

# SUPERMARKET & RETAILER



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**Packaging, labels & scales  
... innovation driven by sustainability  
and technology**

**Behavioural economics ...  
how 'being human'  
affects your business**

**Metaverse ...  
A new way for businesses  
to connect with consumers?**

**Deli and HMR 2022 ...  
Flavour and ingredient innovation, a touch of nostalgia,  
quality and catering for your customer base**







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## FEATURES

### Packaging, labels & scales

Sustainability and technology are innovation drivers in these workhorses, integral to the overall consumer experience and vital to both retail and wholesale.

Covid caused logistical issues, delays, raw material shortages. Add in an unreliable electricity supply and rising costs. So cost, local production or manufacture, low carbon footprint, and manufacturing efficiency are more important than ever.



### Deli & HMR 2022

Image courtesy of Ucook



Flavour and ingredient innovation, a touch of nostalgia, quality and catering for your customer

base are key to success. Research suggests that people are eating at home more often and cooking meals from scratch at home too. Is this trend here to stay? Meet shopper expectations, while also providing convenience and time savings to maintain and grow your HMR and deli sales.

## COLUMNS

### Delight your customers



Image: Tim Douglas, Pexels

Aki Kalliatakis shows how 'being human' affects your business. A lot of how we buy goes back to chemicals produced

in the brain. As sales trainer Zig Ziglar said, "People buy on emotion and justify on logic."

## STOREWATCH

### Game Jabulani Mall



Game stores had a total of 10 outlets damaged beyond recognition in the July 2021 wave of unrest, many left an empty shell. Being known for providing customers with unbeatable prices, the group has come out stronger than

ever with their 'Retail Reimagined' concept.

## NEWS

### Recovery rollercoaster

NielsenIQ 2022 SA Consumer Outlook Study has revealed a substantially altered picture of local consumers. Changed priorities makes it critically important in terms of evaluating how these will affect spending habits and product choices.

### Metaverse

Are we facing a fleeting fad or a new world that is opening the doors to a powerful business model?

### Web traffic

Smartphones have replaced desktops and laptops as the preferred mode of accessing the internet. Developing countries like Nigeria and India are currently the front leaders in the mobile internet revolution.

### Is ecommerce the future of retail?

The pandemic squeezed ten years of digital sales penetration into three months.

### Rise of m-commerce in Africa

Africa's shoppers dial in to multi-functionality, digital wallets, instant accessibility and services that changes lives.

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# Self-care and 'aware'

## How retailers can capitalise on this growth trend



Helen Maister

What has self-care got to do with it anyway? What does this mean in our day-to-day?

Self-care, was a buzz word in the alternative communities of natural health and spirituality. As our millennials and Gen Z moved into the corporate world, this paradigm has moved with them. It's about being fair, equitable to themselves and looking after the people, places and things that didn't have much support in previous generations. This is not a bad move for the world.

What does that mean for retailers and manufacturers? Well, you have to care more. You do. You just do.

You have to make your customer feel good about being in-store. Aki Kalliatakis, writes in his column *Delight your*

**B**y saying a 'trend', you make the assumption that this will go away at some stage. Being 'aware' was born with Millennials, but now these kids are between 26 and 41 years old. Fully fledged adults, living in the real world. Enter Gen Z (the eldest being 25 years old), who have taken being 'aware' to the next level.

*customers* about the brain chemicals that are released when a customer has a good experience and what you, the retailer, can do to produce these feel-good chemicals when they visit your store.

### Packaging, Labels and Scales

The Covid pandemic has caused a ripple effect in almost every industry, particularly those connected to retail. Logistical issues, delays, raw material shortages, an unreliable electricity supply and rising costs have all had an impact on the packaging, labelling, and scales industries.

Meanwhile cost, local production or manufacture, low carbon footprint, and manufacturing efficiency are more important than ever. Added to this is the global move towards reducing plastic usage – energy efficient, recyclable, and eco-friendly products.

In particular Packaging and Labels demand innovation, but also need to be functional and meet safety, hygiene, stock control and legislative requirements. This often results in two dissimilar worlds trying to find common ground and why we still see an abundance of environmentally unfriendly packaging and label solutions. Read more about the solutions in this feature



Image courtesy of Ucook

### Deli and HMR

Deli and HMR offerings are a delight for the senses. They are visual merchandisers for your store and have the potential to create a much-loved destination shop for repeat and loyal customers. Globally, research suggests that, despite restaurants and eateries reopening their doors, people are eating at home more often and more consumers are cooking meals from scratch at home too. The question is whether this trend is here to stay. By ensuring that the quality and variety of your deli and HMR options meet the expectations of your shoppers, while also providing convenience and time savings, you can maintain and grow your HMR and deli sales.

Helen Maister

Helen Maister





Aki Kalliatakis

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This article is one of a short series on how behavioural economics and 'being human' affects your business.

# In the world of customers, emotion creates motion

“Fighting emotion with logic is like bringing a calculator to a knife fight”

Josh Sundquist

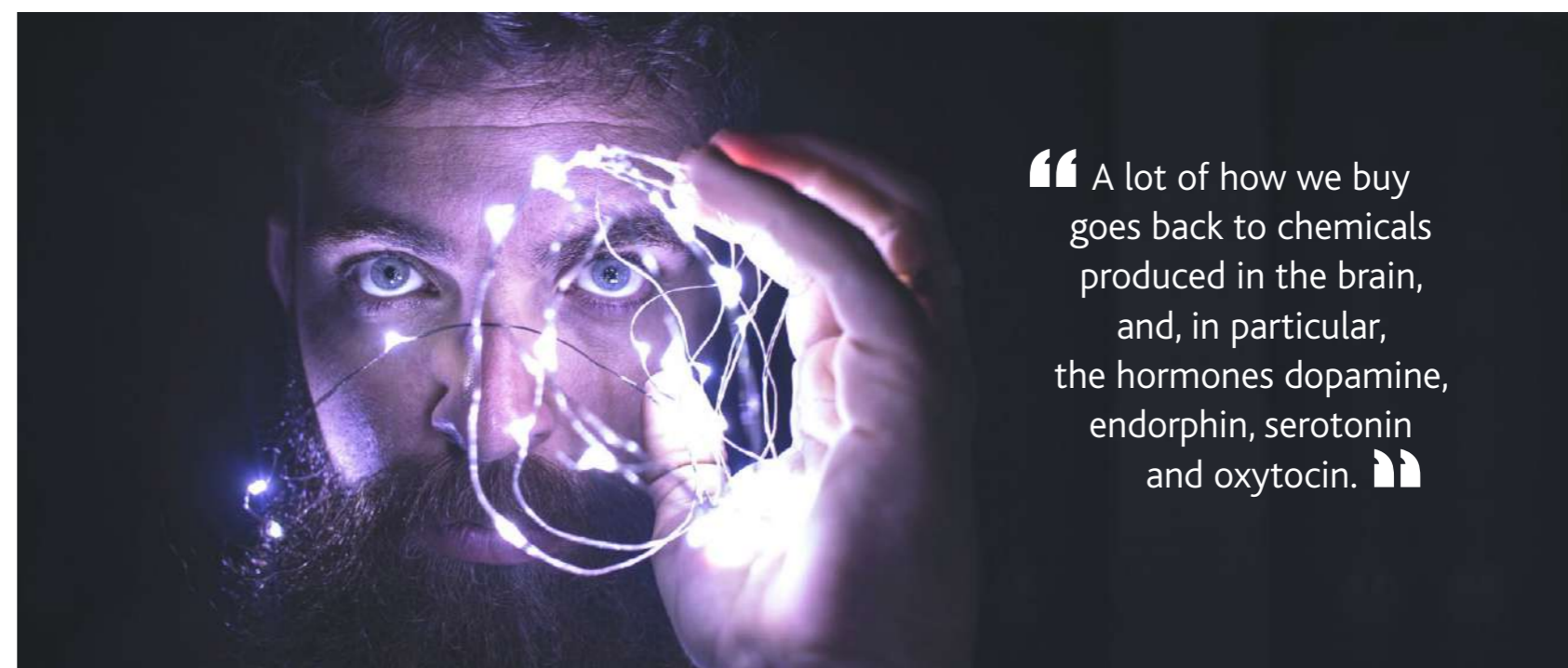
My dear old dad was an engineer and scientist, and he always insisted that all human issues revolved around chemicals and energy. So you can imagine how he felt when his oldest son informed him that he'd chosen a weird career in psychology and marketing.

We disagreed – always with love – about what made human beings happy, what motivated and inspired them, why they were so irrational, illogical, and sometimes evil, and about all things spiritual. As a cocky young graduate I wasn't prepared to concede.

But in one area, my scientist dad was proven absolutely right ... A lot of how we buy goes back to chemicals produced in the brain, and in particular the hormones dopamine, endorphin, serotonin and oxytocin.

Before we take a look at these and how you can use them to your benefit, it's also good to remind ourselves that, as sales trainer Zig Ziglar said, "People buy on emotion and justify on logic."

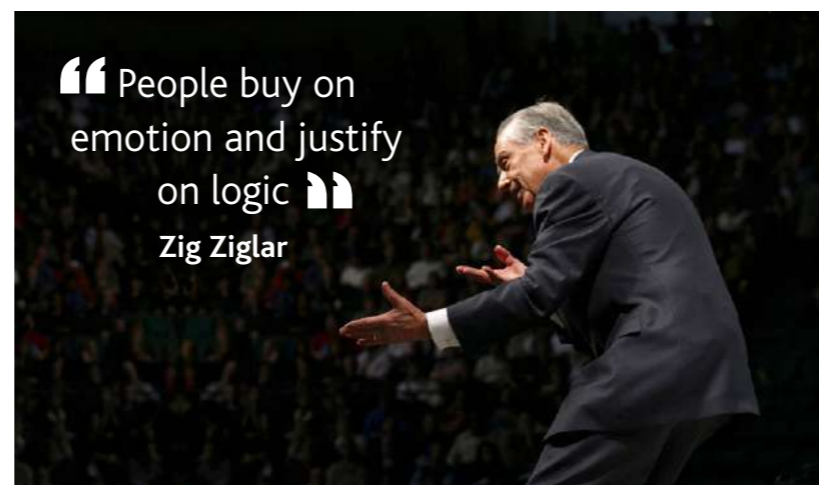
This was confirmed by Harvard Business School professor Gerald Zaltman who concluded (in his



“ A lot of how we buy goes back to chemicals produced in the brain, and, in particular, the hormones dopamine, endorphin, serotonin and oxytocin. ”

Image courtesy of David Cassolato, Pexels

“ People buy on emotion and justify on logic ”  
Zig Ziglar



book *How Customers Think: Essential Insights Into the Mind of the Market*) that 95% of our purchase decision making takes place in the subconscious mind.

Let's start with **dopamine**, produced by the hypothalamus in your brain, and often called '**the reward chemical**'. It's an important part in your reward system, meaning the brain releases dopamine when you do things that feel good or





pleasurable or when you complete a task. It helps you feel pleasure in a very powerful way.

When we develop addictions – to gambling, eating, smoking, drugs, online gaming, 'likes' on social media, and so on, it's the dopamine that makes it so hard to stop. It's the pleasure you get when you finish a particular task that's important to you and includes all self-care activities. Even the anticipation of something pleasurable makes dopamine spike. And the best news is that you don't have to do it every time. The principle of occasional reinforcement – a little surprise out of the blue – can also be potent.

But you can also use dopamine effectively by celebrating things with your customers. Anything that you do to make them feel even a small win can trigger a positive reaction. You can use a reminder of something good that happened in the past in their lives. You can also give them positive feedback: pay them a compliment, tell them what a good choice they made, even emphasise at the end of the experience that the worst is over and they achieved something by completing their shopping task. Unlike serotonin, see below, it is the selfish hormone.

The second chemical is **serotonin** – another neurotransmitter produced when you feel satisfaction, calmness and in touch with your surroundings. It **helps regulate your sleep, appetite and mood**, and is triggered by being outdoors, meditation, relaxing activities, exercise and even just the sun. It's a mood stabiliser that gives you a sense of calmness. As a result ...



“ When we develop addictions – to gambling, eating, smoking, drugs, online gaming, 'likes' on social media, and so on, it's the dopamine that makes it so hard to stop. ”

Image courtesy of Jonathan Petersson, Pexels



Image courtesy of Tim Douglas, Pexels

Some things you can do include looking out for things that do the opposite of creating calm in your business. Could it be too much noise, or hectic activity? Is the environment so artificial and cold that it creates stress? Is there enough light? But you can also build empathy and trust by being an example of empathy and trust and offering things like guarantees and reassurances.

“ Don't worry, I've got your back” is the message you want to transmit to customers. ”



Image courtesy of Singkham, Pexels

“ Serotonin increases feelings of empathy, it connects people and increases trust. It is the selfless chemical because it strengthens our social bonds with others. ”

In some businesses you can also do this by showing that you are skilled and have expertise in what you do, and even offering social proof such as recommendations from other customers “just like me” to build that trust and confidence.

But at a deeper level, serotonin is released whenever we feel respected and admired. That boosts our confidence and makes us feel great. You can see what actions you can take to get this going.

**Oxytocin** is **sometimes called the 'love hormone'**, or 'the cuddle hormone', and we get it in our lives by spending time with family



and friends, playing with a pet, physical touch, (like holding hands and hugging) and giving compliments to others. It produces feelings of love and connection, and it's what binds human beings to each other.

While you need to think very carefully before you go out there and start hugging your customers, simple gestures like a handshake, or allowing a customer to feel a soft toy or similar can make a difference.

“ A short personal chat can also work wonders, especially if it acknowledges that your customer is someone you know, recognise and appreciate. ”

But it should also be obvious to you that simple acts of generosity and kindness achieve the same, especially if they hit some problem – like dropping some of their shopping, or being unable to find something, or reach something. But there is one very important factor that plays a role in this. Obviously, the person on the receiving end feels good, and the person who does something nice also gets a hit of oxytocin (which makes it more likely that we pay it forward again). But even an observer who witnesses someone being kind and generous gets a good feeling!

It's nature's way of making sure that we take care of each other and protect other members of our tribe. But it must be authentic, and you can't have any expectations in return.



Image courtesy of Vinicius Wiesehofer, Pexels

To a lesser degree some fragrances or a massage also help. Once again, what you can do is obvious, and you can manage these things in your business without spending a fortune.



Image courtesy of Lisa Fotios, Pexels

Now, one final word of advice ... unless you are like my dad whose need to understand the science was so important ... don't get caught up in the terminology and try to identify which chemical plays what role. We've looked at a bunch of things that you can do to create positive feelings that result in loyalty. **SR**

And finally, **endorphin, the pain killer chemical.**

“ Endorphins trigger positive emotions when you do something you enjoy such as laughing, exercising or having sex. Nostalgia about happy events sparks it off – and eating chocolate or pleasurable foods has a similar pain-masking effect. ”



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# What you need to know about nutritional profiling

To consumers, a label on a food product is nothing but a guide to help them make purchasing choices. But to manufacturers of foodstuffs, the labels are much more than that. Labels on food products contain the nutritional profiling of the item. And, acquiring the correct information for these labels is a large responsibility. This is because it is legally required, and because it is there to protect consumers.

## What is nutritional profiling?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines nutritional profiling as the science of grouping or grading foodstuffs in relation to the nutrients that they hold. The purpose of this is to encourage healthier eating habits, and to mitigate foodborne disease.

Organisations like the WHO have also placed an emphasis on nutritional labelling as a part of global efforts to reduce non-communicable diseases like hypertension.

To describe it differently, nutritional profiling is the process of analysing the food items that you produce to determine its nutritional contents. After this process is complete, manufacturers can use the information to create labels for their products.

The South African government, in their regulations relating to the labelling and advertising of food stuffs (like the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics,



and Disinfectants Act (Act 54 of 1972), extensively lays out what information you need to present on these labels.

## How is it done?

In short, nutritional profiling is done in a chemistry laboratory, by an accredited and reputable food testing facility. But what happens in the lab?

After you provide the scientists with samples of your product, they analyse it using specialised equipment, like chromatographic and mass spectrometric instruments. Through their analysis, they can give you an overview of both the physical and chemical characteristics of your products.

At the end of the process you'll have a full nutritional profile of your product.

## Why should you do nutritional profiling?

If you're in the business of producing food or feed, you are likely required by the law to have food labels. And if you need food labels, then you need nutritional profiling.

When your samples are sent to the lab, you can select to have your products analysed for the regular factors like nutritional composition of the item. But you can also select to test for harmful components, example: heavy metals and trans fats.

With chemistry lab testing and nutritional profiling, you can avoid unnecessary expenses, legal claims, and damage to reputation.

On top of this, we must remember that part of the reason for nutritional profiling is promoting good health. By doing nutritional profiling, you can help people make better food choices and contribute to overall public health.

## In conclusion

To retain consumer trust and a good brand reputation, you must ensure that your products have undergone thorough testing and nutritional profiling. You can get this done easily, by sending your products to a chemistry lab.

What makes this even better is that this can be a two-in-one activity. You can ensure your food is free of harmful components, and meets food quality compliance standards. **SR**



# A package deal

## Sustainability and technology are innovation drivers

**P**ackaging, scales, and labels are retail workhorses. These disparate but interrelated categories are integral to the overall consumer experience and vital to both retail and wholesale.

### Current state of play

The Covid pandemic has caused a ripple effect in almost every industry, particularly those connected to retail. Logistical issues, delays, raw material shortages, an unreliable electricity supply, and rising costs have all had an impact on the packaging, labelling, and scales industries. Meanwhile cost, local production or manufacture, low carbon footprint, and manufacturing efficiency are more important than ever. Added to this is the global move towards reducing plastic usage, energy efficient, recyclable, and eco-friendly products. In particular ...

“ Packaging and labels demand innovation, but also need to be functional and meet safety, hygiene, stock control and legislative requirements. ”



Image courtesy of Forestry South Africa

This often results in two disparate worlds trying to find common ground and why we still see an abundance of environmentally unfriendly packaging and label solutions.

### The price of packaging

The UN Climate Change Conference 2021 (COP26) highlighted the negative impact of single use

plastics and expanded polystyrene on the environment, with attending countries promising to legislate in order to reduce this impact. Globally consumers are demanding sustainable, recyclable, and biodegradable packaging. A comprehensive green strategy is no longer a nice to have, it is a business must.

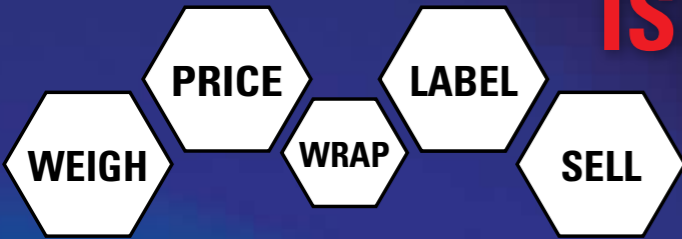
Cling film is a case in point. Cling film contains PVC, and some PVC products are not recyclable





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– although the industry has done much in recent years to reduce its overall environmental impact. Paradoxically, one of the biggest problems are the emissions caused by the PVC recycling process.

For years the problem with PVC alternatives has been cost and quality – alternatives cost too much or were just not good enough for commercial use. Food wrap experts Superthene is one such manufacturer that provides a viable option.



“With major South African retailer Woolworths pledging to do away with problematic PVC packaging, they have been driving a large-scale conversion to 100% recyclable Superthene.”

To date, Superthene has been involved in converting all Woolworths poultry suppliers, in-store butcheries in Cape Town, their crumbed chicken supplier, and their in-store contract packager or copackers. Several other major retailers, including the Spar group, are also looking at replacing their PVC packaging with Superthene.

Director at Superthene Roy Keytel says, “We use a combination of cutting-edge Polyolefin polymers – high-quality polymers that are fully recyclable –

and a specifically designed production process to offer a viable alternative to conventional PVC food wrap.”

Not only is the product viable, but it also has several key advantages over regular PVC-based food wrap. It is completely recyclable and photo-degradable, it comes in at a very competitive price, and the film is thinner and stretchier than regular cling film, which makes it easier on equipment.



Keytel adds, “We are the only CANSA-approved commercial producer in our field. Our product contains absolutely no plasticizers and is non-toxic.” Superthene uses 36% less raw materials than conventional PVC cling film and has gas interchange properties that can prolong shelf-life.

Keytel says other innovations include a micro perforating system, the food wrap’s ability to withstand very low temperatures and its capability to inhibit the growth of viruses, bacteria, and fungi. Ideal for use in the fresh produce industry, hot needles perforate the film, which helps with water vapor properties for super-breathability, while another product in the range remains

ductile to -120°C, making it ideal for blast freezer applications. Superthene Plus offers anti-microbial properties for extended shelf-life for a wide range of foodstuffs.

“The product, which can be used for hand or automated wrapping, also offers unique barrier properties that prolong the colour change in meat and poultry, keeping these items fresher for longer in display fridges.”

Keytel says, “Polyethylene, by nature of the polymer, has a far greater tensile strength than that of PVC, making it stronger and more puncture resistant. This means smaller sized rolls and lower gauges can be used, making it more economical.”

It is fair to say that as more environmentally friendly options become available and affordable, consumers are less willing to overlook a lack of change in retail packaging. It is not inconceivable that shoppers may start to boycott products that fail to comply to certain eco-standards.

### The other side of the PVC coin

In early February 2022, The Southern African Vinyls Association (SAVA), supported by members of the Global Vinyls Council (GVC), issued a press release rejecting the Phase 1 list of “problematic and unnecessary plastics” published recently by the SA Plastics Pact. The list named 12 plastic products that should be banned or entirely phased out, including “PVC rigid packaging (including



# MAKE PVC YOUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENCE

Considering that hospitals rely on PVC (vinyl) to help protect against superbugs and infections – **shouldn't you use it for your packaging too?**

Using vinyl packaging can preserve and conserve food by guaranteeing a longer shelf-life, improving food safety, reducing bacterial proliferation and protecting against external contamination.



**Cling Film**



**Bottles & Labels**



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**Low Carbon:** PVC is an intrinsically low-carbon plastic. 57% of its molecular weight is chlorine derived from common salt; 5% is hydrogen; and 38% is carbon.

**Recyclable and sustainable:** It's extremely durable, cost efficient and it can be recycled several times at the end of its life without losing its essential properties.



bottles, except for medicine packaging), pallet shrink wrap and labels.” A low recycling rate, potentially harmful additives in PVC materials, and environmental concerns were listed in the reasoning.

In the release that responded to the Phase 1 list, Monique Holtzhausen, CEO of SAVA, stated, “Our latest recycling figures clearly show that there is a strong demand for PVC recycle in South Africa. During the 2020 reporting period, a total amount of 21 433 tons of PVC were recycled in our country, of which 13 440 tonnes were flexible (PVC-P) and 7 992 tonnes were rigid (PVC-U).



PVC was the only polymer to have recorded a year-on-year increase of 9.5% despite very difficult trading conditions such as global raw material shortages and supply chain issues, high material costs, interrupted electricity supply due to load shedding and the ravaging effects of Covid-19.”

“The recent global shortage in raw materials and high polymer prices has driven the demand for recycle even further.”

Holtzhausen also addressed the environmental, health and safety concerns by reiterating that all its members are signatories of its Product Stewardship Commitment (PSC), which addresses the PVC industry’s environmental issues. She says ...

“Our PSC is based on international health and safety standards and best practice models which specify sustainable manufacturing, sustainable use of additives, closed loop management and sustainability awareness.”

She noted that should the proposed bans take place, the impact on local manufacturers could be dire, endangering thousands of jobs during an already fraught and difficult period.

“The plastics industry contributed 20% to our country’s Manufacturing GDP in 2020. The industry is dominated by packaging and any decision to ban a specific stream will have significant consequences on thousands of people. Although only 9% of locally consumed PVC goes into packaging such as bottles, thermoformed punnets, blister packs, clingfilm and other flexible packaging, it is important to note that it has very specific and necessary application values that cannot be ignored.”

Simply banning plastic without putting in place acceptable alternatives and ensuring existing industries and jobs are protected, could be as catastrophic as ignoring the plastics issue entirely.



## WHAT PVC CAN YOU RECYCLE?

There isn’t really an easy answer to this. In general, PVC 3 Polyvinyl chloride can be recycled; this includes bottles, clear toiletry and food trays, and cling film. But sorting your plastics, cleaning and drying them, and then finding a recycling company that accepts PVC products could be where you hit a stumbling block. The best option is to contact your recycling partner directly. They should be willing to examine samples of your PVC product and let you know what can and what cannot be recycled. This will enable you to set benchmarks and quotas for your recycling programme.

### Removing plastics from the equation

Banning plastic bags has become a reality, with more than 30 African countries implementing bans – although the enforcement of these laws amid concerns around job losses and lack of viable alternatives is proving to be a challenge.

However, it does show that environmental concerns are gaining ground in a diversity of markets globally. By ditching plastic bags at checkout and in the fruit and veg aisles, supermarkets, chain stores, and independent





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Studies show that new products are being brought to market at a faster rate than ever, making bar coding and related technologies more important and integral than ever. Via its network of resellers, Kemtek Bar Coding Solutions supplies quality products and advanced technologies

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retailers can make an impact. Selling reasonably priced alternatives is also an additional revenue stream, although these are still quite often considered to be a grudge purchase. Surprisingly, we haven't seen supplier-branded long-life shopping bags on offer – is there a missed opportunity here?

Plastic fabrication company Zibo Containers has embarked on a drive to reduce plastics in their packaging options, removing the inner box LDPE liner from their food-safe containers. This important step in removing excess plastics has not compromised their product structurally, nor has it affected its performance, application, or food safety.



**Food Miles: What's the Big Deal?**

Your food is transported a long way before it ends up on your plate. The distance travelled is referred to as food miles.

Did you know:

- 95% of our fruit comes from abroad;
- Half our vegetables are imported, too;
- 30% of goods transported by lorry is food;
- We import over 16 million tonnes of food each year;
- 1% of our food has been on a plane?

Image courtesy of Daria Shevtsova, Pexels

Shoppers like to feel good about what they're buying, and informed consumers want to know the story behind their purchases. Information, presented as captivatingly as possible, is key.

# Storyselling

One of the latest packaging trends is connected packaging.

Consumers want to know the provenance of their food ...

They want to know if it is local, organic, sustainably-sourced, good for the environment, and good for them. Storyselling is the art of using packaging and labels to tell a story and encourage sales.

SERVING SIZE		Nutrition Facts		CALORIES PER SERVING	
1.	8 servings per container	Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)		230	
Amount per serving		Calories		230	
NUTRIENTS TO LIMIT		Total Fat 8g		10%	
4.		Saturated Fat 1g		5%	
		Trans Fat 0g			
		Cholesterol 0mg		0%	
		Sodium 180mg		7%	
		Total Carbohydrate 37g		13%	
		Dietary Fiber 4g		14%	
		Total Sugars 12g			
		Includes 10g Added Sugars		20%	
5. BENEFICIAL NUTRIENTS		Protein 3g			
		Vitamin D 2mcg		10%	
		Calcium 260mg		20%	
		Iron 8mg		45%	
		Potassium 240mg		6%	

## Labels ... changes are afoot

Raw material shortages, delivery delays, and increased costs have made an impact on the labelling category. Added to this is the call for increased sustainability and recyclability. Consequently, change in the labels category have dramatically sped up, driving innovation and the adoption of new technologies.

### The technology behind labels

There is an abundance of technology in play when it comes to labels. Full automation reduces costs and fewer human touch points reduce the risk of contamination.

Auto-cut machines with smart design capabilities can automatically detect unused white space and remove it from the label, reducing the label size and saving on materials.

The effect of climate change on the labelling industry also cannot be underestimated as tech developers and manufacturers work to reduce energy costs, increase energy efficiency, and minimise environmental impact. Environmentally friendly inks are a small but important step to consider.



# SM-6000 Scale

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- Waste Management
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*Searching for  
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## Linerless Labelling

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- Auto Wrappers**
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- Spare Parts**
- Support**



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**Cancelling release liners puts the brakes on tons of waste**

Release liners are made from glassine that has been coated with a release agent, making the entire product unsuitable for recycling.

Teraoka sales director Michael Stent says, "Traditionally label backing sheets go to landfill as they cannot be recycled. Working with Woolworths we discovered that, as a group, they were sending 27 rugby fields of label liners to landfill every year. That's 138 000m of waste. They have eliminated this waste by converting all their scales to linerless label scales."

It's a massive environmental saving, and according to Stent, the Shoprite Checkers and

Pick n Pay groups are following suit. "We may be an emerging market with a third-world economy, but when it comes to environmental awareness, our supermarkets are excellent," says Stent.

According to [www.labelsandlabeling.com](http://www.labelsandlabeling.com), "Currently, less than five percent of the 60 billion square meters of global production of laminates with silicone liners are reused or recycled." Linerless labels are undoubtedly the way forward.

In terms of corporate social responsibility and environmental impact, Teraoka provides bespoke practical labelling and wrapping solutions and related consumables to meet the corporate vision. They provide a locally developed and manufactured product for new stores, as well as revamps, and can advise on the most efficient process for converting a store or chain to become more sustainable through reducing or converting its current usage.

According to Stent. ...

“There are several benefits of linerless scale labels, They are environmentally friendly, reduce wastage, are cost effective, and provide value for money.”

Removing the need for glassine release liners saves 135 tons of wood pulp, or about 3 602 trees. There is also a water saving of 3 001 576 litres, as well as reduced carbon emissions.

“Currently Teraoka avoids disposing of 2 501 313m<sup>2</sup> of glassine liner to landfills across the country each year. This equates to enough glassine liner to cover 500 rugby fields that does not go to landfill.”

"Linerless labels are also cost effective as they are roughly five percent cheaper than conventional labels. You also get more labels per roll – twice as many labels can be wound onto a linerless label roll with the same dimensions as a lined roll. This means less roll changes for the operator," says Stent.

Packaging and labelling go hand-in-hand when it comes to the consumer experience. Eye-catching and attractive products are more appealing, but labels need to be clear and concise, while also containing both legally mandated information,







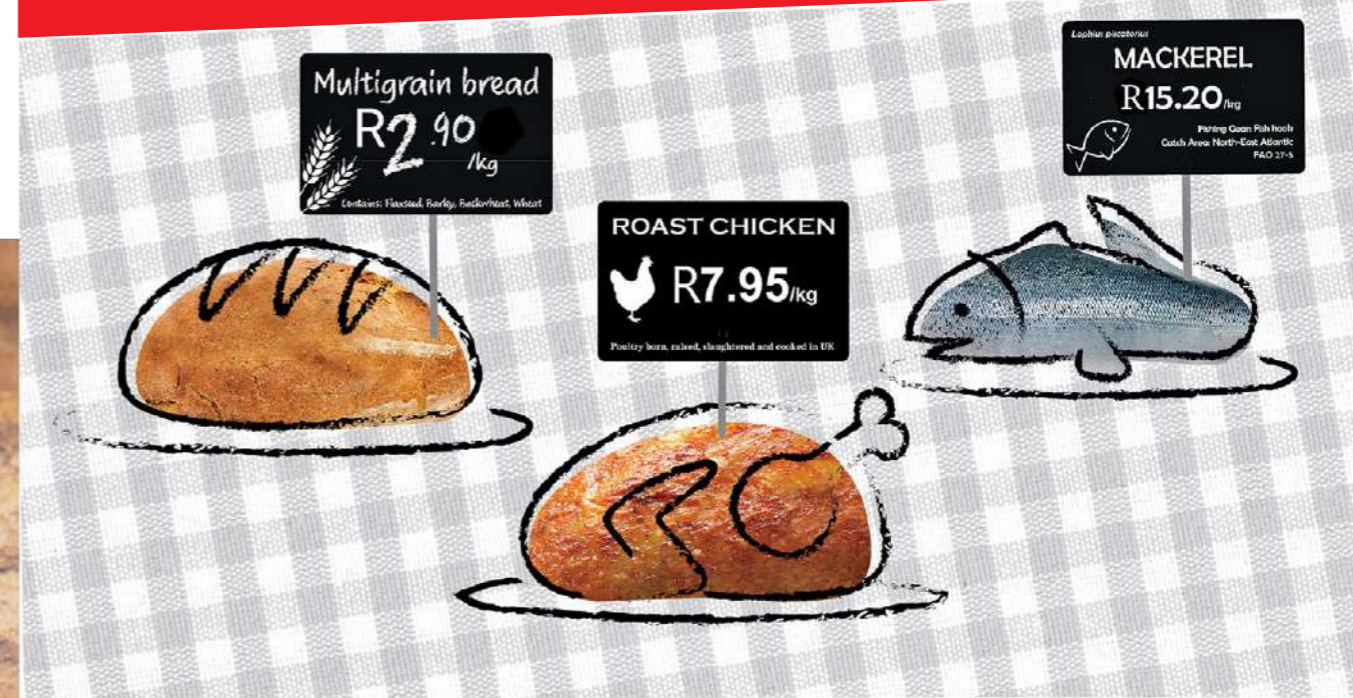
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BACK OF THE CARD FOR YOUR STAFF



Barcode  
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**e Hygienic and Durable**

**e A Stronger Brand Image**

**e Easy to Read**

**e Food Compliant**





such as weight, price, and nutritional content. Other details that inform consumers whether a product is locally grown, organic, preservative-free, gluten-free, or heart-healthy are also becoming increasingly important.

**Consider the environment first**

Non-cyclable packaging and labels are major contributors to environmental destruction. We need change, and we need it fast. By implementing a -swop-this-for-that approach, every positive change you make in your store is a plus for the planet.



Global manufacturer of paper and woodpulp products, Sappi, in its tips on how to reduce, reuse and recycle, sums it up well ...

“ Reusing manufactured materials and containers is a discipline that was second nature to our parents and grandparents, and is one that we all need to develop again.”



Consumers are ready for change and want to see it happening.



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maintained, and operated to realise optimal efficiency. Converting your old system to a new one can be a costly project, but the savings that can be achieved should certainly be researched to determine whether you will see a return on your investment – and the answer may surprise you!

the application of legal requirements to measurements and measuring instruments – ensures that your business is legally trading your products to your customers.

The NRCS (National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications) surveys a wide spectrum of fields to ensure fair trade, including mass measuring instruments (scales). “It is critical to ensure that your scales are being repaired and verified in the correct manner, which allows you to use the scales to accurately weigh an item that your clients pay for.”

### An integrated workforce

Scales, automatic wrappers, slicers, and associated equipment play an important role in consumer trust. Your equipment needs to be efficient, effective, accurate, and hygienic. Ensuring proper cleaning, servicing, maintenance, and repairs is critical. **SR**

## The science of scales

Scales must be accurate and linked to a store’s point of sale system, with correct barcodes, and easy to use. A store’s fresh produce department, butchery, bakery, and deli are especially reliant on scales, either for back of house food prep or customer facing pricing.

The advent of AI and the Internet of Things (IOT), as well as cloud-based software services that link your entire retail chain – scales, wrappers, labelling machines, and till points included, has enabled retailers to increase efficiency, reduce food shrinkage and wastage, and stay on top of price changes, promotions, and store inventory easily. Saving time and labour hours are an added bonus, but the system needs to be well-designed,

### Legal requirements for scales in retail

Avocet Scales and Labels, suppliers of weighing scales, label printers, and associated consumables, says retailers should ensure their scales and labelling suppliers have a strong technical background, and full on-road maintenance, service, and repair solution.

SANAS accreditation is also important, and it’s important to ascertain that your service provider has the ability to verify an approved weighing device within a capacity range of 3 to 1 500kg, as is the legal requirement.

In terms of legal requirements, Avocet encourages all retailers and wholesalers to understand what exactly is expected of any business that uses equipment to weigh and label a product that is then supplied to customers. Legal Metrology –

<https://www.karlknauer.com/en/innovation-and-trends/packaging/eco-friendly-packaging-for-fruit-and-vegetables>.  
<https://mg.co.za/article/2021-06-18-sustainable-food-packaging/>



**Ann Baker-Keulemans**, a highly experienced business and consumer journalist, is published in numerous print and online platforms, writing on topics related to business, lifestyle, and health, with extensive knowledge on the SA retail and wholesale landscape. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature (British and Commonwealth) and Media Studies and is a member of the Golden Key Honour Society. [ann@wilkinsross.co.za](mailto:ann@wilkinsross.co.za)

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# CASE CLOSED

## Energy Saving Solutions

Glacier Door Systems has introduced the Air Shield ('Close the Case') Glass Door retrofit solution for refrigerated supermarket display cases, as well as the Eco Leaf Replacement Glass Door for existing glass door freezer rooms and glass door freezer display cabinets. Both solutions guarantee energy-savings in an ever-increasing energy cost environment. Part of the well-established Universal Industries Group, Glacier has 26 years' experience and are acknowledged industry leaders in refrigeration door technology. Innovative and forward-thinking, the company is built on cutting-edge technology, technical expertise and a customer-centric approach.

## Air Shield Glass Doors

### Features and Benefits

- Double glazed glass doors with Argon gas fill for superior insulation.
- Glass durability and clarity with torsion bar for positive closing.
- Glass door heating option for high humidity environments.
- Glass doors available with hold open brackets and LED lighting options.
- Flex modelling means glass panels are customised to fit existing cabinets and are tailored to suit each store's specific environment.

**A quick and easy energy-saving retrofit solution, Air Shield Glass Doors can be fitted to any existing open refrigeration case, saving up to 40% on energy consumption.**



**Note:** The value proposal is based on R1.31 per kWh and 40% energy saving. These are averages based on our experience and can be validated per store.

### The value benefit

- High-quality locally manufactured solutions featuring the latest energy-saving technology.
- Demonstrated good pay back periods can be expected.
- Customised solutions to suit your store.
- ISO 9001 accredited factory.
- Safety toughened glass in accordance with SABS/SANS certification.
- Flexible installation timing to offset any customer disruption.
- Financing options available.

**You can trust a Glacier door**

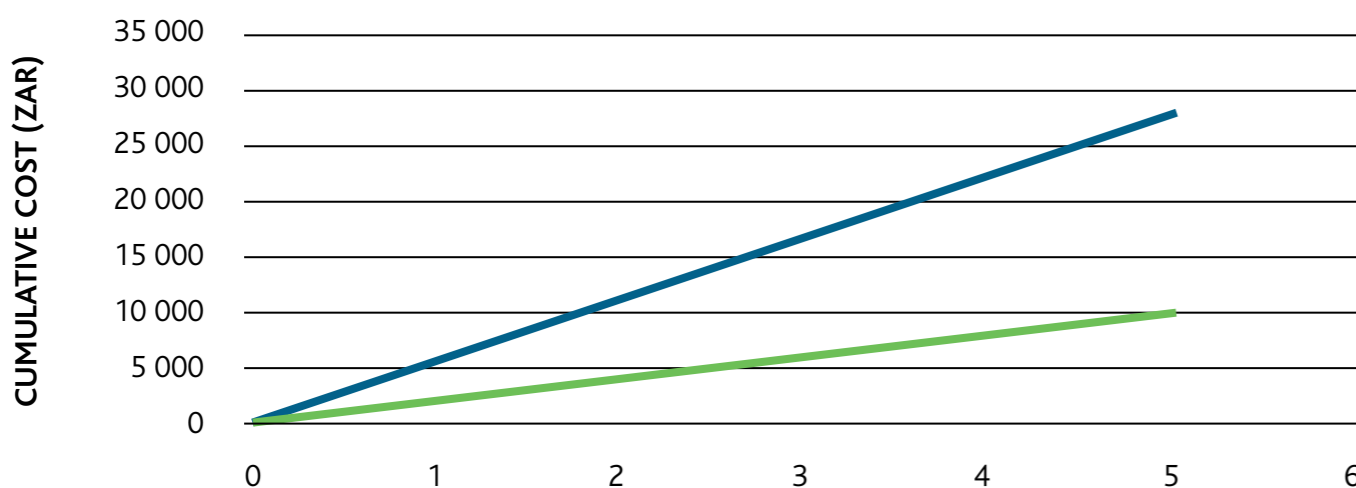




### Eco Leaf Freezer Doors

Designed as a 'swop-out', energy-saving replacement glass door utilising 220V technology that eliminates the need for voltage-reducing capacitors. This results in an amperage reduction from 1.29A on the standard door to 0.46A (64%) with the replacement Eco Leaf Door.

The Eco Leaf door is 64% more efficient than the standard door. The value proposal is based on R1.31 per kWh and 64% energy saving. These are averages based on our experience and can be validated per store.



	AMPS	VOLTS	WATTS
Glacier Eco Leaf Door	0,46	230	105.8
Glacier Standard Door	1,29	230	296.7





Image courtesy of Maria Mrlova, Pexels

# Deli & HMR 2022

## Flavour and ingredient innovation, a touch of nostalgia, quality and catering for your customer base are key to your success

**D**eli and HMR offerings are a delight for the senses. They are visual merchandisers for your store and have the potential to create a much-loved destination shop for repeat and loyal customers. Globally, research suggests that despite restaurants and eateries reopening their doors, people are eating at home more often and more consumers are cooking meals from scratch at home too.

The question is whether this trend is here to stay. By ensuring that the quality and variety of your deli and HMR options meets the expectations of your shoppers, while also providing convenience and time savings, you can maintain and grow your HMR and deli sales.

### Restaurant-quality food for discerning shoppers

One trend coming out of certainly the US and the UK is the demand for restaurant-quality food from the HMR and deli offer. These consumers expect a high-quality offering that is packed with flavour and nutrient dense. They want a tasty experience that also caters to their family's nutritional needs, and they want it fast and as fuss-free as possible.

In SA, quality is key – but so is quantity, with portion sizes remaining much larger than our European counterparts.

“ The balance between quality and quantity will shift depending on your target market and whether you are catering for blue-collar workers who need to refuel after burning up energy with labour-intensive work, for young professionals looking for a nutritious, convenient, and innovative dinner alternative, or families having a treat night off from cooking. ”

### Meal kits and 'special' requirements

Meal delivery kits have gained traction in the SA market, but these are targeted at the higher end consumer.

The ease of having either a meal or a curated box of ingredients (with an easy-to-follow recipe) delivered to your door on a regular basis has plenty of appeal. From single-person households to busy families, this is an offering that is in demand, and







**Kiddies Fun Bar**



**Grab-And-Go Solutions**



**Pizza**



**Fried Chicken Bar**

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Changes in consumer lifestyles have contributed to the increased popularity of grab-and-go products and ready-to-eat meals.

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Pancake Bar  
Popcorn

### Fried Chicken Bar

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Appealing Merchandising

### Menu Regeneration

Concept Development  
Fast & Fresh  
Made To Order

### INNOVATIVE CONCEPTS ARE KEY TO YOUR SUCCESS

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Made To Order  
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Image courtesy of Ucook



meal solutions are varied, flavourful, interesting, and often of a very high quality.

Special – and in some instances becoming mainstream – diet needs include vegan or vegetarian, lactose-, egg- or gluten-free, diabetic, keto, and low carb, and should be easy to access and provide a range of options.

Whether you add this option to your HMR range, or compete on cost, will be a decision based on your customer profiles. Pre-packaged frozen, chilled, or hot meals that are made or prepared on-site in bulk can often be a cheaper option than those offered by specialist meal kit delivery companies.

“ Stores also do not require any sort of subscription – a plus for commitment-phobic consumers.

By cross-merchandising with make-at-home ingredients you can use your HMR offering as an area for recipe inspiration as well. ”

### Let us entertain you

HMR for up-scaled at-home entertaining is a niche but valuable category. Providing a range of size and price options that is immediately available may not always be financially viable but offering a bespoke pre-ordered service such as platters or 3-course dining with customised selections could add spark to your offer.



Image courtesy of Milan, Pexels

Allowing customers to place orders for platters, dishes, or entire meals is a good way of capitalising on the at-home exclusive dining experience consumers are looking to recreate. In this area, product development and innovation are key.

In an article for Provisioner Online, Chris DuBois, senior vice president of the protein practice for Information Resources Inc. (IRI) notes that introducing new recipes, changing things up, and adding excitement for consumers can help bolster both deli and HMR offerings. Unique recipes and frequent recipe rotation are also important when it comes to attracting and retaining customers.



Spinach-chickpea curry, mykitchen.co.za

### Innovation in product development

Comfort foods, mindful eating, and bold flavours With consumers turning to international taste experiences to replace travel during lockdown, their palates have broadened along with their expectations.

“ Bold flavours, interesting recipes, and exotic ingredients are key to innovative product development. At the same time shoppers are more conscious of how what they eat affects their bodies and their health. ”

Mindful eating, and food that is good for you, is a growing concern as people look for nutrient dense foods that are packed with a variety of health-boosting and beneficial properties.

Organic, locally produced foods and ingredients are gaining even more popularity. Less sugar, fewer trans fats and saturated fats and lower salt options are important for health-minded





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consumers. And comfort food saw many of us through the pandemic and stressful lockdown situations. Cooking hearty and wholesome meals means consumers are looking for good quality ingredients as well as recipe inspiration and time-saving options that still result in the desired levels of home-cooked comfort.



Image: Purple Carrot Za'atar Tofu.

### Meat-free alternatives

Research presented by companies from Knorr and ProVeg International to Nielsen, Forbes Africa, and Fry's shows that meat-free and flexitarian diets are becoming more mainstream. Vegans and vegetarians aren't the only target market for meat alternatives as consumers adopt reduced meat diets for cost and health reasons. And as demand drives innovation, tasty, nutritious, and high-quality meat alternatives are easier to find. The South African Mushroom Farmer's Association (SAMFA) is an excellent resource for providing exciting recipes and meat alternative ideas that are healthy, nutritious, and a cost-effective way of reducing meat in any diet. This presents retailers with excellent cross-merchandising opportunities, as well as value-add for customers and a valuable point of communication too.



Image: provisioneronline.com

### Health and hygiene for consumer comfort

“ The deli space is possibly one of the most 'interactive' parts of the shopping experience, and being generally self-service, the one that could cause shoppers the most discomfort in a world focused on hygiene and sanitation. ”

Prepared food that is on display needs to look attractive and be easily identifiable; it also needs to be easily accessible, but in a safe and healthy way.

In an article for The National Provisioner by Richard Mitchell on [www.provisioneronline.com](http://www.provisioneronline.com) Kaitlin Kamp, consumer insights analyst in U.S. research for food and drink at Mintel Group, says, "Deli operators can help ease shoppers' Covid-19 concerns by implementing and spotlighting safety procedures." She goes on to add that "this may include having staffers wear the proper personal protective equipment, while enforcing social-distancing measures and sanitation schedules."

Displaying prepared food behind glass counters is a basic safety measure and ensuring that pre-packaged foods are properly sealed is vital.



Image: Meruyert Gonullu. Pexels

Health and safety challenges during Covid-19 mean consumers have become leery of unpackaged products. Pre-packaged items including deli meats, cheeses, and even ready-made food is seen as being less 'risky'.

Supermarket Perimeter ([www.supermarket-perimeter.com](http://www.supermarket-perimeter.com)) recently published an article by Andy Nelson that quotes Shelly Venenga, Hormel Deli Solutions brand manager. Venenga highlights the importance of helping shoppers feel safer by limiting their time in-store and reducing the need to interact with people.

Of course, this will fluctuate depending on the pandemic and will most likely gradually wane as the threat of Covid-19 lifts. Venenga increased their focus on pre-sliced and packaged meats, added to their base pre-sliced product portfolio, and invested in new packaging. Venenga says, "We are constantly



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listening to our customers and consumers and enhancing and innovating our offerings to ensure we are where consumer preferences and trends are heading. The full-service deli case acts as a place of discovery for many shoppers, so keeping the offerings fresh and exciting with new flavours or seasonal offerings is key.”

Self-service counters are back to some extent but are still eyed with suspicion by many consumers. In an article called Ramping up Food Safety for Deli Business online, journalist Carol M. Bareuther notes that food bars will most certainly be reimagined using additional safety features such as glass or plexiglass shields and doors, as well as high-quality compostable or recyclable servers, utensils, and containers.

**Sustainable packaging –  
Is supply meeting demand?**

South Africa is in a strange middle land when it comes to sustainability and recyclable packaging.

Supermarket chains such as Spar, Checkers, Pick n Pay and

Woolworths have all recognised the need to move away from single use plastics and provide more sustainable and recyclable packaging options – and are driving change in the industry together with forward-thinking manufacturers. This is, however,



Image courtesy of Sappi

a slow and often expensive process, with some stores, chains and suppliers resisting change.

With truly recyclable packaging options increasing and prices decreasing as demand rises, this particular stumbling block could soon be a thing of the past. That said, there is still a long way to go, and consumers can sometimes be put off by an array of packaging that still needs to be sorted into what can and cannot be recycled.



Image: PnP Constantia Village

**Deli design for cross merchandising**

Your deli area presents a prime opportunity for cross promotional activity. Shoppers are looking for meal solutions as well as inspiration, so non-deli sides, accompaniments, and condiments are a natural fit. Meal suggestions that use a deli item and several other non-deli products are a great way of introducing cross merchandising while also providing a value-add to your consumers’ shopping experience.

Your displays are key to successful sales. A clean, hygienic, and safe shopping environment is a must in Covid times, and this includes sparkling glass cases that show off your deli offerings to their best effect. The right display cases will also optimise food preservation levels, while also ensuring an efficient use of energy.

Lighting is crucial as it enhances your display as well as being sensibly functional. For foods that the public has access to, health and hygiene considerations must be taken into account and appropriate steps for browsing, dishing, and serving must be implemented, not only from a health and safety perspective, but for your customer’s peace of mind.

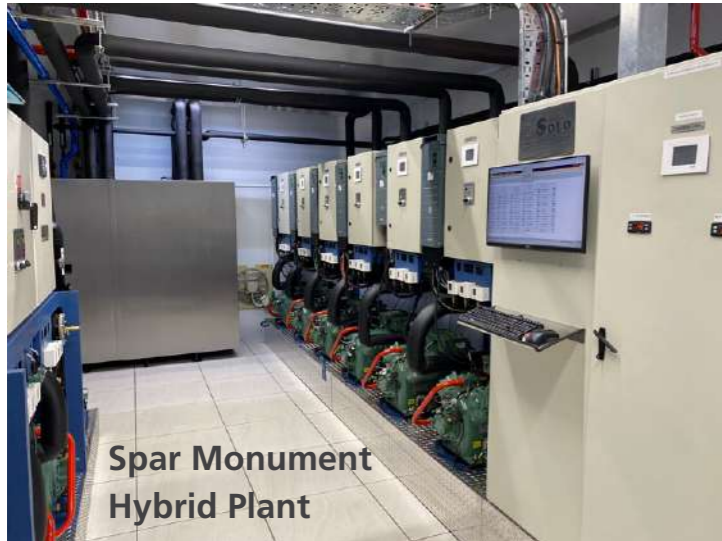
**The HMR and deli experience**

It is important to maintain contact with your customer base and stay up to date with the fluid trends and changing demands of this highly competitive space. Constant, targeted communication with your consumers is vital to allow store managers to stay abreast of what shoppers want and expect. Flexibility and agility are necessary as the pace of change increases and the home-work-school dynamic fluctuates. Creating a memorable brand experience is key to retaining customers as both categories continue to grow. Competition is fierce and innovation mandatory for success. Luckily, the deli and HMR categories in South African supermarkets are up for the challenge and provide fertile ground for innovative and exciting developments.



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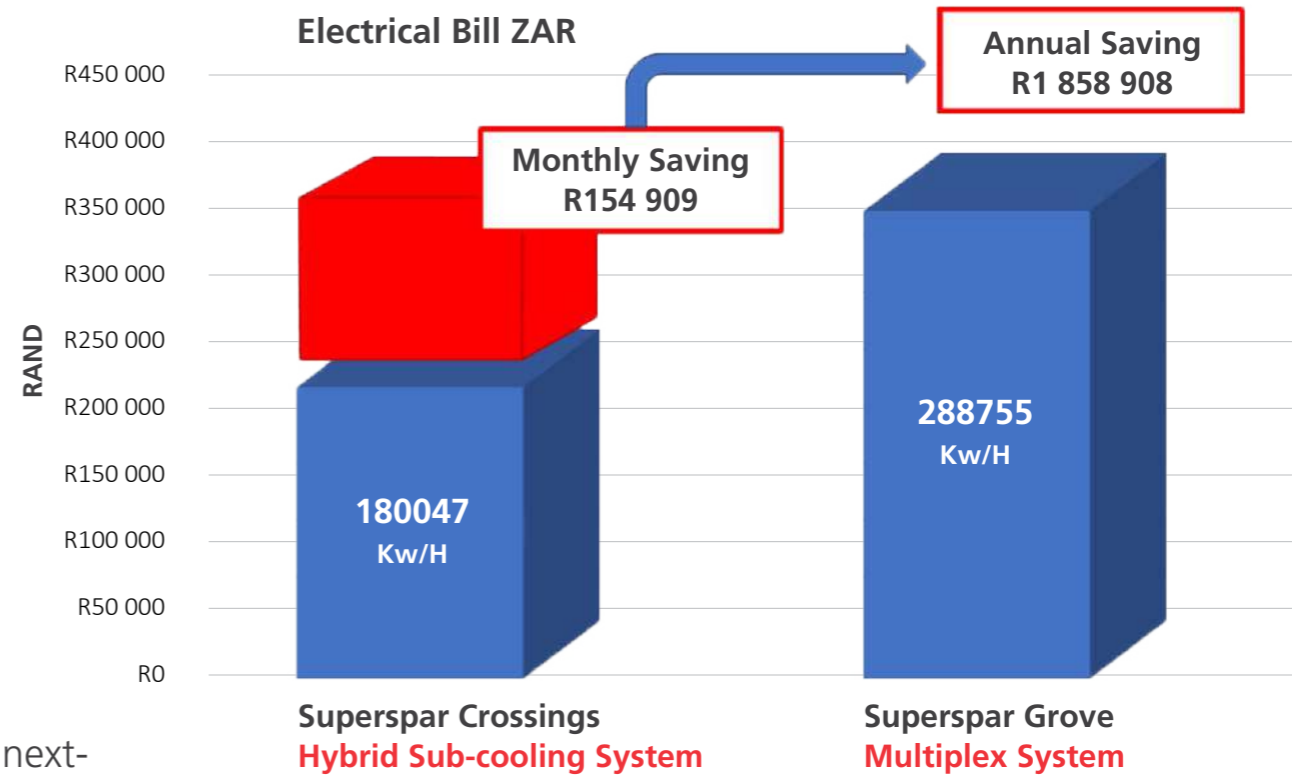
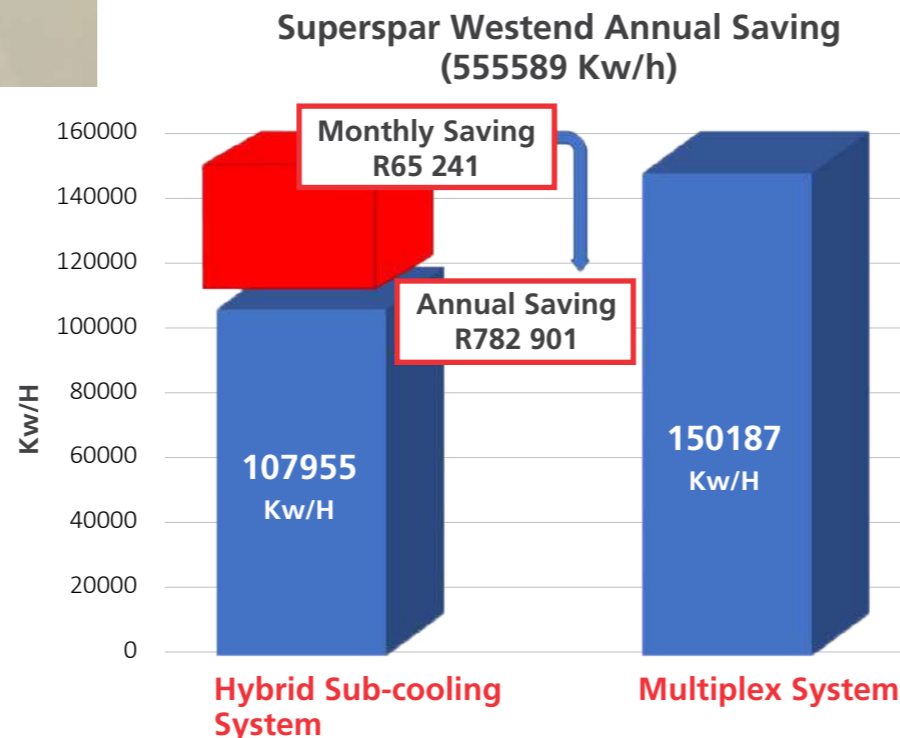


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## HMR and Deli trends 2022

- According to [www.delibusiness.com](http://www.delibusiness.com), consumers are looking for cleanliness and safe, fresh food, with sustainable, humanely raised and organic options forming part of the new 'mindful dining' generation.
- Plant-based is growing quickly too, so don't overlook this when considering your Deli range. Vegan and vegetarian options also need to be part of the offer.
- Grab-and-go single serve items such as salads, sandwiches, wraps, and sushi are as popular as ever, but new flavour and inventive ingredient combinations are a must to keep your customers interested.



Image courtesy of Marta Branco, Pexels

- Fruit, botanical and fresh flavours, ginger, and turmeric (immune-boosting ingredients) and citrus have gained traction.
- Shoppers love and want nostalgic desserts and traditional 'home-cooked' meals – South African

favourites like Malva pudding or bobotie always have a market.

- There is still a healthy interest in spicy foods – the amazing array of Indian cuisines, Moroccan, Thai – with chilli, barbeque and curry flavours adding heat to the mix. **SR**



**Ann Baker-Keulemans**, a highly experienced business and consumer journalist, is published in numerous print and online platforms, writing on topics related to business, lifestyle, and health, with extensive knowledge on the SA retail and wholesale landscape. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature (British and Commonwealth) and Media Studies and is a member of the Golden Key Honour Society. [ann@wilkinsross.co.za](mailto:ann@wilkinsross.co.za)  
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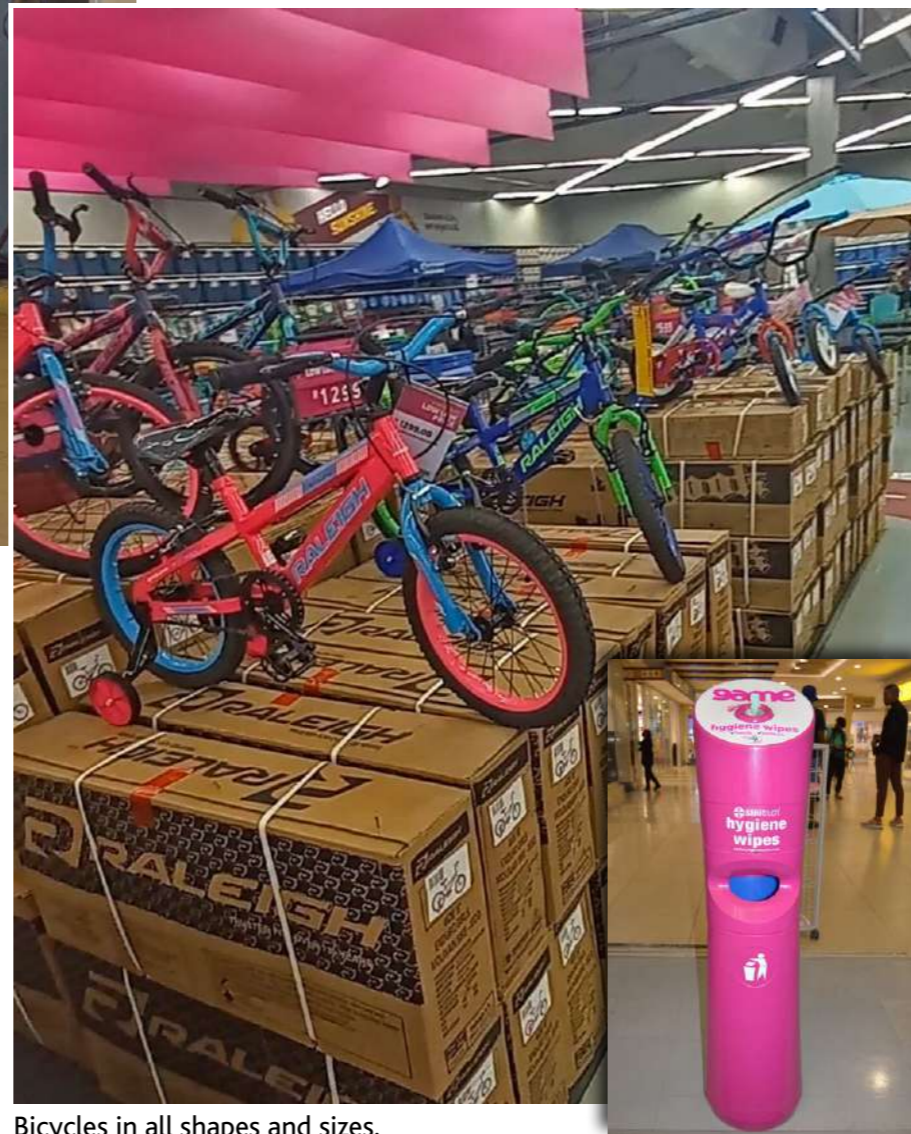




Game Jabulani Mall is ready to welcome shoppers



# Game ... The bounce-back of retail



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Inset: Sani-touch wipes keeping shoppers hands and trolleys sanitised.

Top right: R5 000 Voucher won by the first shopper who spent over R500.

Right: BIC Mascot welcoming shoppers to the store.



In July 2021 the South African retail sector was hit with a devastating wave of unrest. Game stores had a total of 10 outlets damaged beyond recognition. Many stores were left an empty shell. Being known for providing customers with unbeatable prices, the group has come out stronger than ever with their **'Retail Reimagined'** concept.

Vice President of Game – Andrew Stein explains, “As we continue to move forward with our turnaround strategy, we will be officially re-opening a number of our affected stores in the coming months – including Empangeni, Pietermaritzburg CBD and Pinetown.”





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“ We continue to make positive strides in our strategy, while remaining committed to our value proposition of offering a wide product range at unbeatable prices for our price-conscious consumers. ”

The store boasts upgrades with a modernised look-and-feel, as well as an improved store layout. The retailer has expanded its offering to include categories such as a dry groceries, clothing and bestselling adult and children’s books. Game continues to leverage Walmart and Massmart’s strong supplier relationships to ensure their customers are the real winners.

The Baby department is a dream for new parents as it stocks many of the essential items needed for a new baby. Game delivers the most competitive prices for nappies, strollers, camp cots, walking rings and much more. If you find it cheaper anywhere else Game stores will beat the price with their price beat policy. The Wellness department has been extended to include sports equipment, sports accessories, clothing and supplements.

The Kids Toy Club has children spoilt for choice with the extensive range of board games, puzzles, famous brands toys for boys and girls. Students can shop for all stationery and study ... from home equipment with a range of desks, chairs and décor items. Bathroom, Garden and DIY tools are readily available for the crafty individuals who enjoy revamping and home improvements.

Follow Game online to stay up to date with current specials visit [www.game.co.za](http://www.game.co.za)



Baby department filled essential baby goods



In-store bins filled with deals



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With energy costs rising and food retailers looking to improve the shopping environment for customers, Insulated Structures has developed an effective solution to reduce the cost of in-store refrigeration while enhancing the customer experience.

Insulated Structures doors are easy to retrofit on in-store cabinets to reduce the energy required to keep chilled foods at the correct temperature.

Meanwhile, customers are able to clearly see and access the products on offer. Reduced energy requirements means smaller refrigeration plant selection for new stores. These savings will offset the cost of the doors. Up to 40% reduction in refrigeration requirement has been achieved.

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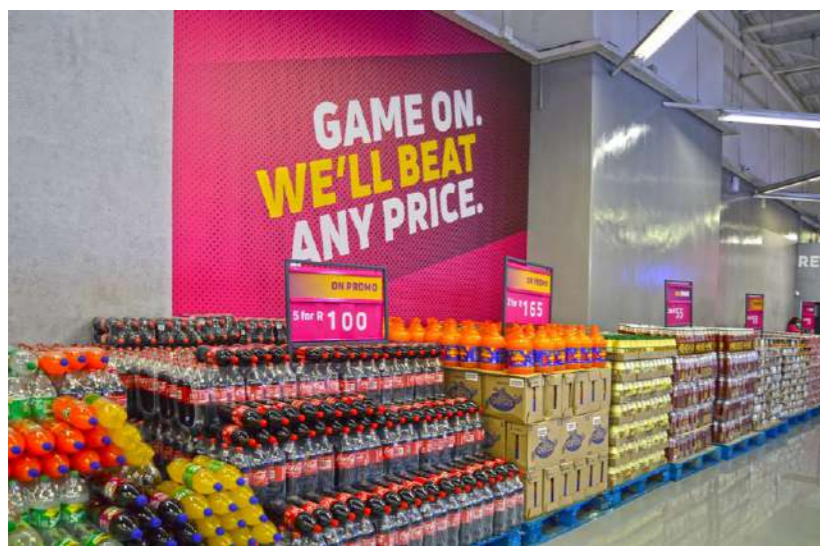


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Data and insights from the *South African Consumer Outlook Study* has significant implications in light of South African shoppers' changed priorities in the era of Covid-19 and is critically important in terms of evaluating how these will affect their spending habits and product choices

### Topline outtakes ...

- Two-thirds of South African consumers feel they'll only be free of the impacts of Covid-19 in 2023
- Eight out of ten consumers have re-evaluated their priorities impacting their future buying behaviour significantly
- As priorities change, so do baskets with an increased focus on affordability, prices, fresh produce and hygiene/safety

Two-thirds of South African consumers remain convinced of the long term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and believe the country will only be free of its direct impacts, during 2023. This is the highest percentage amongst the 16 countries surveyed in the newly released NielsenIQ 2022 South African Consumer Outlook Study, which has revealed a substantially altered picture of local consumers. The report has significant implications in light of consumers' changed priorities and is critically important in terms of evaluating how these will affect their spending habits and product choices.



“ Looking to the future, it's clear that a nimble mindset will be key to keeping up with consumer needs and sentiment through super-charged change ”

# South African shoppers feel effects of recovery rollercoaster

NielsenIQ South Africa MD Ged Nooy says ...

“ The last two years have been a roller coaster as consumers have looked for signs of recovery and hoped that they could move on with their lives but for many, as they look ahead, they still face an environment of uncertainty ”

“Looking at how consumers plan to approach the world as they begin to re-engage, it becomes clear that the majority realise that Covid is likely to continue to impact the way they navigate their daily lives.”

### The 'Homebound Economy' is here to stay

Delving deeper, 41% of consumers (vs. 47% globally) said they would live with some caution if Covid-19 continues to impact the country in the next 12 months. An additional 41% said they would be more vigilant (vs. 33% globally) and will go so far as avoiding certain settings, while only 14% said they will carry on their lives without fear of Covid-19.

Nooy comments; “In this environment, the majority of consumers realise that the carefree life of pre-Covid is a thing of the past and moving forward, they are constantly reviewing





and evaluating associated risks with lifestyle choices and arming themselves accordingly with various precautions. On the plus side, this is good for the FMCG environment as consumers will continue to curtail their movement and won't be spending money on entertaining or local or overseas holidays – the 'Homebound Economy' is here to stay!"



Image courtesy of Vladislav Reshetnyak, Pexels

The other factor that was less evident two years ago when Covid-19 first began, was the inflationary environment consumers have been confronted with in the last six months. With many having felt employment and financial losses due to Covid and government support systems having dried up – consumers have fewer savings and less flexibility in their discretionary wallets to deal with higher prices. Consumers are therefore feeling the pinch of higher prices with 70% (vs. 56% globally) saying their weekly shop costs more than it did six months ago – the third highest number in the world. It's therefore no surprise that eight out of ten consumers say they have significantly changed their shopping habits because of the pandemic

### Smart shoppers

In light of this, the NielsenIQ study asked which strategies South African consumers were deploying to manage their household grocery spend.

The most popular strategy, which a third of South African consumers are deploying, is monitoring the cost of overall basket spend. This points to consumers budgeting ahead of their shopping trip to better manage spend and reflects a highly cautious mindset.

The second highest (26%) are selecting the lowest priced product regardless of brand, this indicates that brand loyalty is being eroded and that South African consumers are not averse to switching brands while the third highest are buying larger packs as opposed to looking to downsize to manage their expenses.

Image courtesy of Kindel Media, Pexels



“ As South African consumers emerge from lockdowns, their priorities have shifted with 84% saying that their mental wellness will be more important over the next 12 months, followed by planning for the future (82%) and job/financial security (81%). ”

### Mental wellness, future planning and financial security top of mind in South Africa

According to the study, as consumers emerge from lockdowns, their priorities have shifted with 84% of South African consumers saying that their mental wellness will become even more important over the next 12 months, followed by planning for the future (82%) and job/financial security (81%).

These shifting priorities mean consumers' brand repertoire and consideration set may look very different to the past. This points to the importance of ensuring that product portfolios allow for consumers changed circumstances, with a focus on the specific product benefits consumers seek and can afford.

Looking to the future, it's clear that a nimble mindset will be key to keeping up with consumer needs and sentiment through super-charged change. Nooy adds; "Agility will be critical. Retailers and brands that consider different trajectories and recovery scenarios will be better placed to address consumers changing priorities, states of cautiousness, and increasingly constrained wallets. They must ensure their offerings can morph and resonate with how the landscape will continue to evolve in the years to come. **SR**

NielsenIQ provides a complete, unbiased view of consumer behaviour. Powered by a ground-breaking consumer data platform and fueled by rich analytic capabilities, it enables bold, confident decision-making for the world's leading consumer goods companies and retailers. NielsenIQ has operations in nearly 100 markets, covering more than 90% of the world's population. Visit [www.nielseniq.com](http://www.nielseniq.com).



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Cezar Pereira  
Strategic Account Director  
Tiendeo.com

**A**lthough not a new concept and with a long road ahead, the word 'Metaverse' has been on everyone's lips since Facebook rebranded itself as Meta and thus positioned itself as a major player in the new virtual world.

Cezar Pereira, Strategic Account Director at Tiendeo, a company that specialises in the digitalisation of the retail sector, kicks off the debate with the following question: Are we facing a fleeting fad or a new world that is opening the doors to a powerful business model?

By way of introduction, he invites us to ask ourselves what we think of the metaverse, to enter this world to find out how it is changing people's lives, the opportunities it offers retailers and brands to connect with the consumer.

### **A whole new universe in the making**

The Metaverse is a virtual space that we can connect to through devices such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) glasses or helmets and applications that offer the promise of an immersive experience that feels like we are actually there, interacting with other people and objects.

“ In this alternative world, everything will be possible through an avatar: buying goods and services, attending concerts, travelling, playing games and even working. ”

# Metaverse

## A new way for businesses to connect with consumers?

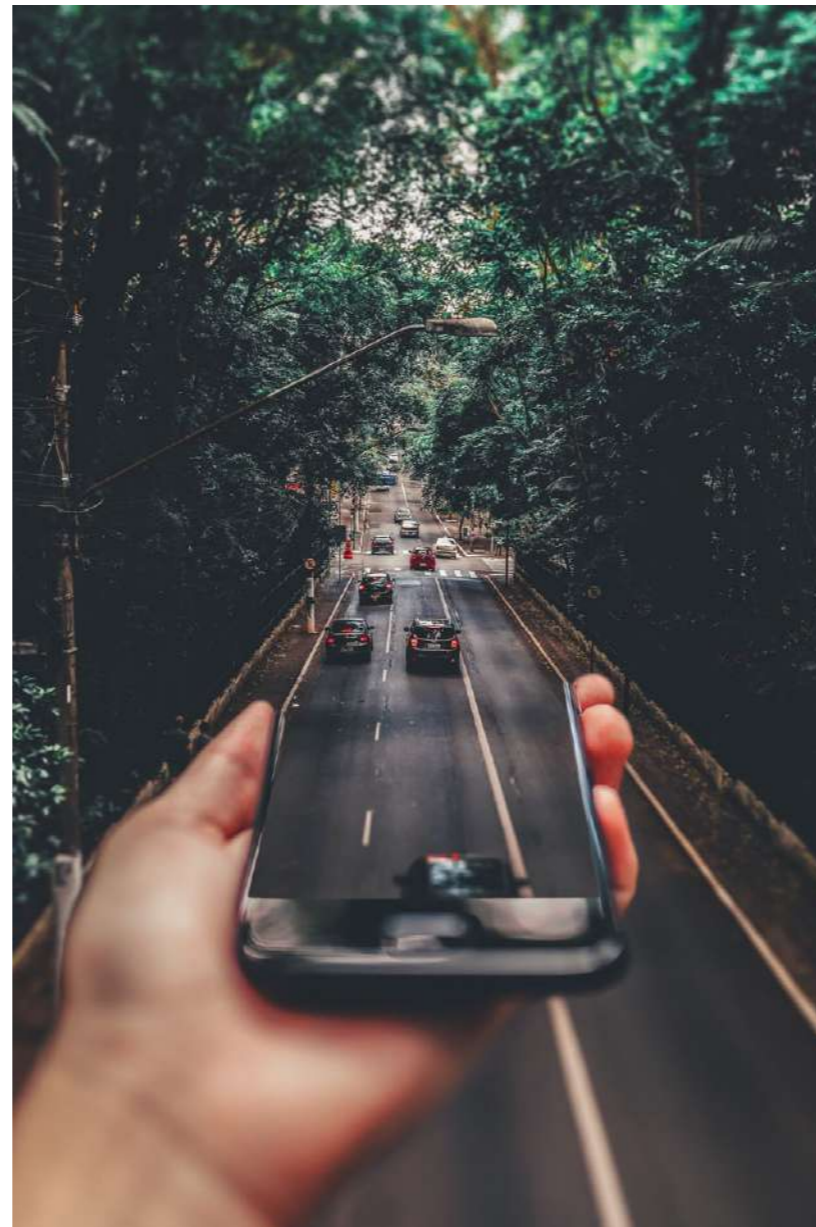


Image courtesy of Matheus Bertelli, Pexels

competing to be number one in the race to dominate the metaverse: Meta (Facebook), Roblox, Fortnite and Microsoft, as well as other technological giants that will also set the tone for this industry in the coming year.

### **What makes the metaverse so appealing?**

The great potential of this technology as a business model is what has led several companies to create their own 'omniverses'. To be successful ...

“ ... they must understand that the user ventures into the metaverse to escape from the real world, because it offers them the alluring possibility of creating their own personality: to show themselves as they 'feel' they are and not how they are physically, taking the user experience to another level. ”

This introduces a new form of interaction between consumers and brands through the D2A (direct-to-avatar) model where we will no longer buy clothes for ourselves, but for our representation in the metaverse.

The challenge for companies will be to get people to carry out the bulk of their activities in this digital universe, just as we do in the physical world, giving rise to virtual marketplaces that already move large sums of money.







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This is not so far-fetched in an age where humans are already glued to technology, whether professionally, socially or both, and it is speculated that by 2030 we will spend more time in the metaverse than in 'real life'. As such, the desire to dominate the new virtual spaces reveals an eagerness to control the way people interact with each other.



Image courtesy of Julia M Cameron, Pexels

### The Metaverse at the forefront of the retail sector

“ The opportunities offered by the Metaverse are endless, especially in the field of commerce. Technology company Wildbytes estimates that in the next five years, 70% of major brands will have a presence in the Metaverse. ”

By 2023 some companies are already promising to launch a new product while others are already looking at the possibility of creating shopping centres, boutiques and virtual shops where avatars will be able to buy NFT products and pay in cryptocurrencies.

The retail sector is one of the most heavily invested in the Metaverse. For example, Gucci has already started selling its own virtual clothing, the Gucci Virtual 25 trainers and H&M has recently launched its first virtual collection through Nintendo's social simulation game Animal Crossing.

Ikea also uses AR technology in its App to allow customers to create their own spaces and see how furniture would look in the physical world using AR technology.

There are brands that go even further and have no hesitation about making a clear commitment to the Metaverse. This is the case for Nike, which has gone so far as to create its own virtual universe: Nikeland. A space that offers access to

### A POWERFUL NEW BUSINESS MODEL?



- The metaverse could be a market worth \$800 billion by 2024 according to Bloomberg Intelligence.
- A new communication channel that breaks with the traditional codes of advertising.
- Nike, H&M, Gucci are already investing heavily in consolidating their brands in this virtual world.

various sporting arenas, as well as a showroom where users can equip their avatars with Nike shoes to take part in competitions. The brand also uses it as a testing ground so that younger generations can experience its new products through avatars before purchasing them in real life. In short ...

“ The metaverse revolution holds the promise of a digital experience in which the virtual world and the real world intertwine and merge under a single reality. It is now up to brands and retailers to find their place in it and explore its full potential. ”

SR



# Nigeria registers highest mobile web traffic

As smartphones have become the norm worldwide, they have also replaced desktops and laptops as the preferred mode of accessing the internet. According to the numbers presented by StockApps.com, 54.86% of global web traffic came through mobiles in December 2021.

“Nigeria registered the highest share of mobile web traffic among nations covered in the analysis at 82.63%. India in the second spot with 73.8% of web traffic on mobiles.”

Over the last decade, the share of web traffic on mobile phones has consistently increased. According to the data available on StatCounter.com, in 2011, mobile phones accounted for only 4%–8% of the total web traffic. In December 2021, this figure increased to 54.86%.

Even though the future of the internet is headed in one direction, the internet habits of users all over the world are wildly different.

Developing countries like Nigeria and India are currently the front leaders in the mobile internet revolution. A massive 82.63% of the internet was browsed on mobile phones in Nigeria. In India, the share of mobile web traffic was at 73.8%. Together, these two countries account for more than 20% of the global population.



Images courtesy of Mohi Syed, and Pixabay, Pexels

Turkey occupies the third spot with 68.52%. The status of Turkey as a developed nation has become debatable of late, but regardless, it's the first European nation on the list. Singapore, China, and the United Arab Emirates occupy the following spots, and all of these countries have more than 60% of their web traffic coming through mobile phones. The worldwide average is 54.86%

It's interesting to note that most developed economies have mobile web traffic in the 40%–50% range. The Republic of Ireland has the highest share of mobile web traffic among

13 Western European nations at 59.39%. It is followed by Spain (51.46%), Italy (49.54%), France (48.91%), and Sweden (47.99%).

European financial powers UK (47.20%) and Germany (43.81%) have less mobile web traffic than the United States (48.77%).

Developed economies like the Netherlands, Belgium, and Canada show the slightest preference for the mobile web. Meanwhile,

Russia features at the bottom with only 36.18% of its web traffic facilitated by mobiles. Vyom Chaudhary, an editor at StockApps, commented ...

“The disparity between different nations is down to multiple reasons. One of the major factors is the availability of cheap mobile internet in various developing economies.”

“Furthermore, the relatively easier access to mobile phones over computers allows the former to become the preferred mode for internet users in developing economies.” **SR**





# Is ecommerce the future of retail?

eCommerce took off during the pandemic and physical retail initially felt the hard landing as the landscape shifted overnight and ecommerce became the 'go-to'

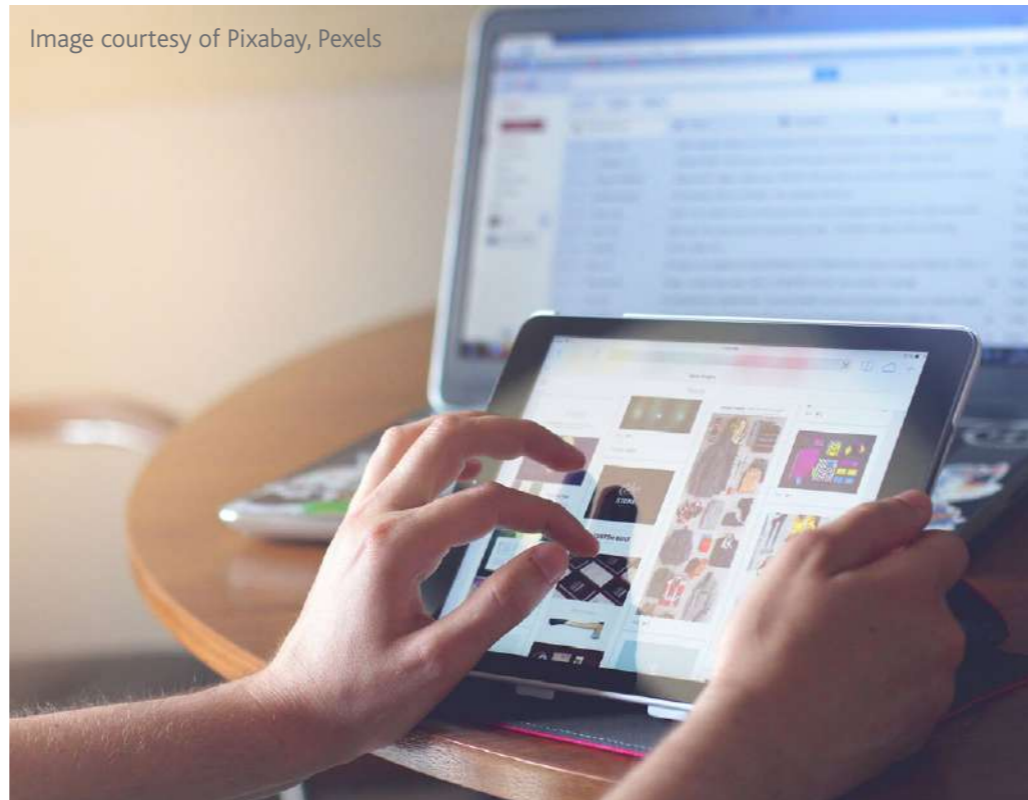
During the early stages of Covid-19 as observed in a McKinsey article December 2021 – the pandemic essentially squeezed ten years of digital sales penetration into three months. In response, retailers scrambled, innovated, and adapted their distribution and brick-and-mortar operations to keep pace.

The article observed that globally, eighteen months later, online sales have shown few signs of reverting to pre-pandemic levels and that ...

“Retailers that may have initially viewed ecommerce as a lifeline now recognise a few truths – all growth is not the same; unprofitable growth destroys value; and healthy, sustainable growth should be the goal.”

So too it was observed that direct-to-consumer capabilities are primed to take advantage of amplified ecommerce and presents the best opportunity for innovative brands and retailers to build direct relationships with consumers.

As both the retail and ecommerce space shifts and accelerates, and despite ecommerce blowing the lights out in early 2020 as shoppers became accustomed to buying essentials and



embracing a vital world, as it turns out physical retail is not dead.

In a recent Martech article, Tracey Ryan O'Connor, Group Vice President at tech company Qubit observed that ...

“As in-store and online shopping merge, ecommerce will explode in 2022. While shoppers are returning to physical stores, we're not seeing a decrease in online shopping – in fact, we're seeing continued growth.”

“In 2021, we saw more people starting their shopping journey online, searching for the products they want at the best price and the actual transaction happening in-store. Even when the pandemic dissipates, online shopping will continue to flourish because this behaviour is now ingrained and habitual.”

How to adapt to this blended online/in-store experience will be the key, adding that she believes that “this will be particularly important for retail sectors where shoppers still prefer an offline component to the experience however in the end,

we anticipate the online performance to decline because stores have reopened.”

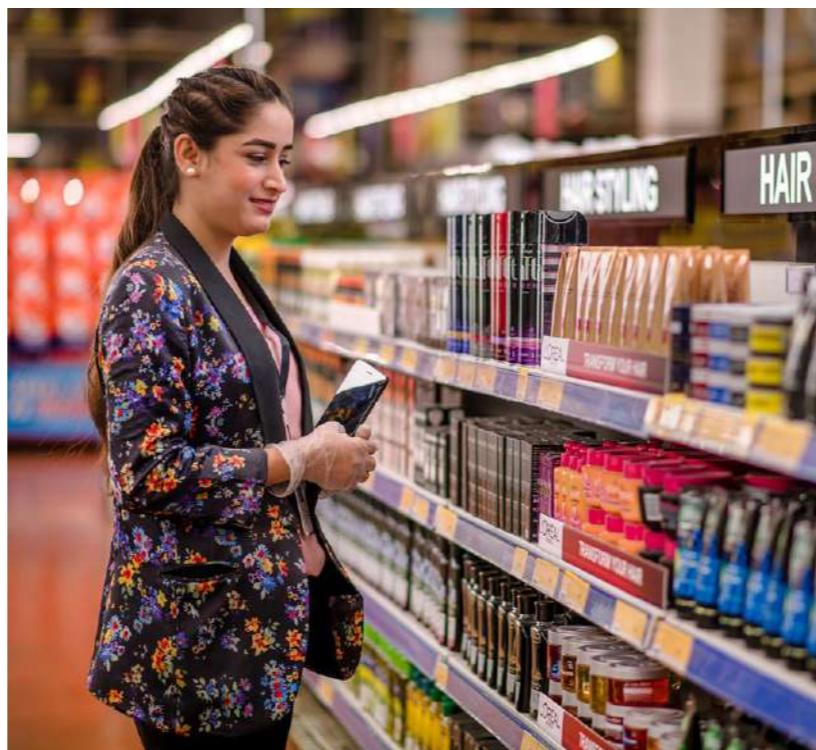
2022 predictions making space for ecommerce and physical retail, point to several key considerations, potentially the most relevant is this merging of blended experiences in-store to that offered online, in the knowledge that the product discovery journey will be individualized and that ecommerce will be the engine that drives this merge.

Local property fund Emira's COO Ulana van Biljon, said that the experience economy of



enjoying a physical space is what South African consumers value the most. The pandemic certainly created a space in the market for players quick out of the starting gates to accelerate ecommerce, with some of the most rapid responses coming from retail tenants that have some of the biggest footprints in Emira malls. Checkers Sixty60, Pick n Pay asap! and Woolies Dash are all ecommerce success stories. "Involving shopping from the shelves of their physical shops, making brick-and-mortar even more relevant in today's market," said Van Biljon.

Image courtesy of Manav Sharma, Pexels



To stay ahead, retailers will need to adapt their ecommerce and offline retail strategies.

Michael Smollan Chief Innovation Officer at Smollan said, "I love physical shopping. Everything about it, the browsing, the feeling the coffee stops in between and best of all, the dopamine hit on purchase. That said, online provides the effortless ease that means I can get what I want, when I want and so too, this fills my cup."

“ A good digital shopping experience is all the way as good as its physical counterpart and the result still is that dopamine injection! It's all about the experience of the purchase. They have different experiences – physical and digital – but that's not to say one is better or worse if they are both done right. ”

"Innovative retailers who make my shopping experience seamless, interesting and engaging with win, whether its in the real world or the digital one. It's not so much about competing with online vs offline, it's about the experience."

To guide retailers and help them crack the code in 2022 with ecommerce everywhere and physical retail here to stay, the Martech article offered the following predictions. Empowering in-store staff to offer shoppers a seamless transition from digital shopping to the in-store experience itself and taking a holistic approach to brick-and-mortar that is focused on helping shoppers transition between physical and digital interactions, must be a priority. AI personalisation will evolve to deliver more highly customised experiences in 2022 with algorithms meeting the demands of individual customers. So too, ads will be more shoppable says CEO Oz Etzioni of ad platform Clinch, "This requires layering of first-party data and personalization that reflects a shopper's environment including time of day, weather and more." Digital communities such as social media platforms will become major sources of shoppable revenue which means brands and retailers will be looking beyond Facebook to diversify. Rob Van Neunen, CEO of Channable predicts that Tik Tok alone will generate nearly two billion users in 2022, with social commerce revenues poised to reach \$50billion.

Online shopping is a convenient, permanent fixture for consumers in 2022 while physical retail hits the spot as it serves a basic human need for interaction and the use of our senses. **SR**





# Rise of m-commerce in Africa

There has been a shift from desktop to mobile as Africa embraces the m-commerce shopping experience. Smollan, retail specialist, unpacks what m-commerce means to the African retail market and what retailers need to do to stay relevant and benefit from this movement.

“ In these quick-connection times, Africa’s mobile economy is on the move as shoppers dial in to multi-functionality, convenience, affordability, super apps, digital wallets, instant accessibility, and services that changes lives as m-commerce platforms a new era. ”

The transactional power shifting from desktops to smartphones and tablets allows mobile commerce to become part of an on-the-move lifestyle for consumers and gives retailers real time access to user information allowing them to reach their audience anytime, anywhere.

A recent European Investment Bank (EIB) article paints the picture pointing out how it took 128 years to bring landline phones to one billion people. Then, in 20 years six billion people bought mobile phones – including those in regions previously cut off from any means of communication. Swinging the pendulum that doesn’t just serve the purpose of keeping in touch, creates a completely new financial landscape.



Global research documents the rise of m-commerce, with mobile bringing in 46% of the sector’s revenue, compared to 25% from desktop and 9% from tablets and the global m-commerce market predicted to rise at a considerable rate between 2021 and 2026. [Market Watch, Dec 2021]

With the release of new phone technology, including 5G, this mobile-obsessed market is getting to grips with the feeding frenzy. Shopifyplus shared some interesting #whattheactual survey results in 2021 – highlighting the fact that the average person taps their mobile phone once every 10 minutes; one in five people would rather go without shoes for a week than take a break from their phone, and people reporting withdrawal



symptoms – including increased blood pressure and heart rate – when separated from their phones.

Closer to home as we turn the corner after a smothering past two years, it’s time to tell a different story of Africa, as expansion and innovation is put on the pedestal it deserves affording new and existing players to improve market penetration across the retailing African landscape.

TechCrunch published a 2021 GSMA Intelligence Report observing that across sub-Saharan Africa, 303 million people, about 28% of the population, are connected to the mobile internet and that this number is expected to rise to 40% in the next three years.

The proof is in the pudding, as Jumia reported 30% growth in the value of goods sold on its platform during Black Friday last year.



Writing for BizCommunity, Christele Chokossa a research consultant at Euromonitor observes that the influx of entry-level smartphones and lowering data bundle prices has created room for a mobile app culture in sub-Saharan Africa, and subsequently m-commerce services. The trend also benefits from the diversification of leading telecommunication companies, with mobile money making its way from physical stores to online platforms backed by over 500 million users across the continent.

“The adoption of m-commerce services will be accelerated by the modernisation of payment systems as it facilitates transactions with the overwhelming number of unbanked populations, overcoming payment and safety challenges.

A noticeable example can be taken for the launch of the e-naira in Nigeria in 2021, and the implementation of the Rapid Payment Programme (RPP) in South Africa. Both offer an efficient digital solution across income groups,” said Christele.

The question is, how can African retailers successfully penetrate the m-commerce economy to reap the rewards and grow their business? A research article by Richard Pankomera and Darelle van Greunen from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (PE), report that besides technical, social, and financial barriers in Africa that m-commerce can bring production, transformation, and incremental benefits to the user.

The study revealed that key adoption factors must be top of mind as retailers both formally and informally, find their m-commerce fit in Africa. From a tech aspect to awareness campaigns,

“ Globally, the average person taps their mobile phone once every 10 minutes; one in five people would rather go without shoes for a week than take a break from their phone, and people report withdrawal symptoms – including increased blood pressure and heart rate – when separated from their phones. ”

ease of use, affordability, perceived security and trust, access to financial services, regulatory support and the availability of mobile money and application services.

Retailers who want to ride this wave for a sustainable future need to understand that in Africa a one-size fits all solution cannot work with EIB suggesting that three key areas must be mindfully addressed. Positioning content by taking local cultures and languages into account. Affordability by pricing services in line with local conditions and accessibility and reaching all consumers regardless of their device or internet access.

While Africa faces some challenges around using m-commerce efficiently, iTouch online reporting on South African mobilisation, true for the rest of Africa suggests there are two practices



to remember to improve mobile sales and uplift brands, namely, the fewer clicks the better and a consistent brand experience. Retailers and brand owners need solid, well-planned, and well-executed e-commerce offerings.

Websites have to be easy to navigate with products that are appropriately categorised and priced. Consumers should only have to click three times to find exactly what they are looking for. Because of the omnichannel approach retailers and brand owners must create a consistent brand experience for consumers – that means that, whether your customers are on Twitter, on a specific App, Facebook or Instagram, the spirit of the customer experience should be the same.

M-commerce is not the next big thing – it’s already in full swing. Retailers need to stay relevant and pivot or risk being swallowed. **SR**

