Weetabix and that's why we stock it. It's a popular bestseller.

WHAT THE SUPPLIER SAYS

Kevin Verbruggen

head of brand,
Weetabix



About 95% of households buy breakfast cereals each year and spend £1.5bn annually. We're confident that we can grow category value by focusing on our large, growing brands and by bringing products to market.



“

It's the kind of product that brings in new customers



Quaker Oats So Simple Original

Tristan King

King Family Stores
Spar, East Retford



How important is breakfast food?

We find more people come to us to buy breakfast foods rather than evening meals and it's something our store can compete on because it's an easy sell when people are looking to pick up something on the go. It hasn't offered great profit margins, but is picking up.

Why do you stock this product?

As a Spar store, we normally follow the planograms our symbol group provides us, which includes Oats So Simple.

WHAT THE SUPPLIER SAYS

Eric Williams

Quaker Oats marketing manager at PepsiCo



Eating at home is the biggest opportunity in terms of breakfast and Quaker Oats have a 9.8% value share of the total cereals market, and as health remains high on the agenda, we recommend retailers stock cereals that fit in with this trend to capitalise on the opportunity.



WHAT THE SUPPLIER SAYS

Lija Seja

category management lead at Kellogg's



Grouping cereals together in blocks, whether it is Kellogg's granola or our core range of cereals, can help consumers find what they want more readily, so it's a good idea to make sure the biggest brands are at eye level.



Kellogg's Special K Red Berries

Shahnaz Patel

Spar,
Bolton



How important is the breakfast category?

It's important to our store, especially since more consumers are seeking breakfast on the go. Suppliers are also developing products in convenient formats to match this.

Why do you stock this product?

Kellogg's Special K Red Berries is good value for money because it comes priced at £2.99 for 360g. It's also popular this time of year because everyone is thinking of eating healthier.



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BREAKFAST

BAKERY BITES

Warburtons Crumpets

Liz Entwistle

St Michael's Post
Office & Stores, Kent



How important is the breakfast category?

We open at 5am, so breakfast foods are really important, especially in the morning on weekends when people come for their bread, milk, bacon and sausages.

Why do you stock this product?

We only stock a local bread brand and Warburtons' range in terms of bakery foods. Crumpets are very popular in the winter months and we sell quite a few of them in the morning.

Aryzta Blueberry Muffin

Ramsey Hasaballa

Speke Town Lane,
Liverpool



How important is the breakfast category?

We only introduced a breakfast foods range six weeks ago, and it's been a phenomenal success, especially since we have a factory near us. When they have a shift change at 6am, they come and buy breakfast from us.

Why do you stock this product?

It was recommended to us by the retail development manager at Aryzta because we didn't have experience in the category. The muffin has been especially popular with consumers and it's going to be a permanent line for us.

CHILLED TO GO

Rustlers All Day Breakfast Sausage Muffin

Danny Wilson

One Stop,
Scarborough



How important is the breakfast category?

It's a decent category, but we don't stock any fresh breakfast foods like pastries. However, it is something I may look to at the future if we get more space in store.

Why do you stock this product?

We used to have a breakfast range similar to Rustlers Breakfast Sausage Muffin, but it didn't do well. However, because Rustlers is a bigger, well-known brand, I will consider stocking this new range.

WHAT THE SUPPLIER SAYS

Darren Littler

innovation and
product marketing
director, Warburtons



To help drive sales, retailers should concentrate on having an available and visible range of bakery products as this is important to drive traffic and spend for breakfast.

WHAT THE SUPPLIER SAYS

Paul Whitely

head of marketing
UK, Aryzta Food
Solutions



Offering customers a range of freshly-baked products is a simple, cost-effective way for the channel to attract new shoppers and increase basket spend.

WHAT THE SUPPLIER SAYS

Adrian Lawlor

Kepak marketing
and business
development director



We wanted to launch a product that would be competitive against the leading players in the sector, McDonald's and Greggs. We recommend retailers merchandise the product with their food to go fixture to capitalise on the opportunity to target highstreets.

COFFEE ON THE GO

Tetley On The Go

Vim Odedra

Nisa Local West
Chiltington, West
Chiltington



How important is the breakfast category?

Breakfast is an important category to capitalise on and that's why

we have a coffee machine in store because it encourages increased basket spend.

Why do you offer this service?

This service has been here since before I owned the business. In recent months however I've noticed more customers buying a pastry and a hot drink.

WHAT THE SUPPLIER SAYS

Marshall Kingston

Tetley senior brand manager



The Tetley On The Go range has been developed for on the move customers, as the cups reduce spillages and mess, so by offering consumers something addressing their biggest concerns, retailers can attract footfall.



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Retailers are free to set their own prices. Non-PMP packs available. *Kantar 18.06.17.

**Nielsen MAT w/e 12.08.17

THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



Launch of the week

‘HALF DECENT’ MAGAZINE FINALLY HAS AN OFFSHOOT

Football magazine When Saturday Comes is launching a new title for children who are fans and keen players of the beautiful game

IT HAS taken more than 30 years to get there, but When Saturday Comes, which billed itself as ‘the half decent football magazine’, has launched its first ever offshoot. Monthly magazine Kickaround is aimed at children aged between seven and 11 and targets fans and keen players. It is intended to achieve the same blend of irreverence and more thoughtful pieces that has served its grown-up sibling so well since its early days as a photocopied fanzine. Adults who read When Saturday Comes are certain to encourage their kids to have a bash at this title.



KICKAROUND
On sale 23 March
Frequency monthly
Price £3.99
Distributor Seymour
Display with Match of
the Day, Kick, Match

My week in magazines



Tim Murray
Magazines reporter
RNreporter@newtrade.co.uk

THE SLOW MARCH BACK TO PRINT

The news that Fangoria magazine is returning to the shelves may not have set many retailers' hearts a-fluttering. It is, after all, a US publication dedicated almost entirely to horror films, with pages of rather gory pictures. It has also been off the shelves for almost three years.

And yet the news that it is relaunching as a quarterly publication should be welcomed because it signifies a recent trend – magazines that closed down a few years ago and publications that shuttered to concentrate on their websites instead are now coming back to print.

Just among magazines I've favoured over the years, both Fangoria and, towards the end of last year, jazz and world music specialist Straight No Chaser have both come back to the newsstand. The former was mired in ownership issues and slowly faded away; but the latter went out with a bang and a final issue.

Both have similar feelings however – the digital-only option isn't necessarily a good model. And, more importantly, its staffers and fans missed print.

The model is the route often favoured by specialists now – quarterly rather than the monthly grind and, in Straight No Chaser's case, a higher cover price and far weightier page count. It makes for greater margin, a longer time to sell through and less likelihood of returns, too.

It's a slow march back to print, but one worth telling customers about.

Opportunity: relaunches
Keep an eye on magazines returning to print, telling customers who've missed them they're on the way back.

THIS WEEK
IN MAGAZINES **WE WANT YOUR
INSPIRATIONAL IDEAS!**

GET IN TOUCH with your news and mags success stories for a chance to feature





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

RN

Call 020 7689 3350

THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES

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RACING AHEAD

- With the Grand National almost under starter's orders, the new issue of Racing Ahead contains an extra 16 pages as part of its Aintree special.
- This issue is the monthly's second biggest title of the year, following its Cheltenham special, with sales predicted to rise by 100%. Intermedia advises retailers to stock it with national and racing newspapers and magazines.

On sale out now
Frequency monthly
Price £3.49
Distributor Intermedia
Display with Racing
Post, Racing & Football
Outlook



MIRROR 2018 WORLD CUP SPECIAL

- One of the first of the World Cup-related one-shots hitting the shelves, this one comes from the trusted football experts at the Mirror.
- The 68-page publication features interviews, quizzes and forecasts for the big event, along with that all-important free wallchart.

On sale out now
Frequency one-shot
Price £3.99
Distributor Seymour
Display with Four Four
Two, World Soccer, When
Saturday Comes



MATCH WORLD CUP 2018 SPECIAL

- A bumper package for football-loving youths and kids, this comes complete with a collection of inserts, additional publications, stickers and, of course, a wallchart.
- It is being promoted in sister publications Match and Match Football Crazy to make its target market aware of its availability.

On sale out now
Frequency one-shot
Price £5.99
Distributor Seymour
Display with Match of the Day, Kick, Match



LOL SURPRISE

- Currently the hottest item in the toy world, these collectable blind-bagged toys give kids the chance to collect and then unbox their goodies.
- This officially-licensed magazine features stories, quizzes and loads more, including a special LOL surprise gift.

On sale out now
Frequency monthly
Price £3.99
Distributor Marketforce
Display with Shopkins,
Frozen, MixIt



COUNTRY WALKING

- This latest issue of the country's best-selling walking magazine goes as far afield as New Zealand, as well as - closer to home - the Lake District.
- The magazine also features guides, kit and gear reviews, as well as competitions and news.

On sale 29 March
Frequency monthly
Price £4.50
Distributor Frontline
Display with Trail, The Great Outdoors, Camping



Bestsellers Primary girls

Title	On sale date	In stock
1 Pink	28.03	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 My Little Pony	23.03	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Moana	21.03	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Frozen	28.03	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Trolls	18.04	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Girl Talk	21.03	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Pets 2 Collect	23.03	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Hello Kitty Magazine	11.04	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Cute	21.03	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Shopkins	29.03	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Sparkle World	05.04	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Barbie	04.04	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Disney Princess	21.03	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 Girl Talk Art	04.04	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Love From	11.04	<input type="checkbox"/>

Data from independent stores supplied by 

SYMBOL KEY



Price change



Launc



Frequency
change



Bumper issue



One
shot

Special
issue

Free
gift



Competition

THIS WEEK IN MAGAZINES



TEEN BREATHE BOYS' SPECIAL

- The Breathe phenomenon continues. After the first magazine's success and the addition of a teen version, now here comes one for boys.
- The idea for this latest wellbeing title comes from reader feedback and includes tips on using social media and how to handle anger.



On sale out now
Frequency one shot
Price £3.99
Distributor Seymour
Display with Teen Breathe, Breathe



MOJO

- The Who's Roger Daltrey features large as life on the cover of the rock music monthly, while the covermount CD features 1960s mod classics.
- Other features take in everyone from contemporary rapper Kendrick Lamar through to prog rockers Yes, by way of Johnny Cash and Ry Cooder.



On sale out now
Frequency monthly
Price £5.50
Distributor Frontline
Display with Uncut, Q, Record Collector



HARRY & MEGHAN ROYAL WEDDING PREVIEW

- Royal weddings boost sales of all related magazines and this preview hits the shelves a few months before the big day.
- Meghan Markle adds a touch of Hollywood glamour to the publication, which also looks back at the couple's romance.



On sale 29 March
Frequency one shot
Price £4.99
Distributor Marketforce
Display with Hello!, OK!, Closer



SPECIALIST CHOICE JEREMY LESLIE, MAGCULTURE, LONDON FLANEUR

Who buys it?

The team visit a different city and a different street each issue and create the magazine around that. This issue is about São Paulo. Its appeal is very much the heart of our market – people in the creative industries. It's not so much travel, more art and culture for inquisitive people.

How do you display it?

We put it very much at the front of the shop and support it. We have some people coming in in a few weeks to give a talk on the magazine, too.



On sale out now
Frequency irregular
Price £16
Distributor
info@flaneur.com

Expert advice

Kate Austin

Managing director,
DJ Murphy



The latest girls' magazine launch from DJ Murphy is the official LOL Surprise magazine, which went on sale on 21 March.

Priced at £3.99 (£4.99 for bumper packages) and aimed at girls aged between five and nine, the new fun-filled magazine brings the world of the collectable dolls craze to life in an innovative package. It incorporates the key elements of surprise for children in both the magazine and the covermounts, and gives kids the chance to collect toys as they go.

Currently the number one toy brand in the UK (taking the top three slots), LOL Surprise is constantly selling out in toy shops, so we anticipate a huge demand for the official magazine when it goes on sale this month.



Our strategy

Who buys your magazine?

Five to nine-year-old girls with a passion for LOL Surprise.

How should it be promoted in-store?

Front of shelf, alongside Frozen, Mixit, Shopkins and other primary girls' titles.

How are you investing in independents?

We are always looking for ways to grow sales in the all-important independent sector. We have set up an agreement with the NFRN for the new LOL Surprise magazine and will be advertising the launch in the NFRN newsletter.

In addition, we have enjoyed great success with incentives and competitions for independent retailers in the past, which we plan to run again this year.

We have lots of exciting plans for our new magazine and I sincerely hope that LOL Surprise magazine is a consistently good seller for independent retailers.

COMING UP IN NEXT WEEK'S RN



Will Kashif Nadeem's brand new store and café pass its first big test?

Plus, with the soft drinks sugar levy just days away, RN's comprehensive guide provides all the information you and your team need

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