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**Winter Food Service  
... Hearty, healthy  
& wholesome**

**Hot drinks  
... trends  
& growth  
drivers**

**Storewatch ...  
Join the refill revolution**

**Gen Z ... The future  
of spending survey**

## FEATURES

### Make your Winter Food Service a feast for the senses

Naim Benjelloun, Pexels



Ann Baker-Keulemans has found that HMR and Deli have become increasingly intertwined and more supermarkets are employing a Food Service specialist team or chef to run their HMR department. Consumer demand also dictates how the menu in your HMR counter evolves as they look for meals to be consumed at home.

### The hot drinks landscape, trends and growth drivers



The Covid-19 pandemic placed pressure on the coffee sector, which is vulnerable to fluctuations in international coffee prices, low productivity levels, and damage caused by pests and disease. It's tea's time to shine. Cheaper than coffee (for the most part), tea is easily sourced, and supply remains stable. Smaller but no less significant are those hot drinks that fall outside the scope of tea and coffee.

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## STOREWATCH

### Join the refill revolution



As many move to a more eco-friendly lifestyle, it becomes more relevant that we need to tackle the colossal problem of single use plastics head on. Jaime van Aswegen explores the Refillery, a 'weigh and pay' shopping concept that allows you to top up your general pantry items with quantities that suit your needs.

## NEWS



### Social grants create significant shift in SA shopping patterns

The implementation of the Covid-19 Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant of R350 a month from May 2020 saw an average increase of 22% in the spend of the most vulnerable households in South Africa by December 2020.

### Bringing the omnichannel B2C experience into the B2B retail space

There is a lot of benefit that could be gained from taking the consumerisation of technology into the business-to-business (B2B) element.

### The Future Market Insights Study

Rising availability and increased convenience propel frozen ready meals growth.

### Social media

With the rise in social media numbers and its importance in shopping decisions, setting up your social media accounts correctly becomes key to convert those users into new customers and to grow your sales.

### Alcohol-free online shopping drivers

Preventing harm to drivers, other road users and their vehicles, is critical to prevent the reputational damage that will follow if a driver is involved in an accident and is found to be intoxicated.

### Gen Z: The future of spending survey

How the world's youngest and most digitally-adept consumers are forcing change to decades-old business practices.



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# How much is a kota and chips going to cost?



**Helen Maister**

**T**he price of sunflower oil is up 55% and canola oil is up 40%. This is a sad state of affairs for both the retailer and consumer. The pocket of the consumer is being squeezed again and by default the retailer will be squeezed again.

Even though a higher percentage of consumer income has been spent on groceries over

the past two years of lockdown, some retailers report that their turnover is down 30% from 2019. That is a big squeeze.

This makes me think of the devastation in KZN. The squeeze seems to be insurmountable. As soon as they start rebuilding and getting some traction, they are hit again. Can this province not catch a break? My heart and prayers go out to all who are affected by this, directly and indirectly.

Food Service – where the customer eats their meal at the serving place – and HMR and Deli – where

the meal will be eaten at home or offsite – have become increasingly intertwined. Food Service offerings influence the menu at HMR and Deli counters, and more supermarkets are employing a Food Service specialist team or chef to run their HMR department.

Consumer demand also dictates how the menu in your HMR counter evolves, as they look for the same out-of-home meal to be available as a partially or fully prepared meal to be consumed at home. For example, when sushi was first introduced in restaurants in South Africa, it was viewed suspiciously by many meat-eating, braai-loving South Africans. Then it began gaining popularity, but was still nowhere to be found at supermarkets. Consumer demand grew, supermarkets saw an opportunity, and now ready prepared sushi to take home is a familiar sight on supermarket shelves around the country.

Despite the increasing price of coffee, the effect of climate change on supply and the logistical issues of import/export caused by international lockdowns, consumer demand for coffee globally has increased.

According to a coffee market industry report on [www.mordorintelligence.com](http://www.mordorintelligence.com). The Covid-19 pandemic placed pressure on the coffee sector, which “is [already] vulnerable to fluctuations in international coffee prices, low productivity levels, and damage caused by pests and disease.” Consumers are not deterred, however, and consumption of coffee around the world has increased.

Tea is having a moment. A staple for many, tea has remained popular for decades, and black tea is a constant companion for many South Africans. Its time to shine, however, is now. Cheaper than coffee (for the most part), tea is easily sourced, and supply remains stable. The Rooibos Council of South Africa recently reported that, “In SA, the hot tea category is forecast to register the fastest value growth at a CAGR of 7.5% over the next three years and is the largest in volume terms, registering sales of 33.1 million kg in 2020.”

*Helen Maister*

**Helen Maister**



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Testing

# Food safety: Microbiology testing

**F**ailing to do microbiology food safety testing can result in a slew of complications. But what to test for? How often should products be tested? What does the law say about microbiology testing?

It is a manufacturer's responsibility to ensure that food products comply with standards and regulations. So, you need to clarify your testing strategy. To do that, you need an understanding of microbiology testing. So, let's get into it.

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## What is microbiology testing?

This is the process of analysing products to detect and quantify pathogenic microorganisms to ensure that the food is safe for consumption.

We have previously discussed the ins and outs of microbiology testing labs. But to quickly recap ...

## How does this fit into overall food safety?

Foodstuffs can carry hazards that are not visible to the human eye. These could be microbiological or chemical risks. Common hazards include bacteria like salmonella. Food products can also contain parasites and pathogens. If ingested, these can cause illnesses and disease.

## What does the law say?

The Department of Health has made regulations for microbiological standards, in terms of the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act, 1972 (Act no. 54 of 1972). They detail various organisms

that are not allowed to be present in food products and specify the necessary tests. For instance ...

- Food products are prone to spoilage. Microorganisms like Echerichia coli, listeria monocytogenes, as well as salmonella should be absent in ready-to-eat foods.
- Partly cooked or uncooked sea-water or fresh-water foods like mussels should have a limited amount of Vibrio and Shigella. In 25 grams of these products, microorganisms should be absent.

These are just two examples to show you the laws are in place to keep people safe.

## What should you test for?

The first group are microorganisms that result in spoilage. These will not cause people to get sick, but will cause the food to go off. For this category you would test for bacteria, moulds and yeast.

Second, you should test for pathogens that cause food poisoning. For example, E.coli or Salmonella.

Remember that there are limits for the presence of all microorganisms in food products.

## How often should you do microbiology testing?

The frequency of testing depends on the type of product you are producing. Moist foods need to be tested more often than dry foods. This is because dry environments are not hospitable to bacteria.

Despite the technicalities of how often you should test, it is still a good idea to test frequently.

In 2017–2018, a pathogen called Listeria monocytogenes went undetected in certain meat products. This led to a listeriosis outbreak in South Africa, causing the death of more than 180 people.

If pathogens go undetected in your products, you face severe reputational risks, unnecessary costs (the sum of recalls, legal fees, damages and more), and you are putting people in harms way. It's better to test frequently to avoid a situation like this.

## In conclusion

Anything that results in food poisoning or spoiled foods, is a risk to food safety. That's why microbiology testing is so important. Undetected harmful substances can cause your business and your customers harm. Avoid this by getting in contact with accredited providers of food and occupational health and safety testing to analyse your products. **SR**



# Hearty, healthy & wholesome

## Make your Winter Food Service a feast for the senses

**F**ood Service – where the customer eats their meal at the serving place – and HMR and Deli – where the meal will be eaten at home or offsite – have become increasingly intertwined. Food Service offerings influence the menu at HMR and Deli counters, and more supermarkets are employing a Food Service specialist team or chef to run their HMR department.

Consumer demand also dictates how the menu in your HMR counter evolves, as they look for the same out-of-home meal to be available as a partially or fully prepared meal to be consumed at home. For example, when sushi was first introduced in restaurants in South Africa, it was viewed suspiciously by many meat-eating, braai-loving South Africans. Then it began gaining popularity but was still nowhere to be found at supermarkets. Consumer demand grew, supermarkets saw an opportunity, and now, ready prepared sushi to take home is a familiar sight on supermarket shelves around the country.

Social media restaurant food posts also play a part in Food Service influencing HMR as delicious visuals stimulate interest and demand.

For in-store coffee shops and restaurants, the Food Service offer can showcase what's available in the store as an HMR option, while



Image courtesy of Dmitry Zvoloskiy, Pexels

the trends at your HMR counter will in some instances reflect the type of meals being ordered at restaurants. It's a fascinating relationship, and one that is constantly developing as food trends and consumers change over time. No matter the

menu evolution, the consumer requirements of convenience, a sensory experience, a break from routine, and from home food prep remain the same – with budget being variable. Gauging how much consumers living and/or working in your catchment area are willing and able to spend on restaurant, coffee shop and HMR/Deli food is critical to your offering – generally they will want more value for money at the HMR/Deli counter.

Food Service and HMR in winter is a particularly interesting time, as supermarkets have an opportunity to attract shoppers with tantalising aromas and a hearty tableau of warming dishes to chase away the winter blues.

### **Convenient and 'homemade'**

Convenience is king for time-constrained consumers who still crave that homemade feeling, and the desire for nostalgic comfort food that our grannies used to make is on a par with the call for bold flavours and internationally inspired recipes. You can cater for this by introducing take-and-bake and pre-packaged meals.

Advertising your winter menu can help shoppers plan and provide meal inspiration which can be used for cross-merchandising. Taking the time to develop an interesting, enticing, and delicious



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menu that caters to your consumer's desires while considering this winter's food trends is well worth the effort.

### A feast for the senses

Food trends that were sparked during lockdown are seemingly here to stay. Tough times call for comfort foods and nostalgia. Traditional recipes, as well as those that offer a twist on old favourites, are still high on the consumers' list of favourites. But they'll need to be up to standard – lockdown helped many home cooks hone their skills and they expect professionals to exceed or at the very least match these new capabilities.

- Curries are versatile, popular, and can answer the need for comfort food as well as add an exotic option – variations such as Cape Malay, Thai, vegetarian, Tikka Masala, Vindaloo, spicy hot or mild and tasty all offer a great way to spice up your food service.
- Stews, stroganoffs, roasts, braised meats, and baked pasta dishes are good winter options, alongside healthier soups, and a variety of bread options from your bakery.
- Include warming spices such as cinnamon, paprika, and chilli in mains and desserts.
- Local flavours and ingredients always hit the spot – South Africans love their traditional favourites.
- Tasting menus that consist of high-end cocktail foods and smaller portions, such as sliders or mini desserts, are a popular restaurant menu item that translates well to retail food service.



Image courtesy of Naim Benjelloun, Pexels

- Introducing flavours such as pumpkin spice, eggnog, chestnut, and spiced apple can attract consumers willing to experience something new, or to recreate a treasured travel memory. Consumers who acquired a taste for culinary explorations and exotic taste experiences from the comfort of their own home during lockdown remember their expanded horizons and are eager to embrace bold flavours, new ingredients, and international dishes. This widens your winter food service options considerably as you can add dishes from anywhere in the world.

Basic and wholesale meal options can still inspire your customers. Getting creative with best-value ingredients, seasonal, local produce and cheaper cuts of meat, and looking to times gone by for recipes that use these cuts can help reduce costs.

Using fewer ingredients can also help reduce costs as well as wastage, but you will need to be extra creative in the prep area to avoid repetition and boring food. Look to grains, pulses, legumes, soy, tofu, and other plant-based options to provide plant-based, hearty, protein-rich meals.

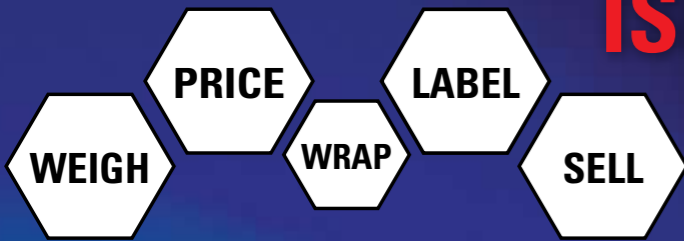
### Value meals

Not all consumers are currently economically constrained, but as fuel prices soar and food prices follow, added financial burdens are causing even those relatively unscathed by the economic fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic to cut back and tighten their belts.

“ It makes good business sense to provide hearty, healthy and affordable options that cater for everyone, from singles on the go to extended families. ”

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Link to recipe courtesy of South African Mushroom Farmers Association (SAMFA) [▶▶▶▶▶](#)

**Meat-free alternatives**

Vegan, vegetarian, and flexitarian diets are on the rise for many different reasons, from those making the change on ethical or environmental grounds to those looking for a healthier diet (several vegetarian meat alternatives are approved by various heart and diabetes associations) and even those in need of a more affordable source of protein.

“Soy, seitan, grains and pulses, and mushrooms are all versatile and relatively cost-effective meat alternatives that can be used to create delicious winter dishes that tick all the boxes.” [▶▶](#)

It is worth remaining abreast of current social trends and initiatives to help your team plan their menus.

Meat-free Mondays are increasingly popular, so this could become an attraction at your store. The South African Mushroom Farmers’ Association (SAMFA) website provides a wealth of mushroom-based recipes and nutritional information.

Testament to the increase of interest in vegan food is the growth of Fry Family Food’s plant-based range. “We can see from our own sales figures and the growth of our company that the industry is changing at a rapid rate,” says Tammy Fry in an interview with vegconomist.com in April 2020. Consumers are looking for meat alternatives, so it makes sense to include these in your ready to eat winter meals offering.

**Chef and cook training**

Be aware of falling into a common meat-free pitfall. Not all chefs or cooks are comfortable with vegetarian or vegan cooking, which can result in bland, stodgy, or boring food that nobody wants to eat.

However, meat-free alternatives can be exceptionally versatile and tasty when prepared correctly.

“Appropriate training is vital to ensure your food service remains current, exciting and appealing to all consumers.

Upskilling employees improves your food service and can also help with staff retention.” [▶▶](#)

Effective training and implementing smart kitchen and production processes can also help your employees provide efficient, friendly, and customer-centric service, which helps build customer loyalty.

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- Stand-alone & compact
- Anti-bacterial, splash-proof casing
- 305dpi print resolution

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These pressure sensitive labels bring several benefits to users and the environment:

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- Reduced carbon footprint
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For more about SATO's supermarket and retail products, contact us on one of the numbers below or send an email to [autoid@kemtek.co.za](mailto:autoid@kemtek.co.za).



Image courtesy of Khaled Hossain, Pexels

### Online shopping and food delivery

For many retailers, lockdown and the Covid-19 pandemic pushed the fast forward button on their entry into the online shopping and home delivery arena. And now that they have experienced the convenience and safety of shopping online, there are many consumers who would prefer to keep it that way – so you need to be on top of your e-commerce game.

When it comes to ready meals and food service, home delivery can be tricky. You will need to invest some time and money into finding the best practices for your business, as food needs to be delivered timeously as well as safely and hygienically.

“ Delivery drivers need to be well-trained and vehicles well-maintained as they are, in effect, your mobile representatives and can affect customer perceptions – a clash with a bad driver could lose you a potential online customer. ”



Image courtesy of Rachel Claire, Pexels

### Reduce food wastage

Food wastage is a costly issue. You don't want to keep running short and disappointing customers, as this is a good way to lose business, but over catering creates financial and sustainability concerns. When it comes to planning your deli and ready-made menu, sales analysis, ingredient versatility and ensuring you use the correct quantity of ingredients for each dish is key. Using fewer ingredients per dish or reusing a staple ingredient in different ways requires creativity but can produce high yields with less effort and wastage. Using imperfect produce is yet another way to combat unnecessary food wastage.

You can also look to recipes and dishes with an intrinsically low wastage percentage. Tasting menus, smaller portions or 'miniature' dishes require fewer ingredients and produce a higher yield, which can help reduce wastage. Unilever Food Solutions South Africa have several 'wastage warrior' articles available online containing smart and practical tips for reducing waste, as well as easy recipes and menu ideas. If you do have surplus, in-date leftovers can be contributed to a charitable initiative.



### Winter food trends to watch

- The top trends to watch this season include functional eating for health and wellness – from meat-free alternatives and veggie bowls to eating the rainbow, health is key. This is a trend that we will continue to see as health remains at the forefront of consumers' minds.
- Low sodium, avoiding trans fats, and using nutritious ingredients is important for consumers who are acutely aware of how food affects their health. This need is not negated by the demand for convenience, so ensure ready-made meals also answer a shopper's health needs. Ingredients such as pulses and mushrooms have additional health



# plastic ideas



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benefits that can be advertised alongside each dish – anything that boosts the immune system or helps fight colds and flu is sure to be received positively.

- Food safety and hygiene are still top priority as the flu and Covid seasons converge, but the desire for health and wellness is also paramount, especially since the Covid pandemic.
- Depending on your location, you may also need to consider speciality diets such as gluten- or dairy-free, sugar-free, keto, kosher, halaal, vegetarian, and vegan.
- Vegetables as mains are a healthier, more affordable option than most meat-based dishes, and the growing number of consumers who will tuck into a plant-based meal makes it a smart business move too.
- Budget-friendly meals that are convenient, tasty, and healthy are important for a wide variety of consumers, from students living away from home to young execs, busy families, and retirees tired of cooking for themselves.

### Green kitchens

Last but not least is the green kitchen trend. Now more than ever, consumers are acutely aware of their environmental impact, and that extends to the brands they buy and even the stores they shop at. By reducing food wastage, sourcing organic, local produce, and embracing 100% recyclable or biodegradable serving containers and utensils, you are meeting both your environmental corporate social responsibility goals and addressing the growing number of eco-warrior consumers.



Image courtesy of Daria Shevtsova, Pexels

### Recipe ideas

- **Oxtail.** Not a budget-friendly option, oxtail is a speciality dish perfect for winter.
- **Brisket.** An underrated cut in South Africa, slow cooked brisket can produce an excellent meaty dish.
- **Lentil or bean stew.** Hearty, filling winter fare that doesn't break the bank.
- **Soba noodle and mushroom soup.** Asian inspiration is a winter must but add nutritious vegetables for health-conscious consumers.
- **Nut roast or harvest loaf.** The vegan or vegetarian answer to meatloaf, these can be packed with nutrition and the ingredient options are incredibly flexible.
- **Winter panzanella.** Add winter vegetables and warming spices to make this classic Italian summer salad a winter staple.
- **Mediterranean halloumi salad.** The Mediterranean diet leans heavily towards plant-based meals and is certainly one of the healthiest diets from which you can take inspiration.
- **Pumpkin mash.** Comfort food with a twist.
- **Bobotie.** It's a South African favourite for a reason!

- **Vegetable biryani.** Indian cuisine is uniquely suited to rich, flavourful vegetarian dishes.
- **Meat-free chilli.** Soy-based mince alternatives or beans and lentils make a great veggie chilli base.
- **Ragu.** Any thick, meat-based sauce served with pasta will do, but be creative with your protein choices.
- **Cottage pie variations.** Think boerewors and bean instead of old-school mince.
- **Harissa-braised lamb shank** with carrot puree and anise scented yogurt. Lean proteins with complex flavours.
- **Tamales.** Mexican and Southwest American recipes are great winter dishes.
- **Broccoli and parmesan risotto.** Vegetarian dishes are versatile and nutritious.
- **Winter-spiced molten chocolate cake.** Baked, spiced, and hot desserts are a winter must. **SR**

#### Sources:

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**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

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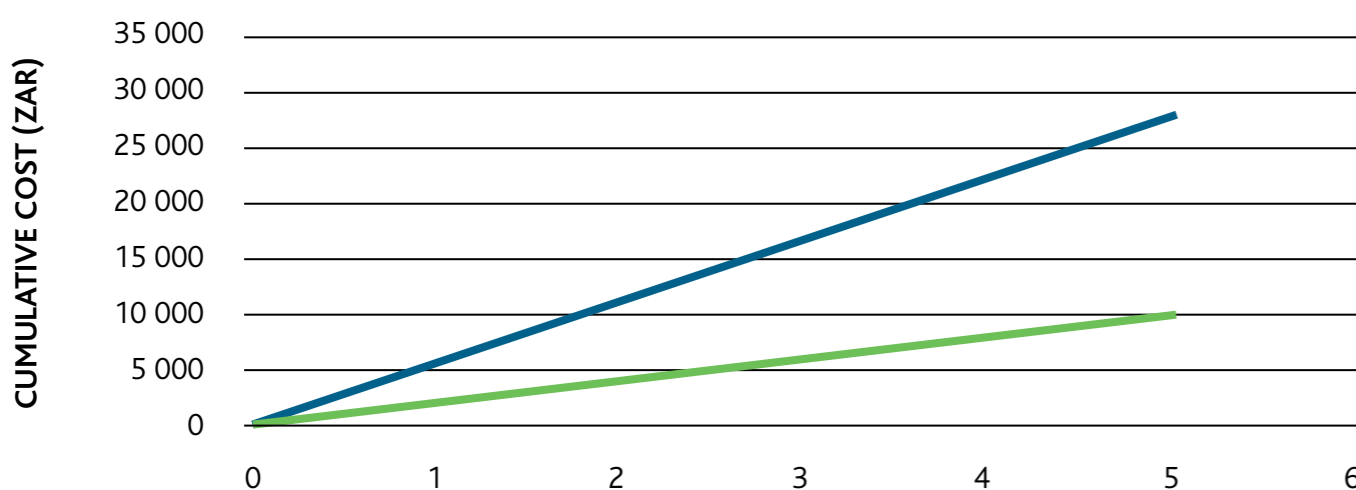




### Eco Leaf Freezer Doors

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

# What's hot in hot beverages?

## The current hot drinks landscape, trends and growth drivers

### Coffee demand grows, despite the category facing challenges

Despite the increasing price of coffee, the effect of climate change on supply, and the logistical issues of import/export caused by international lockdowns, consumer demand for coffee globally has increased. According to a coffee market industry report on [www.mordorintelligence.com](http://www.mordorintelligence.com), the Covid-19 pandemic placed pressure on the coffee sector, which “is [already] vulnerable to fluctuations in international coffee prices, low productivity levels, and damage caused by pests and disease.” Consumers are not deterred, however, and consumption of coffee around the world has increased.

### Homebrewed coffee takes centre stage

The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic will be felt for quite some time to come, particularly in hospitality. People who routinely stopped by their local coffee bar, some weekly, some several times a day, were suddenly left bereft during lockdown. Subsequently we saw the rise of the at-home barista, increased consumption of coffee and tea during the work-from-home workday, and all the retail opportunities that came with online shopping.



“ The Covid-19 pandemic placed pressure on the coffee sector, which is already vulnerable to fluctuations in international coffee prices, low productivity levels, and damage caused by pests and disease. ”

### Instant coffee, pods, capsules, and beans

Instant coffee, from chicory-based drinks to premium roasts and espresso powder, is the go-to caffeinated hot beverage for many South African households. It's quick, convenient, and even when the power is out you can boil some water over a gas stove and enjoy your brew of choice. But as consumers embrace their inner barista, the sale of coffee pods, grounds, and beans are also on the rise. Quality is key while novelty is appreciated. Flavoured coffees are already popular as instant options and in single-serve sachets, but coffee syrups – once only seen in high-end coffee shops – have made their way onto retailer's shelves.

### The at-home barista experience

As consumers seek greater control over their home brewing, the demand for coffee beans is growing. Bean to cup machines and speciality grinders mean greater control over the entire process – and some consumers have spent the last two years getting to know exactly what they want from their caffeine hit. To recreate a special coffee moment at home, coffee making paraphernalia such as bean to cup coffee machines, Moka pots, milk

Image courtesy of Tim Douglas, Pexels



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steamers and frothers, foam art stencils, speciality cups, and even the right biscuit (or biscotti) are all becoming more common place. The growth of at-home consumption has resulted in several out-of-home coffee retailers (such as Starbucks) launching at-home ranges. While still a relatively niche market, the interest in the at-home barista experience is growing, particularly amongst younger coffee drinkers who are experimenting with methods and techniques being shared on various social media platforms such as TikTok.

## The coffee experience

In-store coffee bars and white label coffee products are a good way to attract consumers and encourage sales. Partnering with a specific brand can negate the cost of setting up and running an in-store coffee brand means the store gets the benefit a well-known or exclusive brand name that brings customers in.

## Factors driving coffee sales

### *Ethics and sustainability*

When it comes to sourcing their coffee, consumers are driven by several factors. Product origins, particularly products that are sourced ethically and sustainably, are becoming increasingly important. According to Mordor Intelligence coffee market industry report, there has been a surge in demand for certified coffee products, with consumers wanting to know where and how their coffee is produced, and if those involved in the food chain are fairly and justly treated. There



Image courtesy of scasa.co.za

is also an upsurge in environmental damage caused by production techniques, with consumers wanting assurance from manufacturers of their environmental best practice.

### *Price and convenience, quality and loyalty*

Of course, the big four - price, convenience, quality, and brand loyalty - still drives many coffee purchasing decisions. Quality is important for many mid to upper LSM shoppers, and brand loyalty also plays an important role here. Novelty is also a purchase driver, particularly amongst younger and more adventurous consumers.

### *The passion is real*

So great is the South African passion for coffee that a non-profit organisation "representing the coffee industry from seed to cup" exists. According to their website (<https://scasa.co.za/>), "The Speciality Coffee Association of Southern Africa is an associa-

tion of coffee industry players, from all sectors of the industry in Southern Africa. SCASA has a mission to promote both the consumption of quality coffees and the recognition of the employees of the industry within Southern Africa." For any retailer looking to provide an in-store coffee experience, SCASA is a valuable resource.

## The rising cost of coffee

According to Bloomberg ([www.bloomberg.com](http://www.bloomberg.com)) ...

“ Low rainfall in Brazil – one of the world’s largest coffee exporters in the world – has led to widespread shortages.

In addition, shipping delays and limited space on ships and in ports due to the knock-on effect of global lockdowns during the height of the pandemic has pushed coffee prices to a multi-year high. ”



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## Types of COFFEE DRINKS

 <p><b>BLACK</b> • Just coffee</p>		 <p><b>LATTE</b> • Espresso • Steamed milk</p>	 <p><b>CAPPUCCINO</b> • Espresso • Steamed milk • Foam</p>	
 <p><b>AMERICANO</b> • Espresso • Hot water</p>	 <p><b>ESPRESSO</b> • 1oz Espresso</p>	 <p><b>DOPPIO</b> • 2oz Espresso</p>	 <p><b>CORTADO</b> • 1oz Espresso • 1oz Steamed milk</p>	 <p><b>RED EYE</b> • Coffee • Espresso</p>
 <p><b>GALÃO</b> • Espresso • Foamed milk</p>	 <p><b>LUNGO</b> • Long pulled espresso</p>	 <p><b>MACCHIATO</b> • Espresso shot • Foam</p>	 <p><b>MOCHA</b> • Espresso • Chocolate • Steamed milk</p>	 <p><b>RISTRETTO</b> • Short pulled espresso</p>
 <p><b>FLAT WHITE</b> • Espresso • Steamed milk</p>	 <p><b>AFFOGATO</b> • Espresso • Ice cream</p>	 <p><b>CAFÉ AU LAIT</b> • Coffee • Steamed milk</p>	 <p><b>IRISH</b> • Coffee • Whiskey • Sugar • Cream</p>	

Consumers of high-end coffee are hardest hit, driving some to find less expensive alternatives. While relatively few consumers are likely to give up coffee completely, many are branching out. In good news, however, the Speciality Coffee Association of Southern Africa (<https://scasa.co.za>) reported that “The worldwide shipping congestion that has plagued supply chains globally over the last two years has seen signs of easing in certain quarters of the globe, Asia and the Far East have seen some relief over the past few months, while the United States ports are still struggling through severe congestion.”

**Market growth – the slow but steady ascent of the coffee bean in SA**

A Bizcommunity article from Insight Survey published in June last year says, “In South Africa, the local coffee market experienced positive growth, in terms of off-trade retail value RSP at constant 2020 prices, achieving a 2.1% year-on-year growth relative to 2019. This increase is expected to continue, with the market forecast to grow at a CAGR of 2.5% between 2021 and 2025. This growth, both globally and locally, is being driven by several factors, including the increase in at-home coffee consumption.”

Globally, “Factors such as increasing out of home coffee consuming population, rapid urbanization, rising e-commerce retail sales, increase in Gen Z income, increasing instant coffee preference, growing demand for specialty coffee and increasing green coffee consumption in emerging economies are expected to drive the market” – ResearchAnd Markets.com.





Image courtesy of Suzy Hazelwood, Pexels

### It's teatime in South Africa

Tea is having a moment. A staple for many, tea has remained popular for decades, and black tea is a constant companion for many South Africans. Its time to shine, however, is now. Cheaper than coffee (for the most part), tea is easily sourced, and supply remains stable. The Rooibos Council of South Africa (<https://sarooibos.co.za/>) recently reported that, "In SA, the hot tea category is forecast to register the fastest value growth at a CAGR of 7.5% over the next three years and is the largest in volume terms, registering sales of 33.1 million kg in 2020."

In addition to this, "In top-end retail, over the last twelve months (ending September 2021), the tea market grew 0.4% in volume to 14 kilotons and 3.8% in value to R2.6 billion." As consumption of Rooibos increases both locally and internationally, black tea remains the biggest category. "The black tea segment is the largest within the tea category contributing 47.8% value (R1.2 billion), followed by Rooibos with 30.8% (R788 million) and speciality teas with 21.4% (R547.6 million)."

### Health boosting properties of tea

Although black tea is caffeinated, there are a wide variety of teas that are caffeine-free and purported to boost health in several different ways. Rooibos has been used as a nursery remedy for nappy rash for years, but it is also considered safe for children and even toddlers to drink. Speciality children's blends, some containing chamomile or other herbal blends, are promoted as calming brews or sleep aids and are a popular category with parents looking for formula and milk alternatives.

Green tea and mint have long been used as a gout preventative, and the high antioxidant levels of green tea have long made it a popular health drink. As consumers become more concerned with their health, and maintaining it, healthy beverages with health benefits such as green tea and herbal or fruit tisanes which offer additional health-boosting properties have seen a definite rise in popularity. Calming blends, blends to aid sleep, and blends to

help you wake up and concentrate speak to those consumers looking to achieve health and wellness through food, without resorting to medications.

The Rooibos Council has seen a shift towards interest in speciality teas with innovative flavour pairings and additional health benefits. Jessica Bonin, a South African-born tea sommelier, says ...

“ Rooibos has an incredibly versatile flavour that makes it the perfect base for an array of ingredients. Tea enthusiasts can experiment by adding herbs, fruits, flowers and even spices. The flavour cascades are infinite. ”



Image courtesy of Anna Pou, Pexels



## Afternoon tea is the hippest new trend

“Among the biggest food and drinks predictions recently announced by social media network, Pinterest, ‘afternoon tea’ is to become the new happy hour. Their predictions were based on the interests of their 444 million users worldwide with many choosing tea with a friend over drinks after work.”

In an article on upcoming beverage trends on the Rooibos Council website, functional beverages such as Rooibos are seeing a huge spike in consumer interest. The article goes on to quote Nicie Vorster, a director of the SA Rooibos Council, who says ...



“ Online searches for healthy teas, tea pairings, parties and the like have been spiking across age groups, which is good news for the local tea industry. ”

Inspired by these hot tea trends, cold tea drinks, tea-based cocktails and mocktails, flavoured teas, traditional tea drinks such as bubble tea, and tea rituals are all seeing growing interest. Innovative products, flavour pairings, and ingredients such as buchu, ginger, dragon fruit and more are helping the tea industry expand and flourish. With a plethora of producers both locally and internationally, choosing what to stock will come down to how well you know your customers.



## Ready to drink

The ready-to-drink market in both the coffee and tea categories is seeing increased growth as convenience once again takes centre stage for consumers returning to the office, or those struggling to balance their work-from-home and home-life situations. These are also replacing carbonated canned or bottled drinks that are seen as less ‘healthy’.

## Customisation and tea gifting

As consumer tastes become more refined and they look to elevate their tea experience, creating custom blends is a growing trend. Tea gifting is a niche category, but one that is also experiencing a rise in popularity. This can include speciality blends, loose leaf teas, fruit or herbal additions, and home-brewing tools from tea strainers and artisanal pots to blending kits.



## A bevy of hot beverages

Smaller but no less significant are those hot drinks that fall outside the scope of tea and coffee.

Chocolate and malt drinks, as well as decaffeinated, sugar-free, low fat, protein-enriched, vegan, and gluten-free hot beverages retain their share of the market as winter approaches, parents indulge their children, and nostalgia and home comfort push sales.

## Hot chocolate

Hot chocolate is no longer solely the domain of children. Decadent and indulgent drinks, from premium powdered brands made from actual chocolate (not cocoa, there’s a difference) to solid chocolate or a blend of the two,



are beginning to appear as the South African consumer educates their palate. Single-serve sachets and ready-to-drink options are an indulgent convenience buy opportunity not to be missed.

## Milk alternatives

Milk alternatives are an aspect of the Hot Beverage category that cannot be overlooked, and the options are expanding at an impressive rate, including soya, oat, almond, and rice milks making inroads in mainstream stores. The reasons for choosing a milk alternative can range from dietary requirements such as veganism or lactose intolerance, health and religious – non-dairy milk such as almond is pareve and may be consumed with meat.

Ethical, environmental, and sustainable reasons are also a big driving factor behind the move to plant-based milk options. In addition to the more well-known offerings, milk alternatives include coconut, cashew, macadamia, quinoa, and hemp. Most coffee shops and coffee bars offer milk alternatives, but price can be a factor.

Soy options are generally not sold at quite the same premium price point, as soy milk is readily available and supply and demand are bringing prices more in line with that of dairy, however soy does come with its own environmental and ethical questions.

Consumers already familiar with the milk alternative landscape are looking for earth-friendly, sustainable options that taste good and are within budget. The good news for South African consumers



and retailers is that there are, according to ProVeg South Africa, over 70 different milk alternatives available to local consumers.

## Driven by innovation

It is clear that the Hot Beverages market in South Africa is growing. Driven by product innovation and consumer demand for healthier beverages, higher quality, and traceability, product ranges are expanding. This can make stocking your shelves a little trickier as you walk the line between indulgence and budget-friendly options.

The good news is that with efficient consumer data and analytics systems and processes in place, as well as keeping a keen eye on social media, you'll know what your consumer wants almost as soon as they do. **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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# Social media

## Your first steps online to increase your store visibility and grow your sales



By Arnaud Blanchet  
Founder and CEO  
of Shop-it

**B**y 2025, the number of social media users in South Africa is expected to grow by 30% to reach a total of 40 million. 80% of them visit Facebook or Instagram daily and 56% say that when they buy online, their choices are influenced by social media.

With this rise in user numbers and its importance in shopping decisions, setting up your social media accounts correctly becomes key to convert those users into new customers for your supermarkets or wholesale stores and to grow your sales.

In the previous article, we explained how your store can benefit from the rise of eCommerce. Today, we will explore social media to understand how supermarkets and wholesalers can use them to bring visibility to their brand and to grow their sales in-store.



Image courtesy of Kerde Severin, Pexels

### Three free online tools

**[Get a strong online reputation for your stores on Facebook page,](#)**  
**[WhatsApp Business and Google My Business.](#)**

There are dozens of social media channels but the most efficient to start with for supermarkets and wholesalers are Facebook and WhatsApp as they are the two most used social networks in South Africa. Over 95% of Internet users are on WhatsApp and over 85% are on Facebook.

“ As you grow your online audience, you will learn more about your followers and can grow your online presence on other social media networks they use like Instagram, YouTube or Twitter. ”

Each of these networks has specific characteristics that you will need to adapt to in order to grow the visibility of your store and attract potential customers.

Lastly, Google remains the leading search engine and is used by a majority of Internet

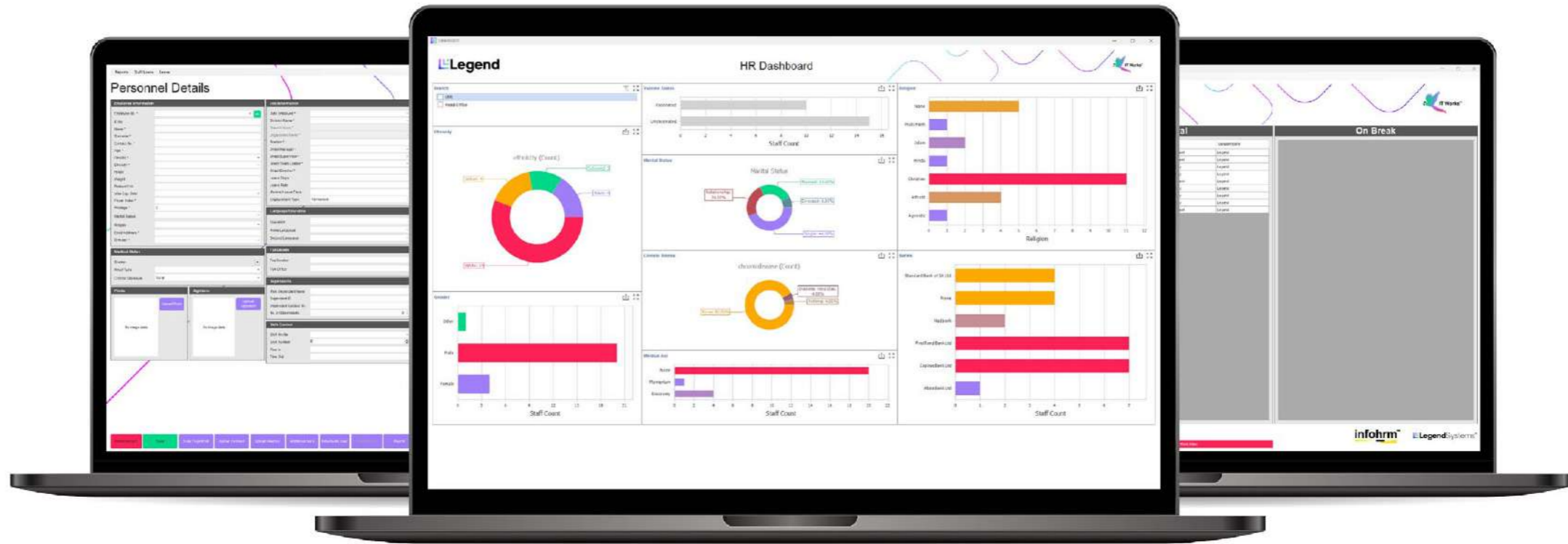
users. Registering your store on Google is a very efficient way to show up in online searches about grocery shopping in your area.

In the next paragraphs we will share with you our best tips to setup your accounts on Facebook, WhatsApp and Google.



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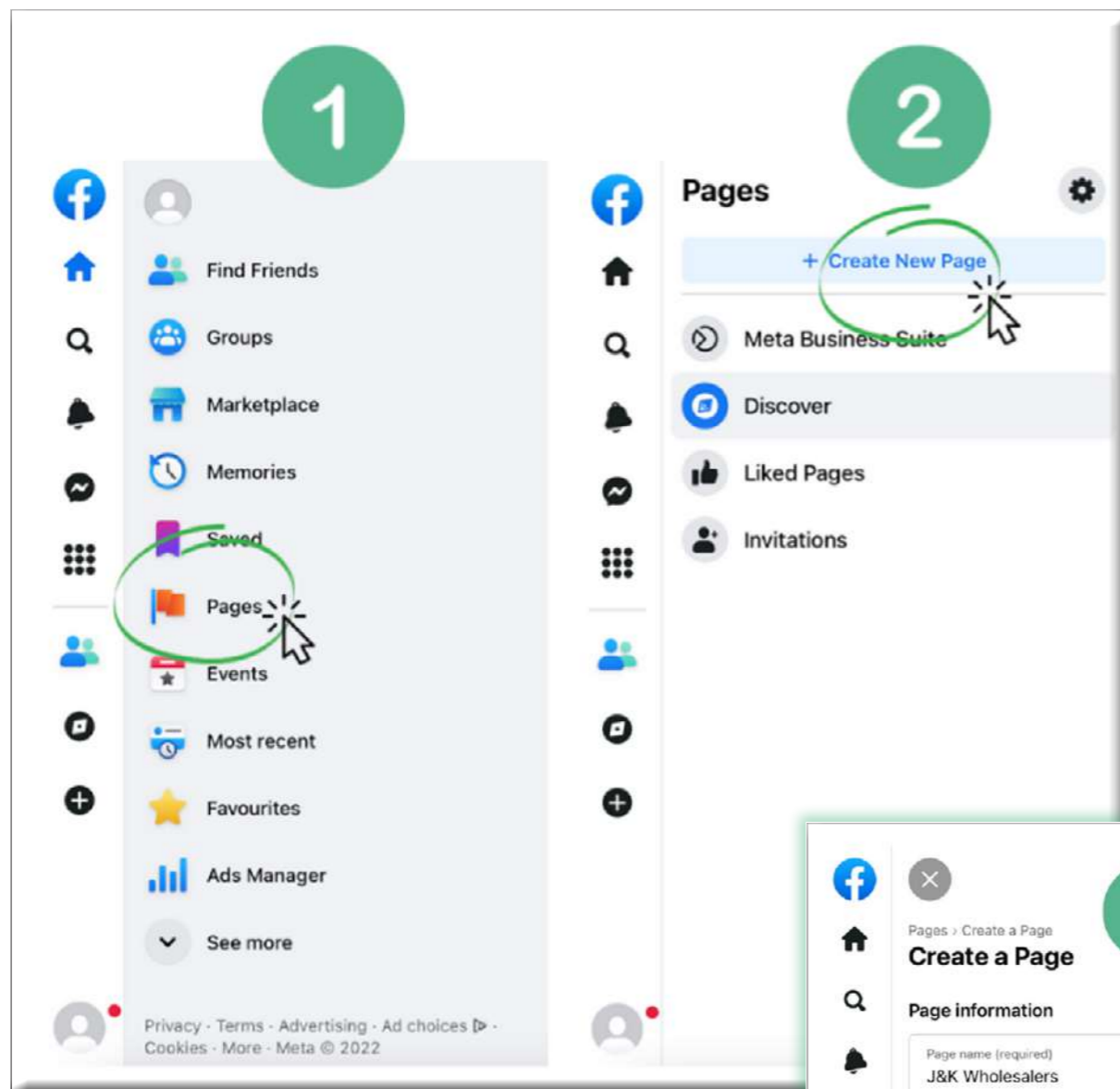


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- Tax bracket thresholds are automatically updated on a yearly basis.
- Payroll is directly linked to the time and attendance register, ensuring that employees' salaries are accurately reflected by the hours worked.

Contact us to find out more about HR Support and how it will benefit your business.





### Step 1. Create your Facebook page

Creating a Facebook page for your business is free and will take you less than five minutes.

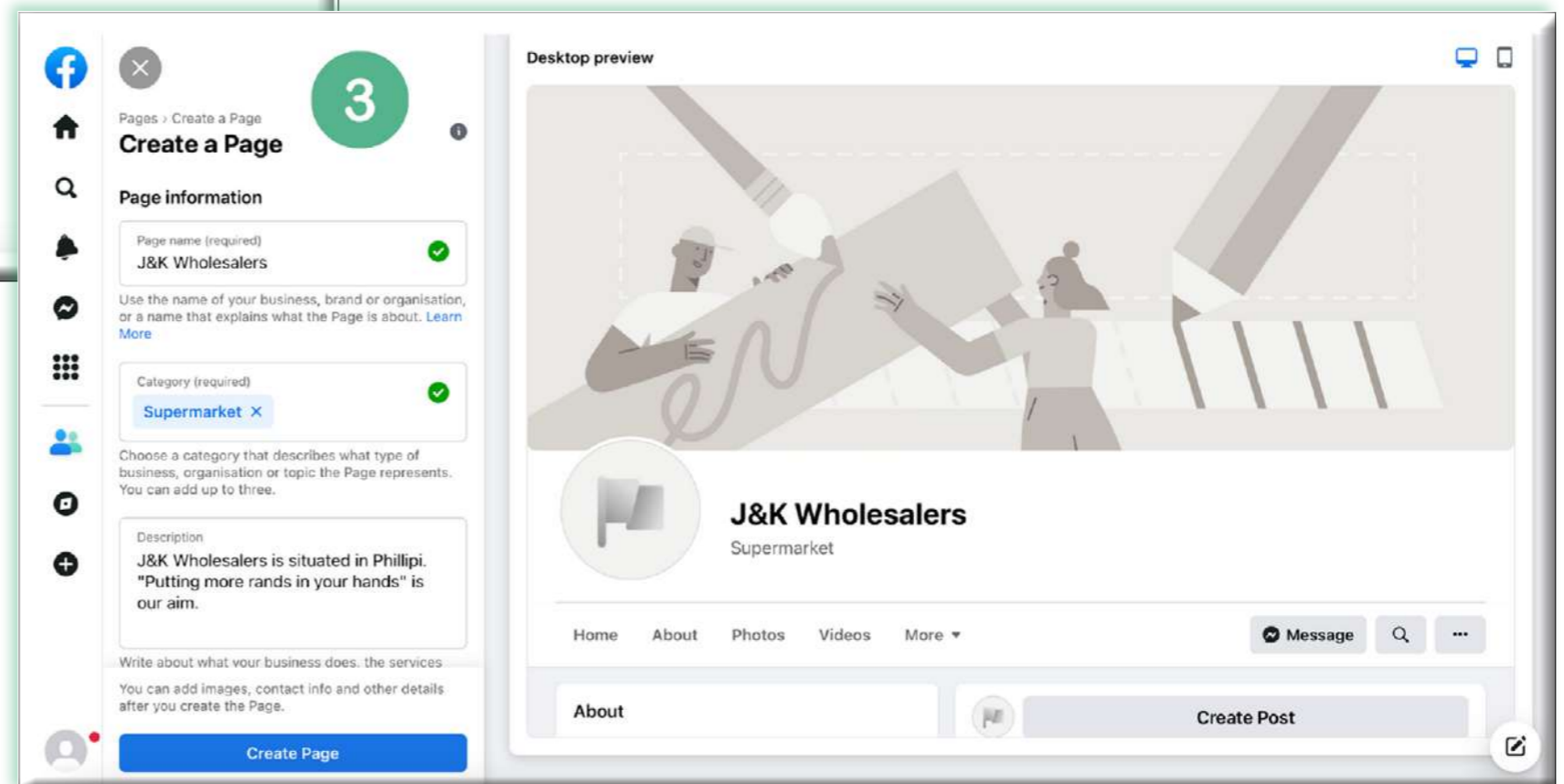
First, to create a page on Facebook for your business you must have a Facebook profile. Every Facebook page is linked to at least one Facebook profile. You can use your personal profile if you have one or you can create a specific profile that you will only use to create your Facebook page.

Once you are on your Facebook profile, follow these three simple steps to create your Facebook page:

- 1 Click on 'Pages'
- 2 Click on '+ Create a new page'
- 3 Fill in the page name (the name of your stores), the category (select the most accurate) and write a short description of your activity.

### Get your store on a Facebook page in 10 minutes

Facebook is used by more than 27 millions South Africans today and this number is expected to increase by 40% in the next three years. Building a strong Facebook community will be an asset for your business. Here is some advice to easily launch and run your Facebook page.



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## Step 2. Setup your page to be recognisable and useful

Once your page is created, add your logo as a profile picture **1** and a good quality photo of your store as a cover photo **2**. This will bring a strong brand identity to your Facebook page and make it easily recognisable by Facebook users.

Fill in all the practical information that will enable potential customers to visit the store or get in touch with you: opening hours, phone number, WhatsApp number, email address, physical store address, etc.

Finally, once your page is setup, start posting information (your specials for example) and answer every comment or message **3** that you receive on your page to build engagement and loyalty from your followers.

- 1** Profile picture: Click on the camera icon to change it.
- 2** Cover picture: Click on the 'edit' icon to change it.
- 3** Inbox: Click on it to see all the messages and comments you receive

## Use WhatsApp Business to connect with your customers and to start selling online

Only 21% of emails and SMS are ever opened but an impressive 98% of WhatsApp messages are read by their recipients. This makes WhatsApp the most efficient tool to communicate with your customers.

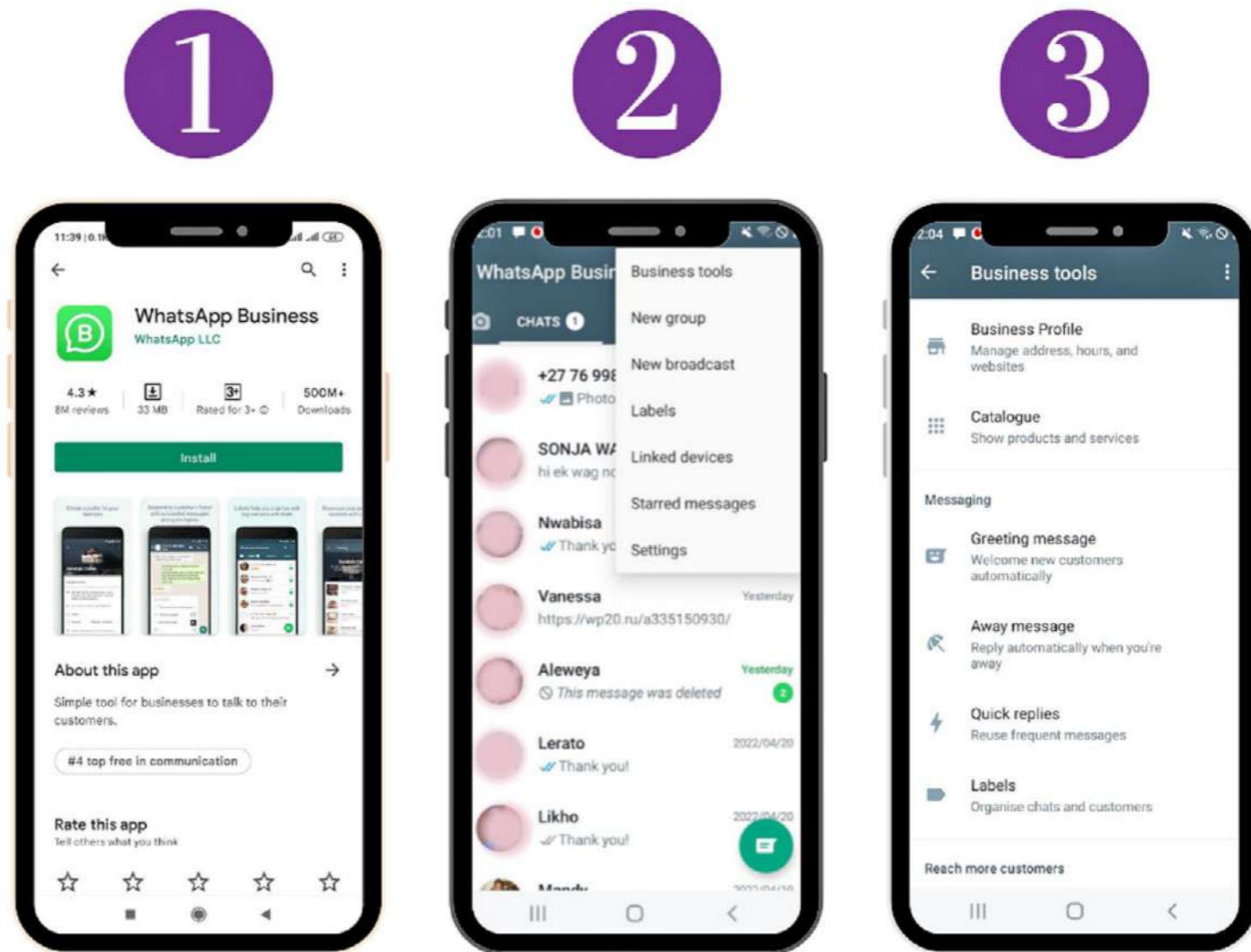
WhatsApp Business is a free tool that you can download and start to use in minutes. You can use it to communicate with your customers, send them your specials and even start selling online.

Here is how to easily get started:

**Step 1. Get a dedicated phone number** and download WhatsApp Business app. Use it on a phone or your laptop (using WhatsApp Web). Make sure to add your logo as a profile picture and to use your store name as your WhatsApp profile name.

**Step 2. Share your WhatsApp number everywhere:** add it on your Facebook page, on your Google Business profile, add it on your promotions leaflet and on your till receipts for example. Make it easy for your customers and potential customers to find it and get in touch with you.

**Step 3. Be reactive and answer all the messages you receive regularly.** Prepare template replies to answer the most common questions you receive (on your opening hours, on prices of best sellers, or on your promotion dates for example).



**Step 4. Ask your contacts to save your WhatsApp number** in their contact list and save their numbers in your contact list. This step is key for you to use the WhatsApp broadcast list feature: it enables you to send a message to over 250 contacts at once. Broadcast messages are the perfect tool to send your specials to your customers.

**Step 5. Create a WhatsApp catalogue** to start selling online and highlighting your best specials.

## Make your store visible on Google by registering on Google My Business

Google is the most visited website worldwide and it is still the default search engine for most Internet users.

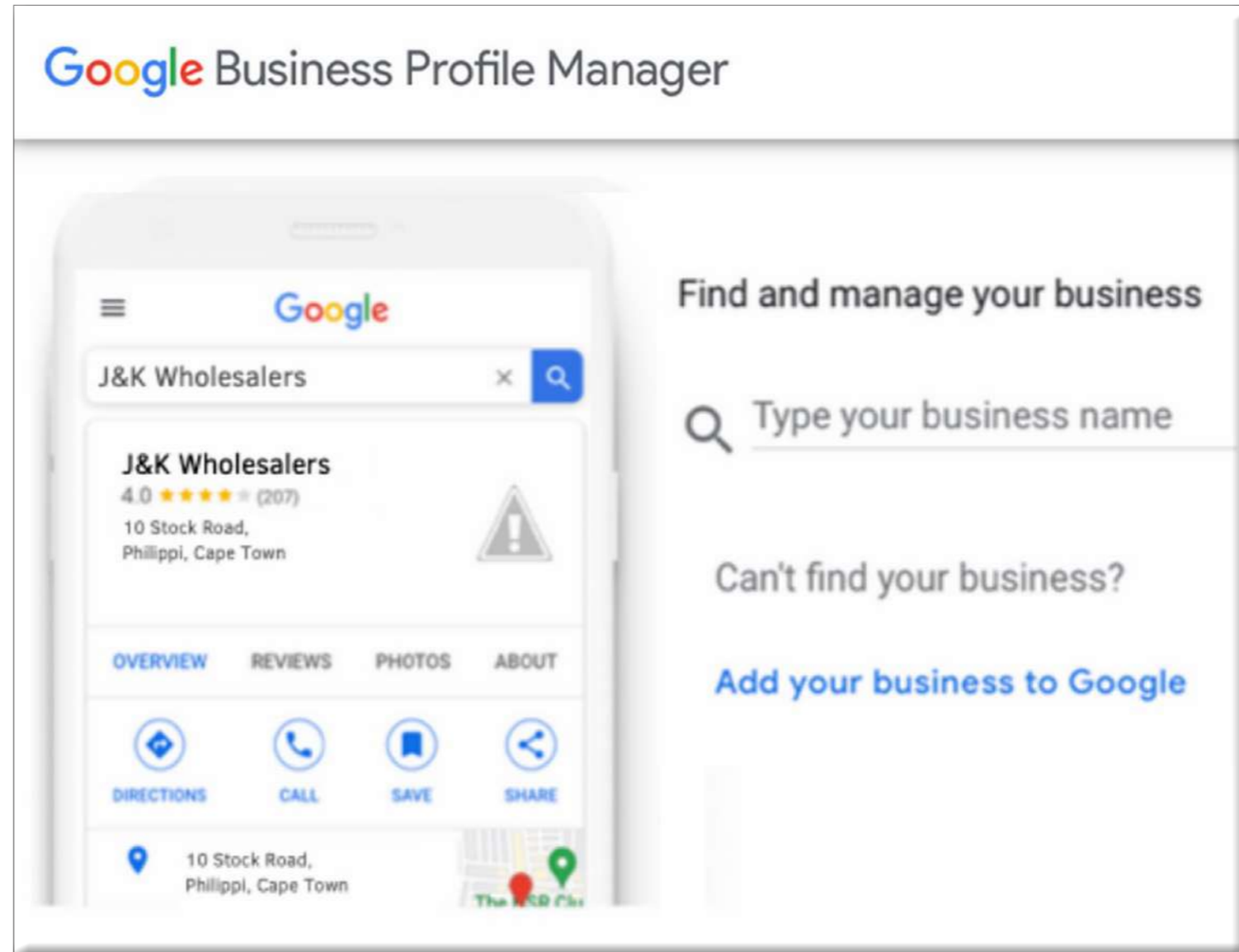
What do your potential customers find when they google the name of your business or when they do a grocery related search in your area? To make sure that your store appears in these search results, you can register your store on Google My Business.

The Google My Business registration is free and only takes a few minutes. Once validated, your business will appear in the local establishments corresponding to the user searches. It will give your business both visibility and credibility. A completed Google My Business account gets four times more clicks to their website (that can be your Facebook page), phone number or directions to the shop.

**Step 1.** To create your account, you will just need a Google email address (a Gmail account). You can use your personal Gmail address or create a specific one for your store.

**Step 2.** Once you're connected to your Gmail address, visit the Google Business Profile Manager (<https://business.google.com/create>). Click on 'Add your Business to Google' and follow the steps. It will only take less than five minutes to finalise your business registration.

And voilà! Your business is now highlighted on all the Google searches that correspond to your activity and location.



**Shop-it** offers turnkey and managed online stores to supermarkets and wholesalers in Africa, as well as digital marketing services to grow your sales.

## Your store is online! Now it is time to build a community

Creating a Facebook page, setting up a WhatsApp Business account and registering your store on Google My Business is free and only takes a few minutes. It already creates tangible value for your business as it increases your visibility and enables you to start building a community of customers.

The next step will be to engage with this community by creating content that they will share with their network, designing online campaigns to attract new customers, and starting selling online. We will deal with these topics in our next article next month. **SR**





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# Increased convenience offered by frozen ready meals

## Rising availability to propel market growth

The global frozen ready meal market is set to witness growth at a CAGR of 8.2% and top a valuation of USD 89.7 Bn by 2032.

In recent years, ready-to-eat food has emerged as one of the most diverse divisions of the worldwide ready-meal market. A rise in convenience patterns, as well as a simultaneous increase in need for customised meal options, has resulted in strong desire for frozen packed meals. The frozen food and beverage industry is perceived as a yet another shop for consumers on the go, with everything from frozen desserts to appetisers and meals available.

Because of its microbiological and fungal-free qualities, frozen ready meals are in high demand in developed countries. Frozen packaged food manufacturers are now incorporating nutrient advantages alongside taste to appeal to a broader clientele seeking health and flavour.

Advances in technology to conserve frozen and partly prepared food, as well as substantial changes in the retail business, all promise positively for market players in the near future. The frozen ready meal industry would be worth more than USD 89.7 billion by 2032.

Frozen convenience meals sold by food supply chain companies remain a major source of income. Convenience stores are expected to extend their



frozen ready meal range in the near future, while online sales will tap into previously undiscovered market opportunities.

In industrialised nations, where demand is higher than in other countries, frozen ready meals are now becoming incredibly common. The spike in the number of individuals working in rising economies such as China and India, and the trend toward longer and more unpredictable working hours, has led in a gradual shift away from the traditional model of daily cooking. Frozen ready meals are likely to grow in popularity in such countries as a result.

Convenience meals are growing in popularity in the packaged food industry due to its easy and portability. Organic convenience foods are also becoming more famous as they are certified natural things that may be used to substitute a full meal and are better than normal ready meals due to component differences.

### Key takeaways from market study

- The frozen ready meal market is expected to expand at CAGRs of 5.4% and 6.2% in US and the Middle East & Africa, respectively, through 2032.
- The European frozen ready meal market is currently pegged at 25.2% share of total market.
- The frozen ready meal industry in Asia – pacific region, except Japan, is predicted to increase at a healthy 4.7 percent.





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**Competitive landscape**

To improve the quality of products, major makers of frozen ready meals are concentrating heavily on research.

Campbell's main business operations, such as its important soups, pre-cooked meals, shelf-stable beverage portfolio, and large snacks portfolio, are now grouped under this new company.

**Conagra Brands:** In the year 2019, Pinnacle Foods acquired the company. Pinnacle's takeover of specialised gluten-free confectionary companies such as Udi's and Glutino may boost Conagra Brands. With this purchase, the company will combine two catalogues with commercial growth to build a USD 12 billion corporation with leading brands in the frozen, snacks, refrigerated food and grocery sectors. **SR**

- Customer demand for healthy, nutrient-dense foods is boosting sales of frozen ready meals in various regions throughout the world.
- Frozen chicken and frozen snacks contributed for more than 60% of the worldwide frozen ready meal markets in 2022, according to product type segmentation.
- Covid-19 pandemic outbreak benefited the frozen ready meal business due to its ease. Because many singles were limited to their homes and apartments, they had to depend on fast and ready-to-eat meals to sustain life. Due to the covid shutdown and social distancing practises, diners as well as other businesses were huttered, increasing market demand for frozen ready meals.

**McCain:** In 2018, the business formed a relationship with Forno de Minas, a well-known cheese manufacturer. McCain bought 49 percent stake in Forno de Minas in this deal.

**Campbell Soup Co:** The company had a complete restructuring in 2018 to strengthen its presence in the rapidly changing foodservice sector.

“ Targeting the food and beverage business would result in large earnings for frozen ready meal producers. Because of the increased consumption of healthy diet goods around the world, the health alternatives business could be a prospective market for frozen ready meals. ”





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## Ways to save

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.

## Benefits

- Reduced energy consumption
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Jaime van Aswegen  
Staff writer  
Supermarket & Retailer

As many move towards a more eco-friendly lifestyle, it becomes more relevant that we need to tackle the colossal problem of single use plastics head on. How do we do this with modern and convenient living being the standard?

The Refillery was started by Sam and Dom Moleta, a couple who felt a deep need to do more for the planet and eliminate the wasteful packaging associated with grocery purchases.

The 'weigh and pay' shopping concept allows you to top up your general pantry items with quantities that suit your needs. All products in-store are ethically sourced and are of the highest quality standards.

All in-store products are tested and trailed by the team and a few mystery shoppers before making it to the shelves of the stores based around Gauteng. There are plans to franchise stores and branch out further to Cape Town and Durban.

The stores offer a casual, friendly, shopping experience in a stylish, simple, modern, 'old-school cool' environment with a repurposed feel of natural wood, textured surfaces and polished concrete floors. Shoppers are encouraged to bring in their own containers for refilling however brown paper bags are provided for ease of shopping.

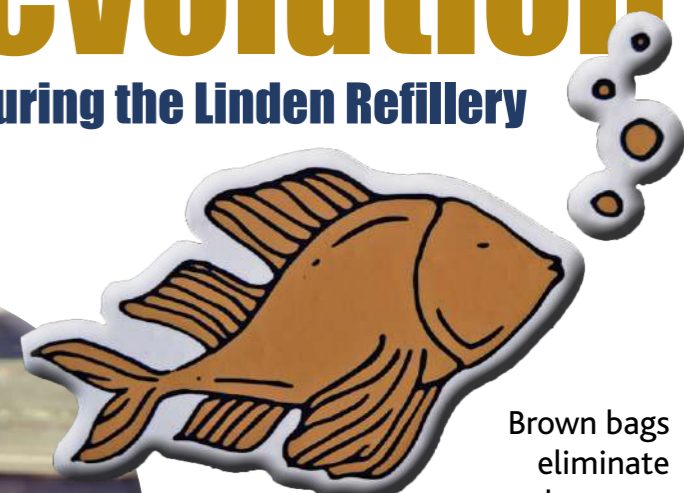


The Refillery store owners



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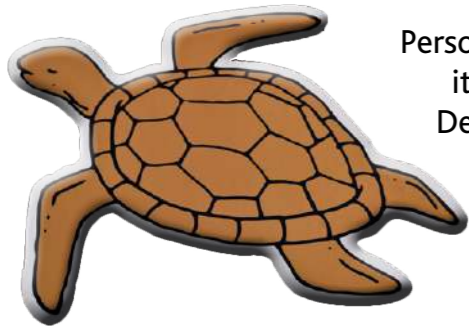
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# Social grants create significant shift in SA shopping patterns



Ged Nooy  
South Africa MD



Until 26 March 2020, when South Africa entered the Covid-19 induced hard lockdown, the week after the 25th of the month was the busiest week for retailers. Also known as payday week, sales were 11.6% higher than any other week of the month followed by the first week of the month that was 7.6% higher than other weeks.

Now payday week is only 10.4% and the first week of the month is now 12.4%. The reason for this, says retail and consumer data platform NielsenIQ, is the introduction of social grants.

NielsenIQ South Africa MD Ged Nooy says, "When consumers came under severe pressure during Covid lockdowns, the implementation of the Covid-19 Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant of R350 a month from May 2020 saw an almost immediate uplift in the spend of the most vulnerable households in South Africa that increased their monthly spend from R1 002 per month in April 2020 to R1 225 per month by December 2020 – an average increase of 22% for these Households."



The previous years when traditional payday weeks were heydays for retailers are just one of the many shifts in consumer behaviour that have been noted. Households have not just changed when they shop, but how and what they buy. "Our data shows that consumers are making fewer trips to stores, testing cheaper brands in key categories, waiting for their brands to be on promotion and buying in bulk or larger packs when it makes financial sense," says Nooy.

## The 'Homebound Economy' is here to stay

The data NielsenIQ has collected also shows where the consumption of these goods takes place. "Historically, around 45% of Groceries (excl. tobacco & liquor) would make their way into people's homes and largely be consumed there. Over the last two years, this has changed significantly and now 60% of groceries are taken into the household," says Nooy.

While these statistics make sense because of the various stages of lockdown, now that Covid-19 related restrictions have been lightened many consumers are choosing to continue consuming products at home as opposed to restaurants or coffee shops even though they have re-opened their doors and have implemented safety protocols to prevent the transmission of the coronavirus.

Retailers and manufacturers have been affected by the change in consumer behaviour.

"Retailers, as an example, are no longer selling as much to small business owners, but rather directly to the end-consumer," says Nooy.

"Retailers like Pick n Pay & Boxer and from March, The Shoprite Group, have created the situation where consumers can now collect their grants and do their monthly shop on one occasion, without duplicating spend on transport," he adds.



## Deeper data able to pick up behaviour changes

To be able to derive these insights and understand the changes in not only consumer behaviour but also in the actions that retailers and manufacturers need to take to meet the changing needs, the source and integrity of data need to be scrutinised. "There is a lot of data that is available in the industry, but it is ensuring that we have the correct data from a variety of sources that we can use to ensure that any trends we communicate are in fact a true reflection of what is happening in the industry," he says.

NielsenIQ starts each study with what they refer to as depth or legacy data. This data is demographically and geographically representative and provides the baseline from which a change in behaviour can be compared with. To do this, NielsenIQ uses established Consumer Panel Services (CPS) that provides the business with data on behaviour of 80% of the segment, a read that exceeds that of many other firms.

## Long term view

NielsenIQ has the longest running consumer panel in the country, covering 4 000 households monthly across 200 product categories and includes modern retail chains, forecourts, wholesalers and independent retailers and any other source of purchase. This has allowed it to track consumer penetration and consumption across all the LSMs (living standard measures) & SEMs (socio economic measures) which has proven vital during the last two years of Covid-19 induced consumer flux.



The company has also made a conscious decision to maintain a manual audit panel. This is linked to the fact that around 90% of retail stores in South Africa do not provide sales receipts to consumers at the point of purchase and a significant proportion of the items that make up the basket, do not carry a barcode.

Auditors, therefore, validate the purchases of consumers through a diary that each one of its panel households maintains as well as a physical audit of the items in the diary to ensure the accuracy of the data. Nooy stresses: "While this is a very manual process, it is the only way to completely ensure the accuracy of the data we collect. This is especially important as more digital approaches in the market have proved problematic, historically producing data that is not as robust as the NielsenIQ CPS audit," he concludes. **SR**

NielsenIQ provides an unbiased view of consumer behaviour, powered by a data platform 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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# Amid the ecommerce boom in South Africa Do big retailers ensure online shopping drivers remain alcohol-free?

By Rhys Evans  
MD at ALCO-Safe

Whether on the road or in the workplace, alcohol testing is required by law for the safety of others. When the road is the workplace for businesses that contract drivers to collect, deliver or fulfil orders, it is essential that these companies ensure a strict alcohol testing procedure is in place.

Just as an intoxicated worker is a danger, especially when operating power tools or heavy machinery, an intoxicated delivery driver is a danger both to themselves, and other road users. Taking steps to ensure that even outsourced drivers remain alcohol-free on the road is a critical risk mitigation measure that companies must take now, before it's too late.

“Not only is it important to prevent harm to drivers, other road users and their vehicles, it is also critical to prevent the reputational damage that will follow if a driver is involved in an accident and is found to be intoxicated.”

This implicates the company for which the delivery was being made, and the cost of reputational damage is much higher than medical bills and vehicle repairs.



Image courtesy of Artem Beliaikin, Pexels

## No place for alcohol in the workplace

Consuming alcohol has a negative impact on coordination, sight, speech and reaction speed; all of which are exceptionally hazardous when that individual is operating machinery or driving a vehicle, whether on four wheels or two.

Employees under the influence of alcohol are a danger to themselves, others and their employer. According to the South African Labour Guide, 20 to 25% of workplace injuries were attributable to employees under the influence of alcohol, while a recent World Health Organisation Global Status

Report on Road Safety noted that at least 60% of South African road deaths are caused by alcohol consumption.

## Delivering, safely

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and social distancing measures, South Africans have largely switched to online shopping, and ecommerce in South Africa has matured rapidly as a result, leading to higher numbers of delivery and courier drivers on the road which means

a greater risk of accidents. A clear company policy that communicates a zero-tolerance approach to alcohol consumption is necessary whenever employees are on the road. This policy must provide details of how it will be enforced along with the consequences of failure to comply, and this is generally done through workplace breathalyser testing.

Where companies are outsourcing deliveries to on-demand drivers, it should still be that company's responsibility to ensure the safety of their deliveries, which extends to ensuring that





Image courtesy of Cottonbro, Pexels



drivers collecting orders from them should be tested for alcohol. Where drivers are making return trips to pick up new orders, it is essential that they are tested for alcohol on their breath before they are allowed to get back on the road. Through consistent, regular testing it is possible to have a deterrent effect in that drivers are deterred from consuming alcohol during working hours, knowing that they're likely to get caught on their rounds.

**The solution is simple**

When a driver reports to pick up a package, they should be tested on a rapid test breathalyser by the person doing the hand over or a supervisor. The process is simple taking less than 10 seconds, ensuring a sober driver is going back on to the road.

Courier companies, transport companies and logistical companies require their workers and drivers to be tested for alcohol before allowing them on the road. Why should drivers' delivering parcels on behalf of retailers not be held to the same level of road safety?

**The dangers of alcohol and accidents**

Ordinarily, where an employee is injured, medical costs would be covered by the Compensation Fund or the employer's insurance if the injury occurred during the scope and course of the individual's job. However, where the accident results from intoxication, the employee will be barred from claiming benefits and will have to pay for medical expenses out of their own pocket. Where there was damage to company property (such as a vehicle and its contents) the insurer will not pay out where alcohol is involved.

This leaves the company with a hefty repair bill for their vehicle, and possibly a liability claims from third parties for injury and damages.

Accidents also cost the company in downtime while the driver is absent from work, recovering, and the vehicle is out of action in the repair shop.

“ All of these costs are minor, when compared to the potential cost of reputational damage of an accident scene photograph with company branding doing the rounds on social media, or on the front page of the daily newspaper. ”

**Regular testing keeps everyone safe**

The safest and most effective way of keeping drivers alcohol-free on duty? Breath testing by

means of a breathalyser is fast and inexpensive, accurate and unobtrusive. Having that zero-tolerance alcohol policy and strict testing procedure in place is a logical means to achieve peace of mind for ecommerce companies, knowing that they've done everything in their power to ensure their deliveries are not being carried out by intoxicated drivers.

The method is tried and proven to be effective in industries across the country and it needs to be implemented by online retailers as soon as possible. **SR**



Image courtesy of Chase Stine, Pexels

# Bringing the omnichannel B2C experience into the B2B retail space



By Andrew Dawson  
MD of MACmobile

The pandemic caused a rapid acceleration of digital channels across all spaces, and the retail sector is no different. However,

while most of the focus has been on the customer-facing side, there is a lot of benefit that could be gained from taking the consumerisation of technology into the business-to-business (B2B) element. An omnichannel approach, supported by appropriate technology, can help to streamline retail sales channels, improve the overall experience, and drive economic growth.

## It's not just about an app

One of the first mistakes businesses make in bringing the consumerisation of IT into the B2B space is the almost single-minded focus on having an app. While apps can be and often are an important tool in simplifying this space, it is essential to consider the level of technology available to the retailers that are being served.

If an app is part of the strategy, it needs to be friendly, intuitive and easy to use, taking into account various levels of tech-literacy. If people need training on how to use an app, the app is



too complicated. However, for South Africa's main market, an app may not be the ideal choice. Many in this space still rely on interpersonal communication, rather than self-service solutions, which makes the humble call centre still an essential communication strategy.

There remains a large portion of retailers that are unable or unwilling to use self-service options, and that are too expensive to reach with a sales rep. The key is a multi-touch, omnichannel approach combining sales reps, sales force automation

and ordering tools with the flexibility of either assisted or self-service, alongside a call centre environment where retailers can engage with both sales and support teams, and even the use of USSD services to bridge the gap.

Technology should always aim to simplify engagement, and smart, unified communication channels are key in effectively optimising the route to market into the various urban, semi-urban and rural areas of South Africa, and into the African continent.

“Technology should always aim to simplify engagement, and smart, unified communication channels are key in effectively optimising the route to market”



**Serving the main market**

Technology, if used correctly, will breed simplicity and efficiency, but the key is using the right technology in the right place at the right time, and for the right reasons. To this end, the South African retail space needs to focus on reaching the main market effectively – it is one of the few portions of the economy that is still growing, and thus represents a massive opportunity.

While the main market is considered as a whole, it is far from homogenous, and a blanket approach will never be successful.

“ Regional consumer patterns are influenced by the communities that live in them, and consumption varies by religion, culture, race, weather patterns and more. ”

The challenge here is that there are multiple, large chunks of data coming from various disparate sources, from point of sale to salesforce automation.

Being able to mine this data and derive some sort of realistic intelligence as to what is actually happening on the ground has proven to be a mammoth task. A central repository to bring it all together would go a long way in aiding this challenge and bringing B2C technology into the B2B space can bring us closer to this point.

**But education is the key ...**

As much as technology can be hugely beneficial, and consumerising the B2B experience in the retail

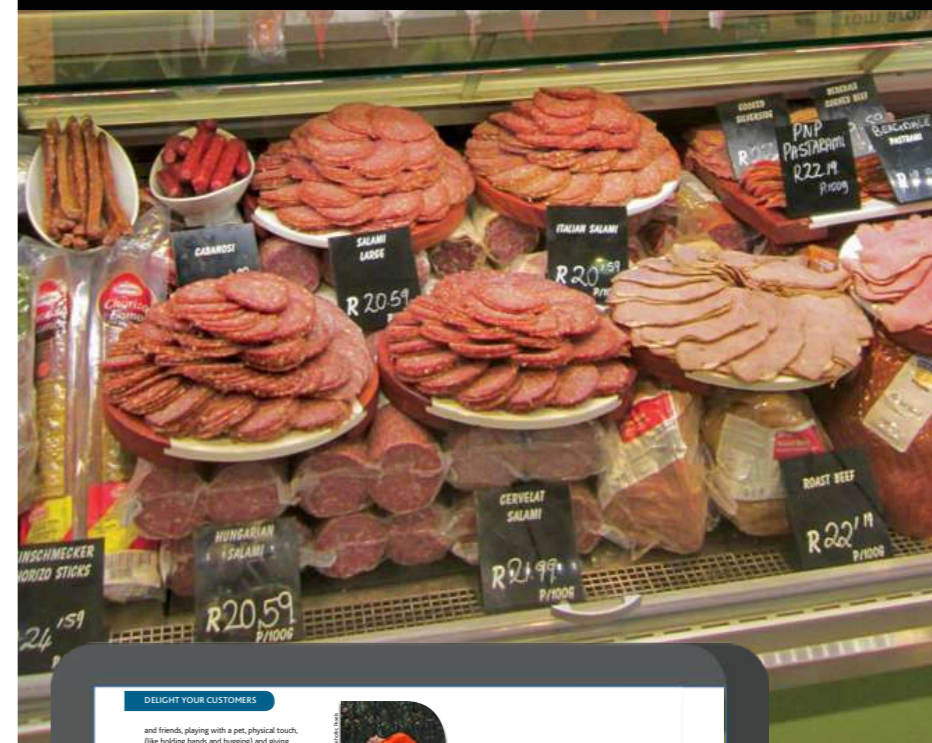


space will take self-service to new levels for those who have access, the reality is that until these solutions can be effectively used by much of the market, they cannot be truly effective. Technology, and importantly education into the benefits of technology, needs to be driven into the main market space.

The consumerisation of IT into the B2B retail space is not just about making pretty apps, you need functional, easy to use tools with a simple design interface that adds value to the retailer. Above all, the retailer needs to be educated effectively to understand the benefits of the tools, which will drive adoption, which will provide the data needed to optimise touch points, remove points of friction from the supply chain, and ultimately grow the economy. **SR**



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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 dopamine (which makes it more likely that we pay it forward again). But even an

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

“ Endorphins trigger positive emotions

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.

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. ”

Image right: Tim Douglas, Pixxel  
Image below: Jonathan Peterson, Pixxel

“ 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. ”

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

don't have to do it every time. The principle of occasional reinforcement – a little surprise out of the blue – can also be potent.

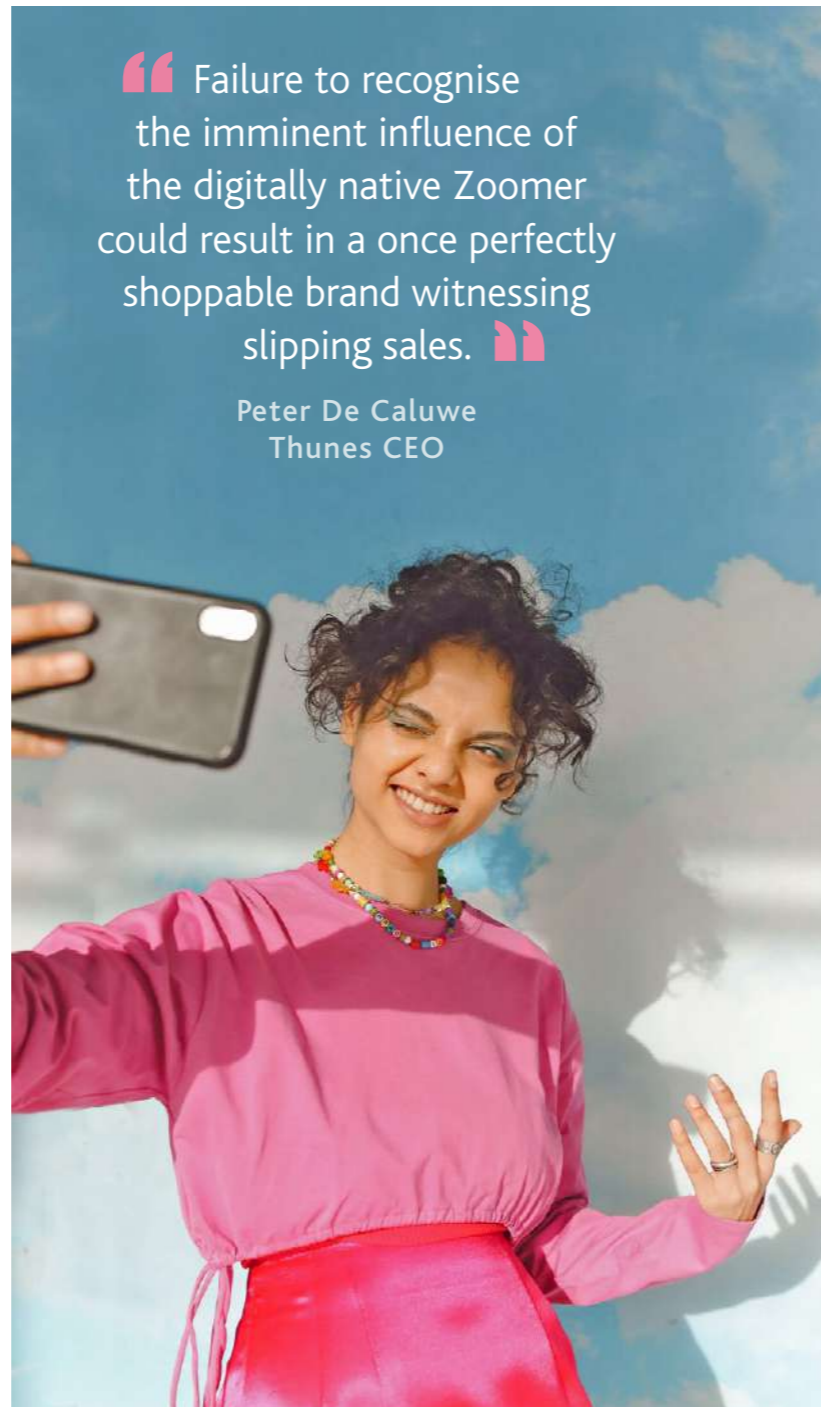
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# Thunes. Gen Z: The future of spending survey

## How the world's youngest and most digitally-adept consumers are forcing change to decades-old business practices

### Survey of 'Zoomers' in 13 countries spotlights ...

- **Social media consumption:** Social media is part of Gen Z daily life and is increasingly driving their economic activity. 8 out of 10 said they use social media on multiple occasions throughout the day. 7 out of 10 said they have purchased products they discovered on social media, such as Facebook and TikTok.
- **Paying the bill:** Cash is on the decline, but still relevant. Mobile wallets are gaining ground: in 5 out of 13 surveyed countries, it is the most popular payment method.
- **Shopping habits:** Zoomers are a generation of shoppers. In all of the surveyed markets, shopping accounts for the single biggest share of their spending – ahead of entertainment, events, and eating out.



“ Failure to recognise the imminent influence of the digitally native Zoomer could result in a once perfectly shoppable brand witnessing slipping sales. ”

Peter De Caluwe  
Thunes CEO

To achieve growth and success past 2030, businesses must start to understand the living, shopping, and financial habits of Gen Z or Zoomers (consumers aged between 16 and 24) now – and accept that they are very different from previous generations.

This demographic, who never knew life without the internet and smartphones, currently represents the largest population group on earth. Members of this age group account for almost 2.5 billion people, surpassing Millennials in 2019.

To shed some light on Zoomers, the global payments platform Thunes conducted a world-wide study into their shopping, social, and payment preferences. They interviewed 6 500 people between the ages of 16 and 24 from 13 developed and emerging countries around the world.

### Gen Z: Some survey highlights ...

- **Social media:** Gen Z is influenced by social media more than any other generation. 8 out of 10 said they use social media on multiple occasions throughout the day. Three-quarters of Zoomers also check in multiple times each day in emerging markets, with two-thirds stating that they have purchased products they first discovered online. Not only is social media where Gen Z spend their money but increasingly where they are making it too, with a growing range of content monetisation options offered by TikTok, YouTube, Patreon, Clubhouse, and Twitch.

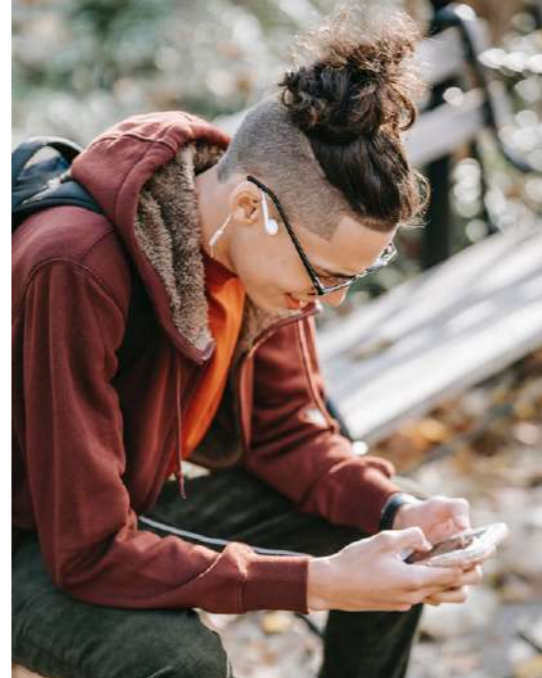
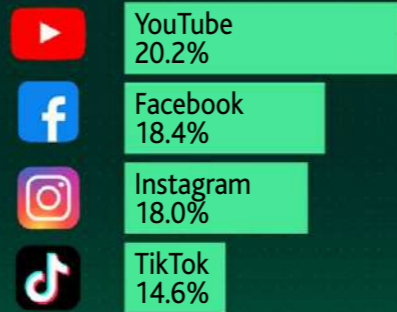


# Gen Z's Social Media Habits

## Role of social media

- 74%** use social media multiple times a day
- 66.4%** bought a product after seeing it on social media
- 28.5%** say #1 influencing factor is online ratings & reviews

## Top 4 social media platforms



“We knew that social media would be a key part of a Zoomer’s daily life, but what our survey helped to reveal is the extent to which they are driving spending activity in this demographic. Another important aspect of their lives that we wanted to explore is their relationships with money and their affection for mobile-driven payment methods. As a company that embraces the diversity of Payments and builds the next-generation payments infrastructure for the world, we will use these insights to shape our payment capabilities and solutions for the large group of the Internet businesses that we serve,” he added.

Mobile wallets are gaining traction, particularly in emerging markets where bank accounts have been historically difficult to access and financial exclusion is widespread. Mobile providers have led a digital payments revolution in Asia, while in Africa, the major telecoms providers have offered similar digital payments solutions.

As the world moves online, social media, content and entertainment platforms, payment providers, and consumer brands looking to capitalise on Zoomers and their online spending habits must consider all the factors above. Gen Z will be influenced first, not by price or even range or scarcity, but by their social circles, brand engagement online, and trendy, convenient, trustworthy payment options.

Peter De Caluwe said: “Failure to recognise the imminent influence of the digitally native Zoomer could result in a once perfectly shoppable brand witnessing slipping sales.” **SR**



- **Mobile wallets and money management:** Gen Z has little enthusiasm for traditional financial products – be it bank accounts or credit cards. 62% of Gen Z’s don’t have any bank account at all. Mobile wallets are however growing rapidly and in some emerging markets, almost 50% of Zoomers now use this type of account.
- **Cash is down, but not out:** About a quarter of Zoomers in western markets almost never use cash. Physical currency remains important in offline spend in emerging markets, but its influence is in decline. This is not surprising given the choice and accessibility of digital tools.
- **Focus on brand and UX:** One of the most important drivers for Zoomers considering purchase and payment methods is brand trust – it became the #1 factor for choosing a primary payment method in seven countries. This is the case in Western and emerging markets. User experience was identified as the second most popular factor, which, in an online world, affects loyalty too.

- **Shopping:** Zoomers spend a slightly larger proportion (19%) of their money online shopping than they do on socialising, eating out, and entertainment – this is the case in developed and emerging markets.



in apps, social media, digital platforms and soon – the metaverse. We should start to take this generation seriously as the revenues and strategic plans of many businesses – especially those that are relying on fast growth – are dependent on them”.

Thunes CEO Peter De Caluwe said: “To many, Gen Z is a misunderstood and overlooked generation. This is a generation to which ‘dial-up’ and ‘desktop’ are meaningless words and who don’t just think ‘mobile-first’, but live and breathe