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**Store design... The key to
the consumer's heart**

**Retail
automation
& payment
solutions
seeing
exponential
growth**





FEATURES



Image courtesy of spc-retail.com

Store design: key to the consumer's heart

Store design is vital to the success of any retail space. From customer comfort and shopping flow, to ease of delivery and shelf packing, a store's layout and design has to work. It's always in a state of slow, but constant flux as consumer behaviour and buying patterns change. Keeping the layout fresh, relevant and contemporary, without disturbing or upsetting the consumer experience, is a necessary balancing act.



Image: inspiredtesting.com

Retail automation & payment solutions

Ann Baker-Keulemans and Linda Wilkins say that retail's ever-increasing need for greater efficiency at a lower cost is one of the driving forces behind

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retail automation, but the availability of new technology solutions in an increasingly digital world is also driving change in the retail space.

STOREWATCH

Randpark Ridge Spar



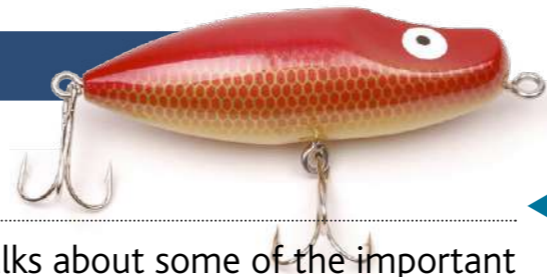
Jaime van Aswegen reveals that this Spar revamp that brings a 30-year heritage up to date.

Tuttigiorni Cagliari, Sardinia, Italy

Hippo Zourides shows that this store, by being different, is a way to fight the big boys.

COLUMNS

The decoy effect



Aki Kalliatakis talks about some of the important persuasive techniques that marketers and retailers have used to make products more desirable and generate sales.

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Create simple social media content

Arnaud Blanchet explains how you can engage with your community and attract new customers to your store.

Online vs in-store

Ged Nooy reveals fresh data that highlights a 109% rise in online bread sales and that food categories grew by 53% in the latest three months.

State of the Retail Nation monthly report

Top findings are ... South African retail sector records R519-Billion in annual sales, stabilisation in alcohol sales recovery, and top manufacturers seeing strong double-digit growth.

BMI pie category research

Dana Braithwaite says that although the pie category has seen some recovery, since the 15-20% decline in 2020, sales volumes are yet to recover to pre-pandemic levels.



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Christmas is coming



Helen Maister

excellent design and bring you into the future of retail? We have the feature that will help you in this process.



Image courtesy of spc-retail.com

Store design is vital to the success of any retail space. From customer comfort and shopping flow, to ease of delivery and shelf packing, a store's layout and design

We have passed the winter solstice and we are heading for Christmas. This year is flying by. Updates to stores always have an end of November deadline. So where are you, the retailer, in this process? Have you got an idea that you want to execute? Do you know who to speak to, who will give you excellent service,

has to work. It's always in a state of slow but constant flux. However, as consumer behaviour and buying patterns change, so too should the arrangement and composition of your store.

Integrated solutions are necessary for maximising profits. The lower the cost of getting the product onto the shelf, the bigger the profits can be.

Retail's ever-increasing need for greater efficiency at a lower cost is one of the driving forces behind retail automation. The availability of new technology solutions in an increasingly digital world is also driving change in the retail space. In-store, the signs of automation are hard to miss, as point-of-sale, labelling, packaging, payment options and in-store weighing networks are automated, improved, and inter-linked to create an improved value proposition for store and customer. It all adds to an enhanced customer experience. Meanwhile automation in the back end, from ordering and receiving, warehousing, transportation, workflows and logistics, security, stock control,



Image: Cottonbro, Pexels

merchandising and point-of-purchase is impacting the entire supply chain.

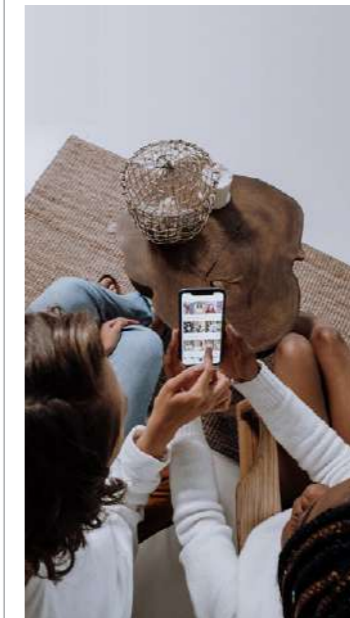


Image: Cottonbro, Pexels

Social media is now an essential part of a customer experience. Are you lost as to where to start this process? Please read the third insert of our series in getting your store online. In this series we have discussed "The rise of e-commerce – how your store can benefit from it."

Helen Maister

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Testing

Are you ensuring dairy product safety?

Dairy is a staple in many people's diet. It is an accessible and affordable food group that many people rely on to sustain a healthy lifestyle. As a result, we are sure we do not need to emphasise the importance of dairy product safety. It is a major factor of overall food safety.

However, there may be several aspects of the field that you are still a bit unclear about. It can be a complex topic, but it does not have to be. Here, we will explain all the basics you need to know about dairy product safety.

Milk and dairy product safety standards

The regulations related to milk and dairy product safety are extensive. They have been set out by the Minister of health in terms of section 15(1) of the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act, 1972 (Act No. 54 of 1972).

The laws set out restrictions on the sale of dairy products. For example, an organisation, manufacturer or farmer is not allowed to sell raw milk for further processing if it contains antibiotics, antimicrobial substances, pathogenic organisms, or if the contents exceed the Maximum Residue Level (MRL) allowed for. The sale of dairy products for consumption is regulated in a similar way.

Other things you will find in the Act are the methods used to test dairy products safety, the maximum amounts of microorganisms and chemicals allowed in products, and rules regarding the labeling of products.

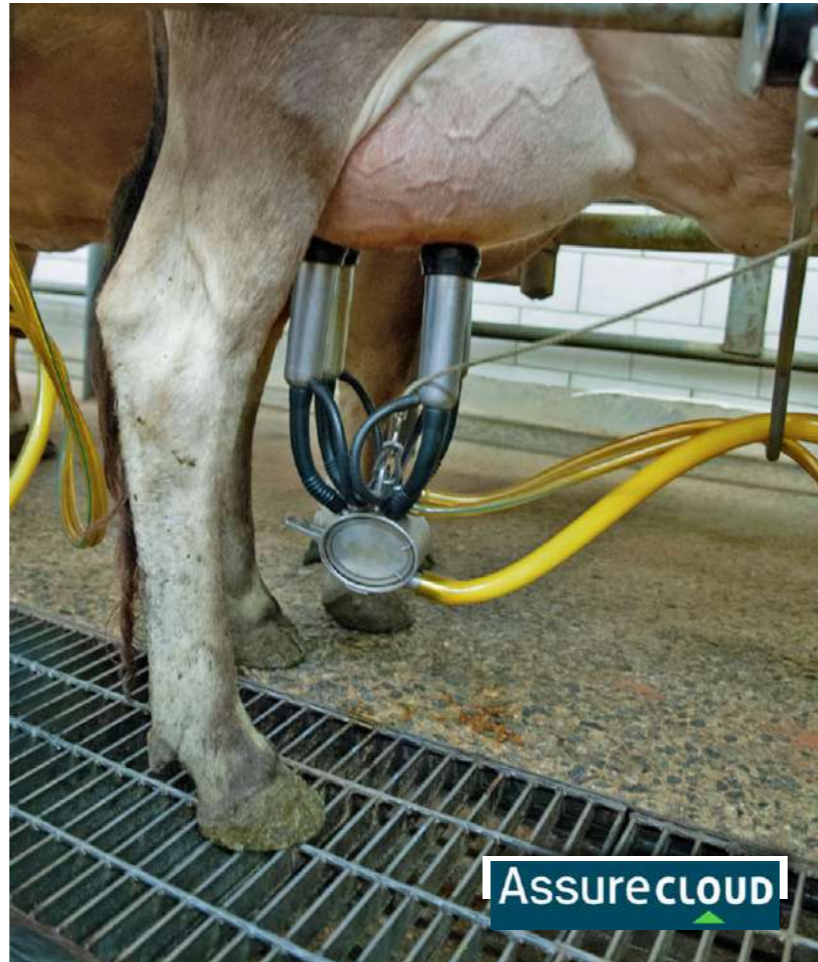


Image courtesy of Mark Stebnicki, Pexels.

Whether you are a supplier, producer, processor, exporter, wholesaler or retailer involved with dairy products in the supply chain, it is best that you familiarise yourself with these regulations.

Overall, the Act is in place to ensure that foodstuffs are safe for human consumption and to make sure that consumers are safe from exploitation.

Why analyse milk and dairy products?

While food safety management is an issue that has been in emergence for years now, it is still not fully

understood – especially in the dairy and milk sector. Nevertheless, it is better to be proactive than reactive, when it comes to dairy product safety.

Rather mitigate potential harm before it has the chance to happen ...

- Monitor your dairy product safety through a suitable testing schedule. If you do not, you may face issues relating to the harm of humans and animals, and public criticism.
- There might be penalties should legal issues arise from non-compliance. If your products are found to be non-compliant, authorities may sentence you with a fine or imprisonment.

What do labs test for?

When you send your products to chemistry or microbiology labs, they are tested for a variety of desirable and undesirable parameters.

In a **microbiology lab**, your products can be tested for pathogens like E.coli and coliforms. If these pathogens are in high concentrations in your products, they could lead to the spread of disease within the population. If they are below the allowed limits then your product is safe for resale or consumption.

Chemistry labs will test for undesirable parameters such as heavy metals, mycotoxins, nutritional information, pesticide residues, antibiotic residues, peroxides, added water and more.

Other things that should be tested for are solid contaminants such as minute pieces of glass or wood, or sand, for example.

Chemical testing for desirable parameters in dairy products include determination of the fat, protein, total solids/moisture and full nutritional testing for labelling.

How are dairy products tested?

To test your dairy products, they have to be sent to an **accredited food testing facility**. Here they will use specialised methods to inspect your products. Each type of product will require a different method. Below we discuss two of the 'gold-standard' chemistry methods used to test dairy products' nutritional values required for compliance:

Rose-Gottlieb Method

This method is the ISO Reference Method for fat determination and is specifically used to test the fat content in milk and dairy products. The fat is extracted from the product sample, dried and then weighed. The Rose-Gottlieb method provides superior accuracy to any other test method available for fat determination and serves as the basis of accurate nutritional profiles.

Kjeldahl Method

The Kjeldahl method is the ISO Reference Method to determine crude protein in dairy products. It provides superior accuracy to other faster/ more routine methods and is the industry standard for protein determination in nutritional analyses.



Image courtesy of Kamaji Ogino, Pexels.

Why is this so significant? Being aware of the accurate composition of products is important for the labelling process. It is also important to ...

“ ... ensure that your products have the necessary nutritional values to accurately inform the consumer and protect you from any possible dispute in this regard. ”

What safety precautions can you take?

In addition to lab testing, which is the most important, there are a few measures you can implement to ensure dairy product safety.

- Make sure you are mitigating risks of contamination through proper waste management, storage of dangerous substances, and following appropriate milking practices.
- Be aware of animal and plant health.
- Keep an eye on your equipment to avoid using dirty tools.
- Clean and disinfect regularly.

In conclusion

Ensuring dairy product safety and compliance is a matter of public health and company reputation. It involves investigating the physical, chemical, and microbiological elements of the product. To do it correctly, you must be able to prove compliance in all of these areas. **SR**

Image courtesy of Ronit Hanegby, Pexels.





Image courtesy of Arthur Ogleznev, Pexels

This is the next article in a short series on how behavioural economics and 'being human' affects your business.

Aki Kalliatakis
aki@leadershiplaunchpad.co.za

The decoy effect

“Dad, can we buy a pair of Kosmo Rider sneakers?” my son said.

“How much?” I asked.

“It’s not too bad,” he replied, “They are usually way over R2 000... but I can get them online much cheaper – but we have to move fast because they only have a few left.”

“Cold day in hell,” was my retort.

“But dad,” he continued, “They will last me for a long time, and all my friends say they love them. 🙌”

So, I resorted to the usual phrases that all parents depend on: “Do you think money goes on trees?” and “If your friends all asked you to go jump in a lake, would you do it?”

But this conversation shows that, even as a teenager, my son has already mastered some of the important persuasive techniques that marketers and retailers have used to generate sales – and you can use these too. Let’s look at what we can learn from this conversation.

In most businesses your challenge is to get customers to perceive the value of your products without changing the price. There was a marvellous experiment conducted at a supermarket chain in Iowa, USA, in 1998. They were promoting Campbell’s soups at the aisle-ends, with a moderate advertised discount of around 12%. But on three separate sequential days one subtle change was made. One day they stated there was no limit to how many cans of soup customers could buy, the next they said a maximum of

four per customer, and the third day a limit of twelve per customer.

At the end of it all, the researchers tallied up the results, and found that all three strategies increased sales. But the best by far was when they said, “Limited to 12 per customer” (an average of 7 cans per customer, versus 3.5 and 3.3 cans for the other two days). By providing a limit, they had made soup cans more desirable – and anchored buying behaviour.

Creating scarcity can be a powerful strategy, and it includes limiting quantities, as well as creating deadlines ... “Only this weekend.”

There is another variation of the principle of anchoring that is especially powerful when it comes to price. A manufacturer of bread-making appliances was reasonably successful with their original model, but customer feedback showed one request coming up repeatedly – the loaf that was produced was too small. The executive team gave the go-ahead to develop a new deluxe



Image courtesy of Breville Custom Loaf Bread Maker | Williams Sonoma

model that doubled the size of the loaf, and after considerable effort and expense, the company launched the new model.

Sales were terribly disappointing – and they wondered where and why it had all gone wrong. After much hand-wringing and embarrassing conversations, a small discovery created some hope, however. A junior marketing staff member pointed out that while the new product was not making money as hoped, sales of the older, smaller model had significantly increased.

How could this be? After making lots of observations at the point of sale, interviewing countless customers, and analysing results, they discovered that it became much easier for hesitant customers to buy a somewhat cheaper bread-maker when they saw the price of the deluxe model.



“The expensive machine had become a decoy that anchored the customer’s mind at the more expensive model. The original machine appeared to be a bargain.”

If you also combine this with the principle of social proof, then it can be further enhanced. Social proof is when we observe a whole lot of other people, people like us, doing something that we haven’t decided on yet.

“The classic example is one of two restaurants next to each other. You’re new to town, and you need to decide where to eat. In front of the first, you see people clamouring to get in and it’s already full.”



Image courtesy of The Guardian

There is no wait at the eatery next door. Guess where you will most likely choose?

This happened to me recently at a coffee shop at the end of a day. Most cakes were finished and the waitress said, “But we have lots of the Black Forest left.” “I’ll just have a cappuccino,” I replied. Somewhere in the back of my mind I probably thought that if the Black Forest was good, others would have eaten it, therefore it can’t be that great. And then my son set me up for the final part of the conversation. Right at the end of the conversation, he sadly added, “... but only if you want us to get them, Dad.”

With this simple addition, he had me hooked. By reinforcing my freedom to choose to help, and by plucking at my emotional heart strings (after all, which parent likes to disappoint their child?), he was quickly able to get me on his side.

Your customers are the same. If they feel that in some way they have retained some control of the interaction, then they too will cooperate. And when that is combined with some basic courtesy, rather than orders, you will find that they are quickly on your side.

To illustrate, during the Covid lockdown there were a lot of signs at places where people gather which stated something like, "Do not sit here." But at some places the signs read, "Please sit here." It's a small, but polite difference – and it makes the world of difference.

Another example ... when tills are not manned in your store, you probably have a sign that says something like, "Checkout closed." But you can empower your customers by cleverly and courteously redirecting them, "We'd love to serve you at another checkout."

To summarise, think about how you can use these principles to make your business more successful. Can you change the customers' perception of value of what you sell without lowering the price? Proving a limit in terms of quantity or time can make things seem more desirable.



“ If price is an issue, use a more expensive product as a decoy to set expectations and anchor their minds, so that whatever follows seems like a better deal.

Give your customers the feeling that they are in control by offering them choices.

And finally, appeal to their emotions. What are the things that push your customers' buttons? ”

SR



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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



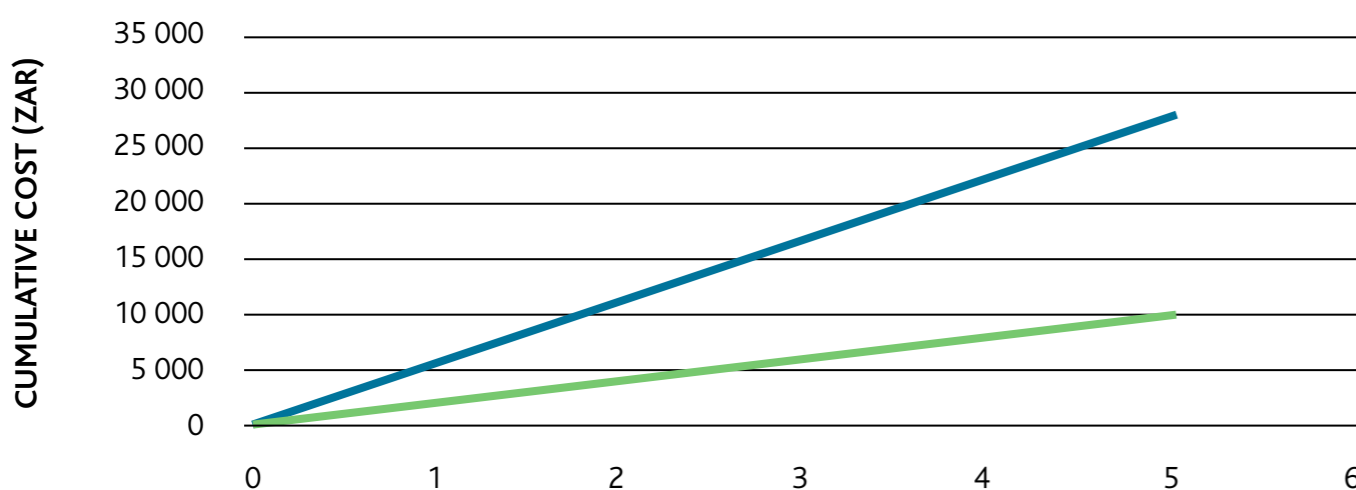
CASE CLOSED

Energy Saving Solutions

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



Store design

By Ann Baker-Keulemans

Store design is vital to the success of any retail space. From customer comfort and shopping flow, to ease of delivery and shelf packing, a store's layout and design has to work.

It's always in a state of slow but constant flux, though – as consumer behaviour and buying patterns change, so too should the arrangement and composition of your store.

However, keeping your layout fresh, relevant and contemporary, without disturbing or upsetting the consumer experience, is a necessary balancing act. Your shoppers might say they are excited by your store's



The key to the consumer's **HEART**

new layout – and really mean it – until they can't find something where it used to be. This means that signage is key to helping your customers adjust to any changes in your store, while lighting, flooring and finishes, till placements, the height of your shelves all affect the consumer experience as much as where you situate your products within a store.

A store's design guides and informs the shopper, making the experience easier and more efficient, while also encouraging impulse buys and 'shopping with their eyes'.

Signage matters

Big, bold, easy-to-read signage is a must. No shopper wants to spend precious time searching for the correct aisle, counter, or department. Keeping things in their line of sight can be overlooked as shelves get stacked higher and promotional banners cover the store. You can have the sleekest signage imaginable, and it won't do any good unless it can be seen and understood



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by consumers of all shapes, sizes, and abilities – it is critical to keep factors such as the first language of the majority of your shoppers, wheelchair accessibility or sight-impaired consumers in mind when planning your in-store signage.

Wider aisles work best

Aisles are better when wider. Shoppers loathe being inconvenienced, so ensure even the unruliest of trolleys can make it around any corners and that two distracted shoppers can pass each other safely in the aisle. A wider aisle also allows your shoppers to browse in peace and gives your merchandisers space to work.

Keeping queues under control

Smart planning and the careful positioning of salespoints and tills are necessary to create a better queueing experience, as well as cater for as many till points as is necessary for your customer base. Queues that back into the store space can severely disrupt shoppers who are still busy. And don't overlook the frustration of insufficient unpacking space at the cashier (often caused by too many displays on the counter). Ensure you provide enough room for shoppers to park their trolley in front of the cashier while also providing enough space to unpack their goods and make payment.

Smaller store formats

When the focus is on providing convenience, some retail groups are seeing the benefits of downsizing. According to Checkers, customer demand for



At the opening of Checkers Foods Franschhoek: Gesie van Deventer, Mayor of Stellenbosch Local Municipality; Reuben Riffel, Chef; Aviwe Malanga, Checkers Cashier; and Pieter Engelbrecht, Shoprite Holdings CEO.

Take a virtual tour around Checkers Foods Franschhoek here:
<https://www.shopriteholdings.co.za/articles/Newsroom/2022/checkers-top-quality-food-franschhoek.html> ▶▶▶▶▶

Checkers supermarkets in their neighbourhoods has inspired a new, smaller format Checkers Foods. In their press release announcing the opening of Checkers Foods at the Weltevreden Park Shopping Centre in Roodepoort in November 2021, they say, "The new 1 200m² Checkers Foods store boasts an expanded fresh food offering with solution-based convenience ranges curated to meet specific customer needs, including lunch, braai, dinner or emergency purchases." Checkers has now also opened their first Checkers Foods in the Western Cape, with a 1 000m² store launching in Franschhoek in April 2022. The store has a unique look and feel "designed to honour the style and charm of Franschhoek and the architecture of the building in which it is located."

The store includes freshly prepared sushi, exclusive brands Forage & Feast and Simple Truth, a meat market with free-range chicken and restaurant-quality steak, a bakery with artisanal breads, fruit and vegetables, a wine and cheese cellar, fresh flowers, Starbucks and a Money Market counter.

In a similar vein, local company TDC&Co. (www.designcompany.co.za) unpacks their work on Checkers Hyper, saying their main objective was to "challenge the status quo and develop a fresh approach to the large format store experience."

Understanding that each department is an independent entity, resulted in each area having a signature look and feel, and created an interesting artisanal market-style design. Although the finishes



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and signage for each department are different, to reflect this independence, the use of similar materials treated or aged in different ways, and a harmonious colour palette, ties everything together.

Meanwhile Checkers FreshX concept stores offer an emphasis on fresh food and convenience. Checkers says, "Customers can also look forward to an improved layout – including wider aisles and seamless floors that allow trolleys to move with limited noise. Unlike traditional Checkers stores, the FreshX concept stores feature more upmarket furniture and signage – including benches and tables for customers to test samples."

Smaller format versus larger format stores

Smaller-format stores located within suburbs and catering towards a very specific customer base harken back to the convenience and corner stores of the past – albeit on a new and improved level. As consumers find a new work-life balance post-pandemic, the desire for more intimate shopping experiences that can be completed quickly – on the way home from school or work, or during a mid-morning work-from-home break – becomes the norm. Consumers love shopping local – but they expect more.

A survey from YouGov conducted in 2021 shows some interesting data on store size preference. The survey, which spanned 17 markets, shows that people prefer smaller grocery store formats to larger ones in most markets. This sentiment is strongest in markets such as India, Mexico, France,



Good lighting, wider aisles and clear signage are not only functional, they also add to the overall look and feel of a store – in this instance, clean, uncluttered, aesthetically pleasing, and easy to navigate all come to mind.

Image courtesy of Lotus Fresh, Head Architecture and Design Ltd.

Poland, and Denmark, where more than two in five people agree they prefer smaller grocery stores. Larger format stores tend to be more popular in places such as the UK, Sweden, Australia, China, and Singapore – where people are more likely to disagree that they prefer smaller grocery stores to larger ones.

In Germany and Italy, people seem split on the topic and perceptions of smaller versus larger stores are closely divided. However, this is also age-dependent, as many younger consumers polled in the survey said they preferred larger stores.

In an article for Rosseto Serving Solutions, Mark Dunson at Chain Store Age says, "To remain competitive, many retailers are exploring new, smaller store formats with a wider variety of fresh and prepared food offerings." He believes this is in

response to the growing consumer demands for convenience, as well as fresh produce.

Design decisions – what to think about and what not to forget

Chriselda Kistnasamy, Marketing Manager for store design and shop fitting services experts TCK Retail Solutions, says, "As consumers, we buy with our eyes first. Design can encourage shopping or hinder it. How many times have you walked into a shop and walked out simply because the experience of shopping was frustrating? Layout and design are of utmost importance when it comes to attracting and retaining customers. At TCK we use a system to enhance the flow and design of the space. Store design is one part art and one part science."

When it comes to store design, some things





plastic ideas



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tend to get overlooked. Kistnasamy explains, “People often forget to consider positioning the right display products in the right places. We call it Retail Design Strategy and Visual Merchandising – a combination of interior designing, formulated store layout, brand management and signage essentials – and it can be an effective way to drive sales. Retailers also need to consider using display units and counters that are both efficient and good looking to start with, instead of relying on ‘window dressing’ after the fact. Lastly, lighting and signage are crucial to good design and are both often afterthoughts.”

For stores that need a design makeover, the real challenges are budget and downtime. For Kistnasamy, retailers looking to design a new store or revamp an existing one need to incorporate three basic principles: every design must work to elevate sales, improve functionality, and add value to a store. She says, “As a store owner, your store design should give you these three things in addition to looking good.”

Colour coding and the impact of colour on consumers

As strange as it may sound, colour therapy (or chromotherapy) is a recognised holistic therapy. This is because colours, and even shades within a particular colour, can evoke certain feelings and responses. Your colour palette can also say quite a bit on a social level. Bright and bold colours are assertive, modern, and edgy – think lime green, fire engine red, canary yellow, teal, tangerine



Green roofing in Vancouver, Canada.
Image courtesy of Building and Decor



Natural colours are more calming and convey a sense of maturity.

orange, bubblegum purple. Natural palettes are more calming and convey a sense of maturity. Earthy tones convey a sense of “local and organic”,

whereas brighter hues tend to signify the exotic and convey energy. The temperature of a colour, whether it is warm or cold, can also affect people and the way they think and act. Warm colours convey a cosy atmosphere, while cool colours portray a clean and modern look.

A store designer who understands chromotherapy and the meaning of colours can provide expert advice for choosing the best colours for your store. For example, red can encourage action, orange can stimulate enthusiasm, and yellow can engender feelings of happiness. Green means balance, and blue, serenity. How you pair and complement the colours you choose can also have an effect. It’s a science, and one that shouldn’t be ignored. From a practical point of view, once you have chosen your palette, be sure to examine it closely under different kinds of natural and artificial light to avoid any unwelcome surprises.

Creativity versus practicality – design trends with a purpose

There are a number of exciting design trends on the horizon. Some make excellent sense from a practical and a functional point of view, while others are aimed at attracting customers using more emotive methods, such as how a store feels, its atmosphere, and the overall customer experience. There are also shorter-term trends that can provide some in-store excitement.

Ghost kitchens spring to mind – a trend that has made its way into Walmart Canada. Restaurant brands partner with the retailer to provide



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a one stop mealtime offering, with online and walk-in ordering making its way into some retail outlets to promote specific brands).

In-store dining

An in-house food prep area dedicated to fresh food made for customers has the potential to encourage longer shopping trips and more browsing, provide a space for consumers and their families to snack, or sit and take stock. More comfortable, inviting retail spaces are growing in popularity.

The creation of relaxing and sociable spaces

Many retailers embracing free-flowing perimeters with clusters of market-style displays such as cheeses, baked goods, wines, and deli areas. According to Rosseto Serving Solutions, ...

“ Design and architecture magazine Dezeen spotlighted a grocery store in China called Lotus Fresh. Designed like an open market, the supermarket is further enhanced by open ceilings and a set of store graphics that incorporate clear hand-scripted fonts in Chinese and English. ”

Lotus Fresh, which has 70 locations in China, rebranded to attract customers in big cities like Shanghai and the Pudong area. That store’s designer, Head Architecture, later was awarded the title of Most Influential Design Agency in Greater China.”

That’s quite the sell, and it’s easy to see why. A market-style design makes it much easier to



Images courtesy of Lotus Fresh, Head Architecture and Design Ltd.

wander and browse the produce, be enticed by new or unexpected offerings, and make impulse buys. It can be somewhat frustrating for shoppers looking for a speedy exit, but the number of options on offer in this style of set-up can outweigh that.

“ Psychologically speaking, retail spaces that encourage lingering, and eating or drinking, can drive further sales as a fed shopper is a happy shopper, and happy shoppers tend to buy more. This is also true of hungry shoppers caught by the scent of fresh food ... two birds, one stone. ”



Patterns at play – how floor design works

How store designs are utilised, and even mixed-and-matched, can be a source of innovation and creativity.

- The grid layout is the most common, the most familiar to shoppers, and provides maximum



display space with minimal empty space. Wide aisles encourage browsing, and gondola ends at the front of the store provide a changing landscape of speciality items and promotions that are hard to ignore, and which can be used to attract new customers, depending on how much of the store can be seen from the entrance.

- A herringbone layout is an adapted grid for much smaller floor spaces. While it maximises the available space, it does reduce product visibility from the front of the store and can cause a small space to look even smaller and more cramped.
- The loop is not particularly popular locally, although a good example is hardware and home store Leroy Merlin, although it is not a strict loop, per se. Shoppers are guided along a single main channel through the entire store, which means they have to walk past every department, but this can be frustrating during peak periods as too many shoppers going the same way can cause something of a logjam effect.
- Free-flow designs are relatively new for the local market and are less predictable. The grouping of products produces an open market effect, but this style of design does take up a lot of space and consumer movements are much less predictable.



Most important, is the customer experience. Is your store laid out intuitively, with product groupings that make sense while also subconsciously guiding consumers to consider additional unplanned purchases? Are your displays appealing, eye-catching, and placed for the greatest effect? Is your store easy to navigate? And ultimately, are you geared to making the best use of your space for maximum sales and customer satisfaction?

Trends to watch

The designer word of the moment is disruption. By disrupting the norm and disrupting traditional ways of thinking, store designers are hoping to intrigue and attract consumers with store concepts that

meet their needs while also playing into the desire for a truly superior shopping experience. When everything can be bought at the click of a mouse, shoppers need a reason to go in store.

It should be noted that while change can drive sales (confused shoppers buy more while searching for the products they actually came for), this can be an annoying tactic. Introduce change gently, and if you are making a big change, give loyal customers plenty of warning. And while not every international trend translates well on South African shores, what we're seeing is innovative, challenging, and even titillating. Building and Décor (www.buildinganddecor.co.za) introduces us to several trends they expect to see in the near future.



Up to 40% energy saving with our Close the Case Glass Doors



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

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● Brand storytelling

The power of storytelling has long been used by brands to sell their products. Moving this in-store and utilising the same tactics to highlight brand values and core tenets that answer consumer demands can help attract and retain customers.

● Interactive shopping experiences

In order to compete with the ease and convenience of online shopping, retailers are having to be quite creative when it comes to their in-store experiences. This also needs to happen in a space that feels safe, comfortable, and welcoming – no easy feat when customers expect to be able to taste, touch, and smell what they are buying, safely.

● Technology

This is dependent on a store's target market and demographic, as for many South African consumers, overt and advanced technology can be off-putting, overwhelming, or utterly foreign. For others, the latest and greatest tech is a big draw, from QR code competitions to contactless shopping and digital coupons, to name a few.

● The power of social media

Social media is pervasive and effective, and its effects cannot be escaped or ignored. The power of social media is significant, particularly for tech-savvy and younger shoppers. Investing in an innovative, interactive, responsive, and effective social media team is vital for a retailer's success. Use your social platforms to showcase your store's design elements, innovative layout, and beautiful displays.



● Natural lighting

Natural lighting, or the effect of natural lighting, is a mood enhancer and can enhance the aesthetic appeal of certain products. It also allows consumers to get a more realistic look at what they're buying. Alcon Lighting recommends 4 000 to 4 500K bulbs for a natural lighting effect, which is "optimal for retail dressing rooms and grocery stores".

● Wayfinding for floor designs

Not just a pretty floor layout– specific designs can be used to subtly direct the flow of movement and guide shoppers around the store.



Images courtesy ofalconlighting.com



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Partnering With People To Create Exceptional Value

Basic store design mistakes to avoid

Last but not least, here is a list from spc-retail.com of basic store design mistakes to avoid.

Choosing the wrong floor plan. This will confuse your customers and even stop them from coming back to your store. **The solution:** Choose a layout for your type of business, size of store and customer expectations.

A complex or disorganised layout. Your customers will feel as if they are in a maze, have to work hard to find what they want and distract them from their shopping goals. **The solution:** Think logically about your floor plan and navigation signage. Bring in some outside feedback from customers and ask them about their experience. You'll be surprised at what they say!

Too much merchandising space. Too much space means you have to keep all those shelves stocked. **The solution:** Rather give your shoppers a little more room to get around the store and browse the shelves.

Lack of design cohesion. Too many diverse elements will detract from your ambiance, brand image and overall shopping environment. **The solution:** Design elements that run through the store will pull it all together.

Lack of flexibility in design and displays. This will result in store boredom and a feeling of stagnation. **The solution:** Even long-term design needs a little shake up now and then. Making minor changes will keep your store engaging. Use tables, platforms, shelving, and other displays that can be changed as required.



“ Think logically about your floor plan and navigation signage. Bring in some outside feedback from customers and ask them about their experience. You'll be surprised at what they say! ”

Image courtesy of spc-retail.com

Blocked sightlines. Already mentioned, but worth another. Blocking a customer's view with tall displays will not help them to figure out where to go next in your store. **The solution:** Look at the eye level of your customers – tall and short. What do you want them to see as they enter and exit? Use shorter displays towards the front of a sightline path and taller displays towards the back.

Overcrowding with point of purchase material. Having too much point of purchase material in aisles blocks access and makes customers want to leave the area so they don't contribute to the blockage. **The solution:** Use appropriately sized displays that don't block the flow of traffic and limit point of purchase displays to keep aisles free of clutter. **SR**

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Ann Baker-Keulemans, a highly experienced business and consumer journalist, 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 | [@Wilkins Ross Communications \(Pty\) Ltd](https://www.instagram.com/WilkinsRossCommunications)



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OUR STORY

Registration as a company

1964

Foundation of KK Engineering

1968

Registration as a company

1981

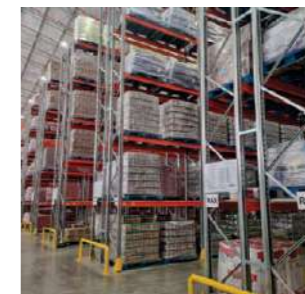
Change of name to KK Display

Creation of Storequip ground and factory in City Deep.
Change of name to KK Shelving

2008

Aquisition of StoreWorks, Storeworks becomes part of the Storequip Group

2018





OUR MARKETS

Storequip Group is collaborating with customers from 18 countries and two continents. We aim to provide services in more marketplaces to enhance the environment of our customers.



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TEL: +27 11 613 3839

Email: sales@storeworks.co.za

WEBSITE: www.storeworksc.co.za

Retail automation & payment solutions

Seeing exponential growth as technology solutions explode worldwide

Retail's ever-increasing need for greater efficiency at a lower cost is one of the driving forces behind retail automation, but the availability of new technology solutions in an increasingly digital world is also driving change in the retail space. In-store, the signs of automation are hard to miss, as points of sale, labelling, packaging, payment options and in-store weighing networks are automated, improved, and inter-linked to create an improved value proposition for store and customer, and an enhanced customer experience.

Meanwhile automation in the back end, from ordering and receiving, warehousing, transportation, workflows and logistics, security, stock control, merchandising and point of purchase is impacting the entire supply chain. Autonomous delivery vehicles, warehouse and delivery drones, warehouse robotics that lift, move and sort, automated re-ordering that uses satellite communications, and intelligent automation are just some of the technologies coming into play. This is an exciting time for FMCG retailers and wholesalers as technology solutions are changing the face of the industry.



Image courtesy of tdwi.org

Shopping technologies and digitalisation

“ Factors influencing shopping technologies and the digitalisation of the shopping experience include the minimising of touchpoints for greater health and hygiene, social media, a greater focus on sustainability and environmental impact, cashless payments and the surge in online shopping. ”

Big changes coming for Pick n Pay, Checkers, Woolworths and other stores in South Africa (businessstech.co.za)



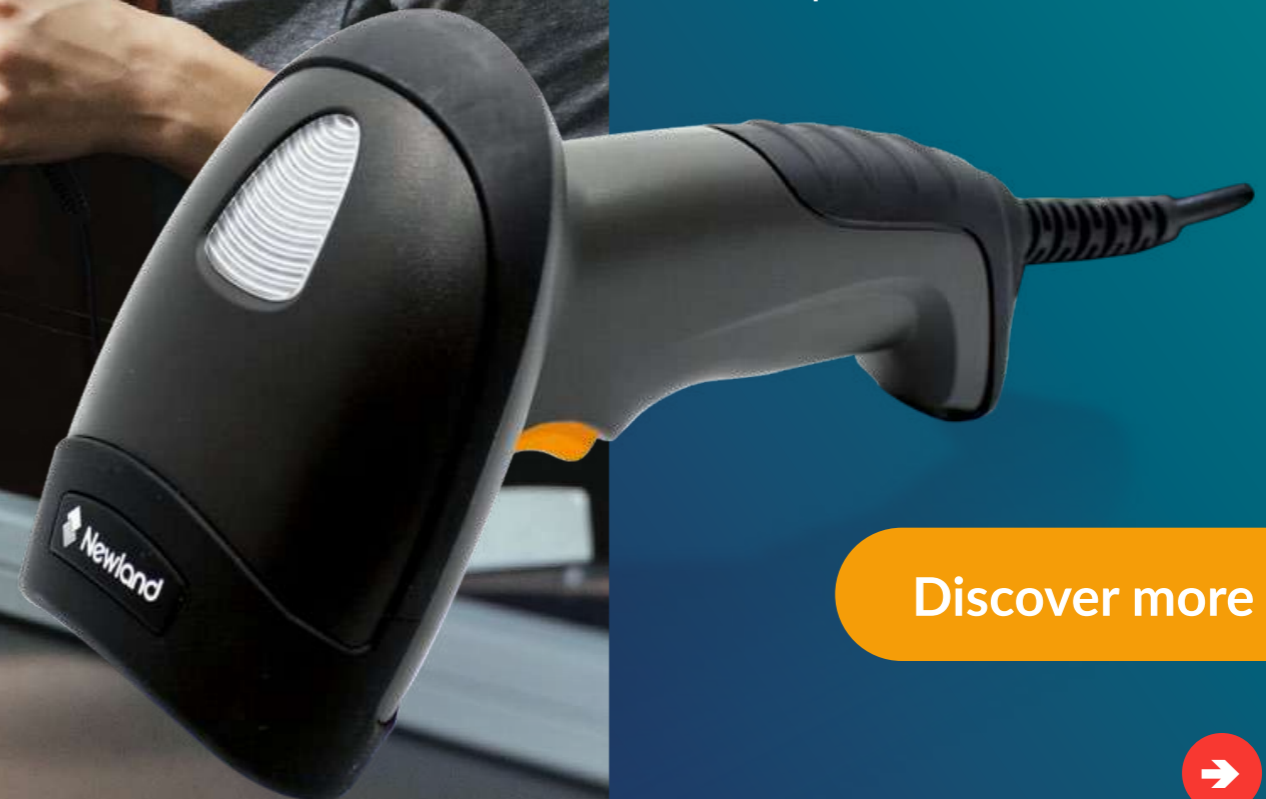
Image courtesy of Albin Berlin, Pexels



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The HR32 Marlin Corded is a barcode scanning powerhouse. No matter what type of barcode is displayed, the megapixel camera allows scanning even very small and high-density 1D and 2D barcodes with impressive speed and ease.



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Automation driving transformation

In an insights piece written for EY Global, the importance of customer-first technology takes centre stage.

“From creating a hybrid, omnichannel retail experience that blends the brick-and-mortar experience with a customised online presence, to finding “the right mix of invisibility, indispensability and intimacy,” it becomes clear that the technology behind retail automation is a vast and complex beast. ”

The EY Future Consumer Index indicates that consumers want the best of both worlds. “Fifty-five percent of people actively decide not to shop online because they feel it gives them less control of the purchase. Forty-five percent are mixing online and in-store for grocery shopping. Fifty-eight percent say they like to shop in bigger stores for more choice, consolidating multiple shopping trips into one weekly shop.” It should be noted that the last point “opposes an underlying trend toward more convenient formats, as consumers stay home more and shop on the go less.”

EY sees retailers prioritising analytics and artificial intelligence alongside robotics and automation. The internet of things (IOT) and edge computing – with its biggest benefit being the ability to process and store data faster are also top contenders for retailers looking to invest in emerging and developing technologies.

Mendel Gniwisch (www.foodlogistics.com) agrees. “54% of grocers are already increasing their year-

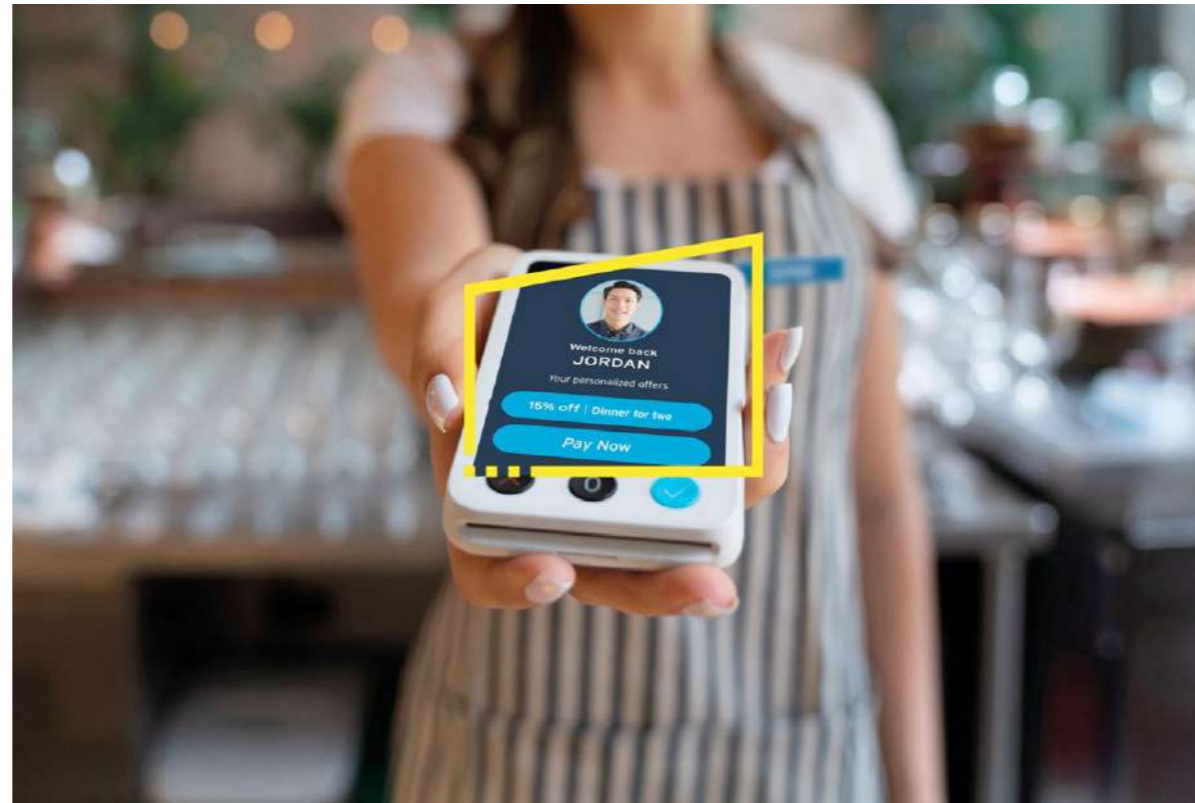


Image courtesy of EY Global

over-year tech spend with a focus on advancing digital and mobile capabilities, analytics-driven decision-making, personalized marketing and click-and-collect processes.” The trends to watch, Gniwisch continues, include ultra-rapid delivery, CEOs who think like CIOs, and augmented reality (AR), robotics, and automated fulfilment.

Retail digitalisation

Automating your manual processes is crucial for adaptability, agility, and growth.

Technology and weighing systems

For the software and hardware experts at Bizerba, retail automation just makes good business sense. Fully automated and customisable scales that weigh, pack, and label a variety of products can help meet the consumer demand for transparency.

Fully customisable labels can be used as a marketing tool and as an information port that includes everything consumers want and need to know about the product, such as weight, price, best before date, origin, ingredients everything can be included in one easy label.

Michael Berke, Vice President Global Sales & Marketing at Bizerba, knows it is important for retailers to stay open to possibilities

and keep an eye on evolving and developing technologies. Referencing how technology expands a retailer’s scale network, he says, “Integrate an inspection system into the GLM-levo CleanCut. Network your production with the BRAIN2 industrial software. If your requirements grow, BRAIN2 grows with you, and does so at low cost. I feel that this independence is the greatest value that Bizerba can offer its customers.”

Independence is the key word here. Automation and digitalisation should make things easier and increase a retailer’s independence while improving the customer’s shopping experience. Integrated scales, packaging, and labelling systems that connect to sales points and stock tracking software offer proven ways to cut costs, improve efficiencies, and reduce the risk of human error.

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SATO Judo Food Hand Labeller

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SATO FX3 Label Printer

The compact FX3 solves many of the complex challenges faced in food factories and stores by providing secure and easy food labelling:

- Labels can include ingredients, prep info, nutrition, allergen and storage advice details
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- Up-to-date data anytime, anywhere – error-free and secure
- Stand-alone & compact
- Anti-bacterial, splash-proof casing
- 305dpi print resolution

SATO Linerless Labels

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- Lower total cost of ownership



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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.

RFID and traceability

While radio frequency identification (RFID) tags and labels are not new, the technology has had far-reaching effects in terms of traceability, warehousing and merchandising, as well as security. A great example is Decathlon, the French-based multi-sports hub that quietly stormed our shores. All their clothing (all private label and own brand) contains a sewn-in RFID label.

This label means each unit can be traced, from manufacturer to warehouse, to store to sales point. This makes tracking stock and sales easy and is an excellent theft deterrent too. It is also much less invasive than the potentially dangerous security wires often used by local retailers.

While RFID still plays a major and vital role in retail, next-generation asset tracking solutions utilising BLE (Bluetooth Low Energy) and UWB (Ultra-wideband) provide real-time traceability and increased location data.



Image courtesy of losspreventionmedia.com

“RFID technology continues to evolve, with the ability to link to surveillance videos, provide a digital fingerprint of the store, assist with stock control and reduce organised retail crime making it an invaluable asset for retailers.”



Image courtesy of cba.ca

Automated cash management

From cash verification and banknote validation technology to cash recyclers and smart safes, the technology and hardware involved in cash handling is aimed at security, efficiency, accuracy, and accountability.

By removing the potential for human error and decreasing the amount of physical labour that goes into cash handling, you can streamline processes, reduce opportunities for theft or error, and free up your staff for other tasks. Mark Templemore-Walters, operations director at Cash Connect, says automated cash management is all about “leveraging a complete set of fintech solutions that can help your retail business to innovate and grow.”

He goes on to add that a truly automated cash management and payment solution should eliminate all staff touch points associated with manual reconciliations and banking.

“This will ensure fast and error-free cash management, while reducing overhead and back-office costs. Eliminating manual reconciliations and banking, and count and double-count supervision,

frees up staff time for more meaningful work. Depending on how much cash they process each month, a retailer can save up to 40% in cash costs by deploying a fully automated, end-to-end cash management service with a robust cash vault.”



“South Africans are being encouraged to wean themselves of their reliance on cash”

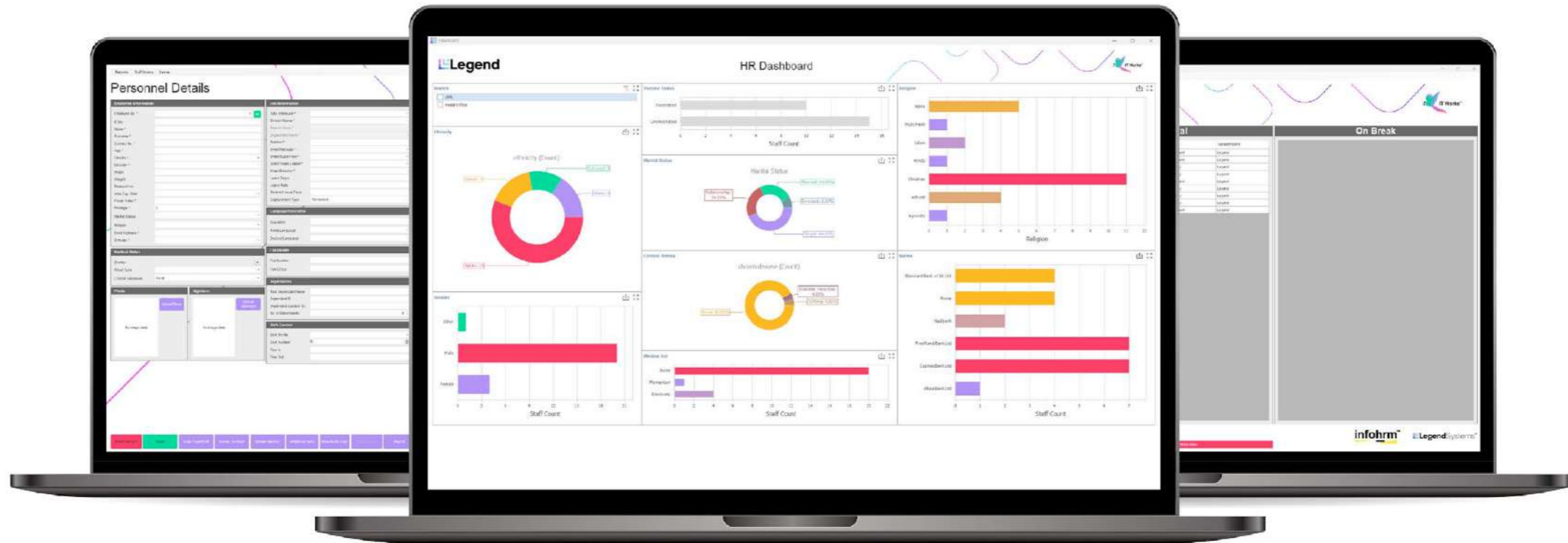
Image courtesy of techcentral.co.za

Self-checkout – retail automation at its most divisive

For some customers, the pinnacle of retail automation is self-checkout. Grab your groceries, scan and pack them yourself, pay, and off you go. However, countries like South Africa present numerous challenges to this level of automation, with union resistance, poor connectivity and an unstable power supply, and theft some of the

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major stumbling blocks. Industry experts remain slightly divided on the possibility of this type of technology taking hold in South Africa.

Christian Schiess, Managing Director at Bizerba South Africa, says, "In my opinion, until the unions see that digitalisation has its benefits to the job market, I feel South Africa will not be able to move on to fully automated systems in the retail industry and make room for self-checkout."

Wendell Trican, a Solutions Expert at Bizerba, presents another view. "We have a volatile market for retail and while some stores are able to make it work like Leroy Merlin in their hardware departments I feel we would only ever get to a 50/50 split of retailers who could make it work and those who simply face too many challenges."

For those who are considering it, there's plenty to weigh up. "Digitalisation has become a reality and the significance of intelligent applications will continue to expand in leaps and bounds," says Hendrik Ohse, Director of Global Software Sales at Bizerba.

“ At an international level, Bizerba customers in the retail sector have shown a growing interest in software solutions that work with AI (artificial intelligence). Part of the reason is the pressure e-commerce and retail digitalisation are bringing to bear on brick-and-mortar retail spaces. As usual, adaption is the key to survival. ”



Image courtesy of Bizerba

The benefit of self-checkout is clear as staff typically tied to the till can be redirected to other points in the store, while self-checkout counters typically use less physical space than manned counters, adding to precious retail floor space. Scanning errors and deliberate theft, however, can result in such huge losses that self-checkouts become a drain and are removed. When it comes to technical errors, Bizerba has been able to leverage its experience and expertise in the retail sector to develop digital solutions for these problems.

In general, South African labour unions are vehemently against anything that can be seen as taking away jobs from people, and with South Africa's unemployment figures, this concern is valid. Another point against self-checkout is the need

“ South African labour unions are vehemently against anything, such as self-checkouts and cashierless stores, that can be seen as taking away jobs from people, and with South Africa's unemployment figures, this concern is valid. For many, cash remains their only way of transacting. ”



for some form of non-cash payment solution. For many South Africans, this is still unfeasible as cash transactions remain their only way of transacting. At best, self-checkout would be limited to certain points within certain stores, to smaller high-end retailers catering solely to consumers able to transact, or as a hybrid solution of self-checkout and manned tills – a popular option in several Australian retailers.

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Online shopping

During the pandemic, consumers embraced online shopping and e-commerce for its ease, convenience, and safety. Tech-savvy retailers rejoiced, and the rest scrambled to put online shopping solutions into place. The ubiquitous delivery bike is now a common sight on metropolitan and suburban streets, with any retailers not yet fully operational online pushing hard to become so.



Image courtesy of Cottonbro, Pexels

“But all online shopping experiences are by no means equal, and the difference between success and failure is time, thought, understanding your customer base, and an excellent tech partner.”

Lizette Spangenberg is the Head of UX/UI Design at DVT, experts in digital technology transformation and a Dynamic Technologies group company. In this instance, user experience (UX) and user interface (UI) design focus on the relationship and interaction between consumers (users) and retailers (companies).

It ensures the look, feel, and interactivity of the digital product is intuitive, effective, appealing, and easy to use. And this is, of course, vital to any online shopping experience.

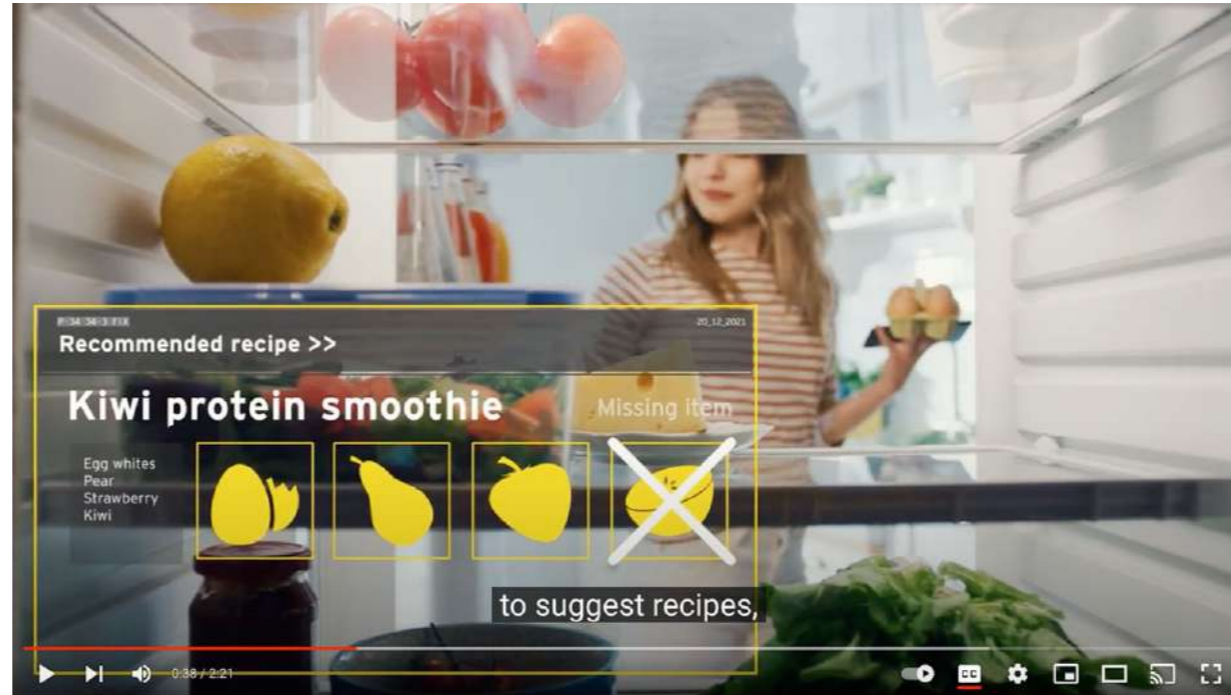


Image courtesy of EY Global

“Nobody wants to debate which button they should click to perform an action, or whether something even is a button you can click, they just want to buy something. It really needs to be intuitive and easy to use.”

Spangenberg – who has deep insight and expertise on what customers expect when they log on – understands some of the main challenges that FMCG retailers face in terms of their online shopping platforms. Ease of use and an intuitive interface are two that spring to mind.

She says, “Many platforms sell the same brands, so the easiest and least stressful to use will likely be the ones that people will go back to. The ability to find the right products is also crucial. It’s very important to let consumers search in a variety of ways: by brand, by type of product, or even in context – for example, by putting all the pantry-related items together as you would in a physical shop.”

It’s the simple things which can make or break an online shopping experience. She explains, “Being able to perform actions without needing to think about it too much means a lot to users ...

Closing an online interaction is as important as getting consumers to your site in the first place. Transparency, Spangenberg believes, is one of the most important factors when it comes to closing a transaction. “If someone gets to checkout and there are suddenly additional charges that weren’t communicated upfront, like large delivery costs, or handling fees, they’ll abandon the transaction. Or if the delivery time isn’t communicated upfront and they suddenly see it will take seven days to receive their goods, then they will often rather go and buy the items in-store.”

For Spangenberg, putting yourself in your consumer’s shoes is imperative to the online platform’s design process. She says, “Speak to the people you are creating a solution for – your customers – because as the designer or client you’re rarely the target market, and there are things your customers may find important that you,

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as a retailer, may never consider.” Tailoring your online offering to meet consumers’ needs and demands, while providing a superior experience, is a good way to attract and maintain an online shopping base.

The importance of testing a system

When you automate any system, testing is vital to ensure everything works exactly the way it should. When it comes to your online platform, this is particularly important as one bad experience can put a consumer off for good. Your online platform is your presence in the world of e-commerce, and the experience needs to be as satisfying as your in-store offering if you want to attract and retain customers. This is where tech partnerships with industry experts become invaluable.

Izak Burger is a Delivery Manager at Inspired Testing, a Dynamic Technologies group company. He understands how the Covid-19 pandemic amplified the growth of online retail, and the pressure this has placed on retailers who need to ensure they have effective and competitive online shopping systems. He also understands that often, the only competitive edge you can really achieve is through pricing and the customer’s shopping experience. It is for this reason that retailers and system designers expend huge efforts to ensure a great customer experience.

For brick-and-mortar stores, retailers must ensure that the prices on the shelves are correct, there is sufficient stock on the shelves, and the point of sales system is functioning correctly.



The same applies to the online store. Burger says, “Satisfactory customer online shopping experiences can only be guaranteed through efficient and sufficient software testing. You can have the greatest online specials but if you cannot add them to your cart or basket, or if the link to the payment portal is broken, the specials are useless. To keep the online shop competitive and up to date, with new technologies and trends, constant system changes are inevitable. If there is any defect or dissatisfying user experience, your customer will log on to any of your competitor’s online sites for a better user experience. You can literally lose your customer at the click of a button! Therefore thorough testing on all aspects of your online system is so essential.”

For Burger, an efficient and sufficient test approach should cover the following ...

- Are the system changes, whether updating existing functionalities or adding brand-new functionalities, working correctly as per the business requirements? Implementing functional testing will allow these questions to be measured.
- What is the impact of the system change on existing functionality? This can be achieved by regression testing. The more system changes, the bigger your regression testing requirements will be. This pressure can be relieved through automated regression testing.
- What is the impact of the changes on system performance? You don’t want to keep the customer waiting. These impacts can be measured by system performance testing.



- Is the usability of the site still the best it can be with the new changes incorporated? Usability testing will ascertain if the site is accessible, useable, findable, desirable, and useful.
- Does the system still have enough burglar bars and alarms based on the changes that have been made? Cyber-crime is a massive threat to retail companies due to the increase in online traffic and transacting. Solid security testing will mitigate this huge risk.

“The lack of proper testing of system changes in the retail industry can have a devastating effect,” warns Burger.

“ Besides mitigating risks, efficient and sufficient testing will give your online site that polished edge which might just put you ahead of your competitors. ”

Payment solutions

South Africa is an interesting case. Cash remains, and will no doubt continue to remain, the sole means of payment for many South Africans. But while credit and debit cards are still common methods of payment, the rise of alternate payment solutions continues unabated.

SnapScan, Zapper, eWallet, Yoco, Payflex, mobile and smart device payments – the technology is exciting, enervating, and innovative. The ability to pay and go gives retailers and consumers flexibility, agility, and accessibility.

Image courtesy of Ukheshe Technologies



Local tech start-up Payflex is a welcome addition to the family as it allows any consumer the ability to pay for bigger ticket items over a set term – the modern lay-by, if you will. But introducing a digital lay-by solution isn’t the only benefit.

In an article on IT-Online (it-online.co.za) Paul Behrmann, founder and CEO of Payflex, says, “Non-interest options like lay-by mean that the store holds the product until it is paid in full. Payflex consumers receive their orders immediately after paying just 25% of the cost. SA’s shoppers clearly love to buy now, pay later and overwhelmingly choose it over standard payment or credit options, according to our research.”

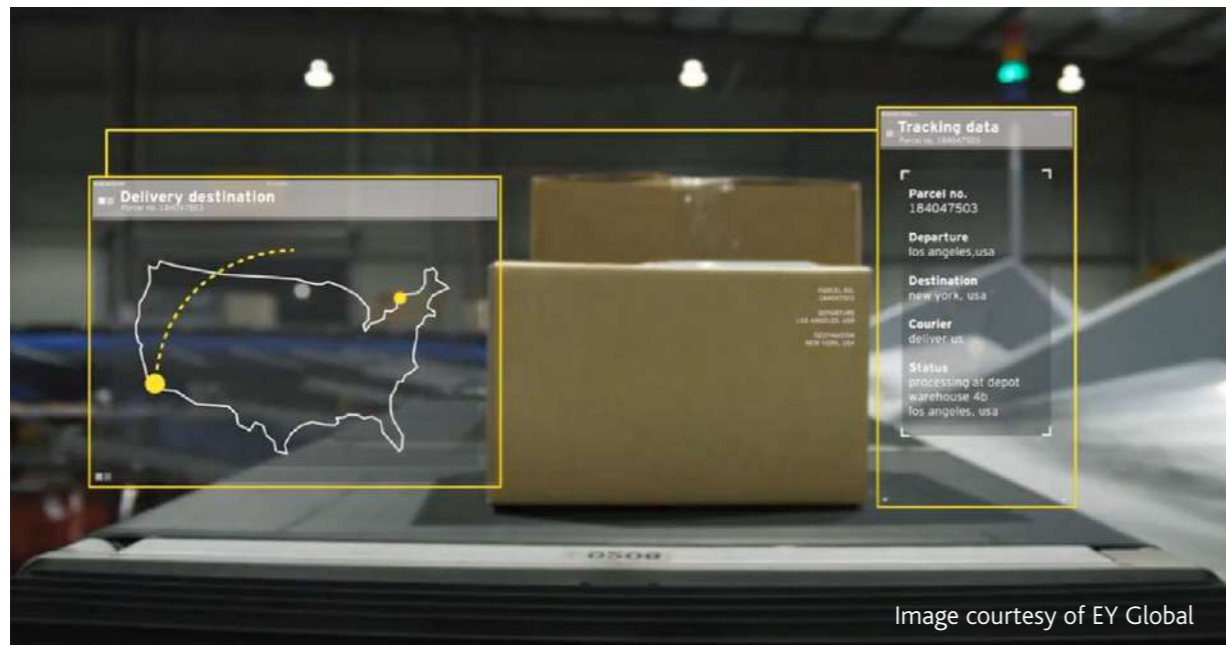
Another major change to the South African payments system is expected to be rolled out by the end of this year. In a TechCentral article by Duncan McLeod, BankservAfrica CEO Jan Pilbauer

revealed that South African banking customers will no longer need a bank account number to transfer money. A cellphone number, or any other piece of personally identifiable information, is all that they will need to make a payment to someone else. And this is just the tip of the iceberg.

According to Pilbauer, locals can expect technology-led disruption and innovation in the payment sector originating from emerging fintechs, telecoms operators, and social media players.

The aim is to enable cheap and virtually instantaneous payments that will be accessible to all. Two of the greatest challenges here will be tech accessibility in rural areas and people’s general mistrust of technology they don’t fully understand. We can, however, expect to see younger and more tech-savvy consumers embracing these developments.

Providing a multitude of payment solutions, making it easier for your customers to pay you, is a great idea. But how safe is it and should consumers and retailers be taking more precautions when it comes to this type of technology?



In a recent Fin24 article Clayton Hayward, CEO of fintech company Ukheshe Technologies, says, "Digital innovation has enabled several payments options locally, such as contactless, virtual cards, QR codes and tap-and-go." He adds, "Apple Pay and SamsungPay have also launched, super apps are becoming more common, and we are also seeing chat services, such as the new TelkomPay in WhatsApp, reaching consumers for the first time."

But with the advent of new technology, so the potential for crime increases as criminals adapt their approach. Deloitte UK identified several potential risks for contactless payments, including "device and e-wallet vulnerabilities, malware within tags, eavesdropping data or man in the middle attacks."

The key to data security lies with the user, for the most part, from choosing safe passwords, being alert to phishing scams and not sharing secure information with anyone. Nevertheless, once a consumer's data is in your possession, the security risks are all on you. This is where cyber security comes in.



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The Top 50

BIGGEST DATA BREACHES

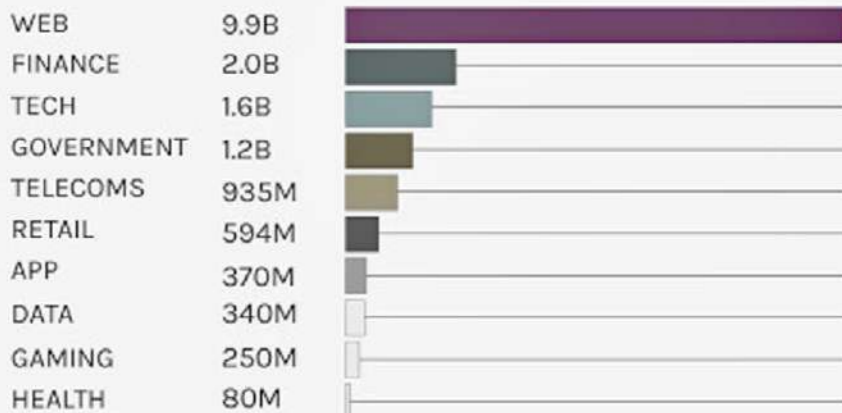


from 2004 - 2021

A data breach is an incident where protected information is copied, stolen, or exposed to an unauthorized person. The largest breach in recent times was the LinkedIn breach of 2021 in which 700 million records were lost. The visual on the right highlights the Top 50 known data breaches from 2004 to 2021. The Web sector was impacted the most. 9.9B records were lost. The Tech and Finance sectors were also severely impacted, and they lost 1.6B and 2.0B records, respectively.

SECTORS - These are industry sectors which the companies belong to. There are 10 in total.

The number of records lost per sector is shown below:



Sources: News reports

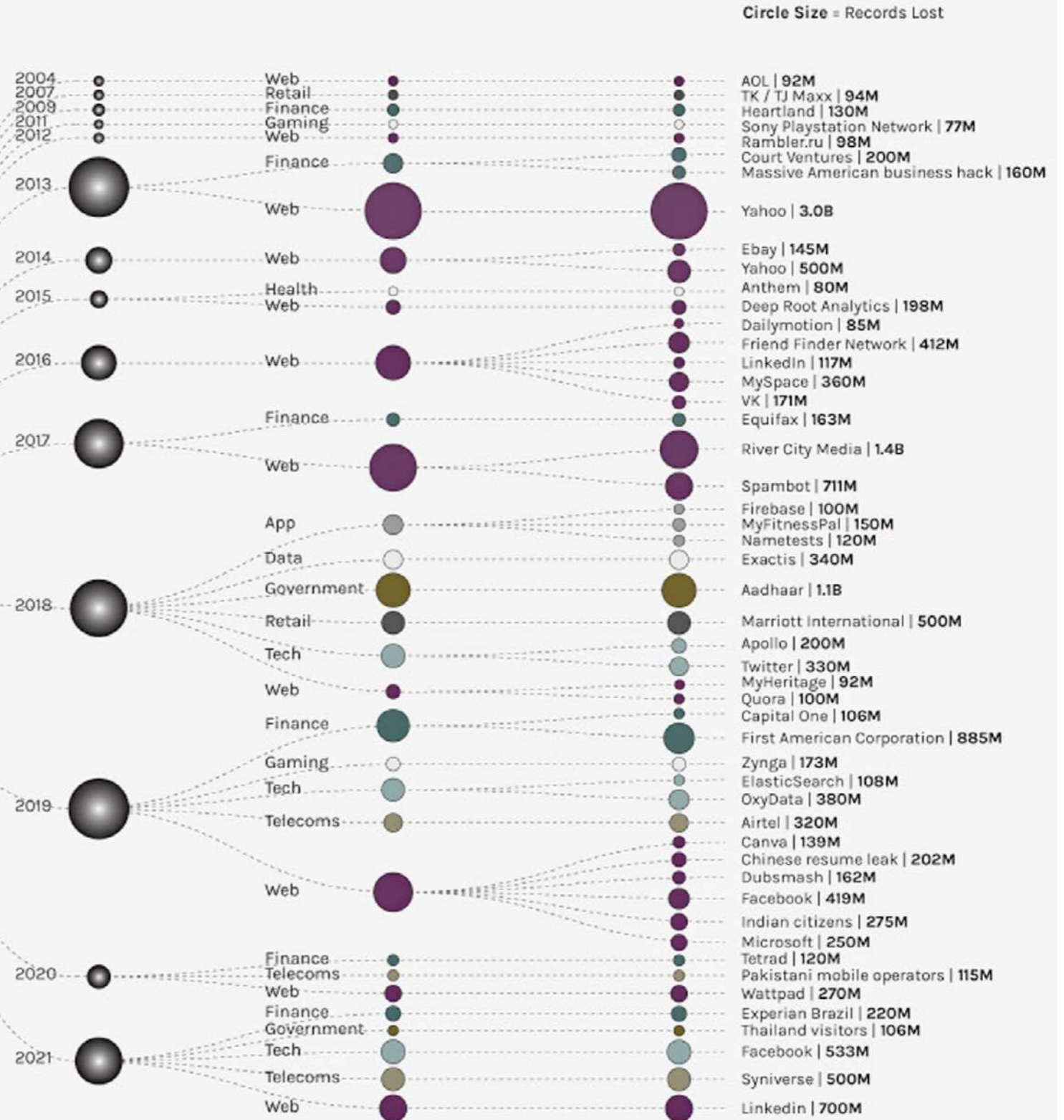




Image courtesy of itweb.co.za

Cyber security

“ Cyberattacks and online criminals are a real threat, and this will only increase as payment solutions continue to go digital and retailers continue to store their customers’ data. Email compromise is a favourite target of hackers. ”

In a recent LinkedIn post on cybercrime by cash handling company Volumatic, it was noted that “businesses have borne the brunt of this particular online crime for many years, but as the online demand continues to increase, the retail industry is now becoming more and more vulnerable to

cyber-related theft and fraud as attacks become more frequent and ever-more sophisticated.”

- See graph on previous page

South African retailers should take note and prepare themselves for the inevitable onslaught, as the recent cyberattack on TransUnion South Africa, which affected at least three million consumers and 600 000 businesses, is proof of this growing threat.

Other high-profile data breaches targeting South African companies in recent years include Experian, Dis-Chem, Standard Bank, Transnet, the Department of Justice and Constitutional

Development, and most recently Shoprite with a potential data breach. Using standard IT security measures is no longer a safeguard and retailers have no choice but to invest in powerful cyber security solutions to protect their business and their customers. **SR**



Image courtesy of Cottonbro, Pexels

Sources:

- <https://it-online.co.za/>
- <https://techcentral.co.za/>
- <https://cba.ca/tap-to-pay-card-security-an-faq>
- www.news24.com/fin24/companies/checkers-cashierless
- www.ey.com/en_gl/consumer-products-retail/
- www.foodlogistics.com/warehousing/grocery-retail/
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- www.capetownetc.com/news/watch-checkers
- www.forbes.com/sites/chuckbrooks/
- www.itweb.co.za/content/dgp45Ma6WE2qX9l8
- <https://losspreventionmedia.com>

Linda Wilkins has written across a wide range of digital and print media for both B2B and B2C markets for retail and tech, lifestyle, copywriting, websites and marketing collateral, as well as for annual reports for listed companies. She holds a BA degree in Communication, a BA Honours degree in Psychology, as well as a partially completed BA Honours degree in Corporate Communication. She has over 15 years’ experience in the FMCG retail sector, more than 14 years’ experience as a communications specialist and is a versatile and professional writer and journalist. Contact Wilkins Ross Communications at linda@wilkinsross.co.za or connect on LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/in/linda-wilkins

Ann Baker-Keulemans co-author of this article can be contacted at: ann@wilkinsross.co.za and at @Wilkins Ross Communications (Pty) Ltd.

Solutions for the networked supermarket of the future

Digitalisation and networked solutions as part of a modern customer journey were main topics at the Bizerba booth at EuroCIS 2022, the European trade show for retail technology in Dusseldorf, Germany. Bizerba presented cutting-edge solutions and innovations to make future shopping more convenient for customers and more efficient for retailers.

The topics of networking, digitalisation and artificial intelligence are important future-related issues. Bizerba exhibited its latest networked hardware and software solutions based on the motto, "Shape your future. Today." Through AI, visitors 'walked' through all the key stations in the supermarket. "We demonstrate a modern customer journey, from pre-ordering fresh products to contactless checkout and payment processes. These innovations open doors to a completely new shopping experience for customers and retailers," explained Andreas W. Kraut, CEO and shareholder of Bizerba.

Bizerba is digitalising brick-and-mortar retailers

Hendrik Ohse, Director of Global Software Sales said, "Customers at the supermarket are offered a one-of-a-kind shopping experience with our software solutions. From hassle-free in-store ordering and intelligent shelves to a self-service area that's effortless to use and an AI-based self-checkout – everything can be done intuitively, easily, and without long lines."



BIZERBA

By offering SmartShelf with integrated weighing technology, each product removed from the shelf is detected and recorded with gram and centimetre accuracy. This means that the intelligent shelves create entirely new opportunities for efficient inventory management and can also be used in non-staffed stores for reliable monitoring.

Continuous digital inventory monitoring guarantees that customers can always find fresh products such as fruit, vegetables, or pastries. The Smart-Shelf makes a notable contribution to waste reduction by providing insight into how sales of certain products vary, depending on the day of the week, the time of the day, and even the weather.

Loss prevention with Artificial Intelligence

Supersmart Scan & Go Loss Prevention System powered by Bizerba features a validation process which checks in mere seconds whether customers have scanned all products correctly using cameras and weighing sensors at checkout. Featuring intelligent hardware components and also artificial intelligence-based software, Supersmart streamlines checkout times and processes at the point of sale.

Tudor Andronic is responsible for the Supersmart solution and explains, "In self-checkout, Supersmart addresses lost sales due to shrinkage. Retailers can either complement and improve their existing Scan & Go solution with our validation process, or they can get everything from us as a one-stop-shop."

Moving confidently into the future

A digital pioneer in the retail sector, Bizerba acts as a holistic solution and digitalisation partner. Shoppers of the future will find everything easier, contactless, convenient, and innovative. One of the big winners is ultimately the retailer, who will benefit from significantly more economical workflows, saving valuable time and money. Bizerba has the solutions that retailers could use to move confidently into the future.



Spar revamp brings 30-year heritage up to date



Images courtesy of Jaime van Aswegen



Bold, bright display for Randpark Ridge Spar's special day

Take the legendary SPAR brand, mix in a new look, stir in quality products and service, sprinkle with courteous staff, top off with a new manager, and you have the revitalised SPAR Randpark Ridge which reopened on 26 April.

"Our new store will have everything that South Africans across the country value about SPAR – fresh food, fresh ideas, and now a fresh-looking ambience, including a new layout and up-to-date, easy-to-navigate shelving. SPAR's promise of choice, quality and freshness of



A welcome with flower display to the upgraded store.

products, as well as friendly, personal service will remain – as will the promise of accessibility that has always been part of SPAR neighbourhood stores," says Rob.

"With extended hours offering 7am to 8pm convenience, Randpark Ridge will once again be the best store in the community for daily or weekly shopping, or simply just to pop into on the way to or from home or work," continues Rob.



View of store from entrance.



Whether in-store, in the revamped TOPS at SPAR outlet next door, or through the SPAR 2U shopping service, which will be introduced in the coming weeks and offer swift deliveries to doorsteps in and around the immediate area, shoppers will find the popular SPAR-branded ranges and other quality names they love.



Left: Fridge stocked with simple grab-and-go meals for convenience.

Centre: Team of chefs and bakers ready to serve hungry shoppers.

Right: Fresh and healthy HMR meals for a quick lunch or dinner.



Checkout counters keeping shoppers flowing



Fresh fruit being stacked up by a merchandiser

Along with the new-look store will also come the SPAR's tasty 'ready to go' and home-ready meals to add some free time to busy schedules. From healthy baked 'Chikka-chicken', a hearty SPAR McCoy pie crammed with irresistible fillings, or a self-selected main course with accompanying freshly cooked vegetables, the choice is there.

"The much-anticipated SPAR Rewards programme will be available in-store for the first time from opening day. By simply coming to shop with us, customers will stand the chance to win one of the 50 Hyundai Grand i10's as part of SPAR's national car giveaway competition," says Rob.

Although everything is new at Randpark Ridge – including the service team led by Andre Vogers, who has more than ten years of experience in the SPAR family – community ties and store traditions will remain key priorities.

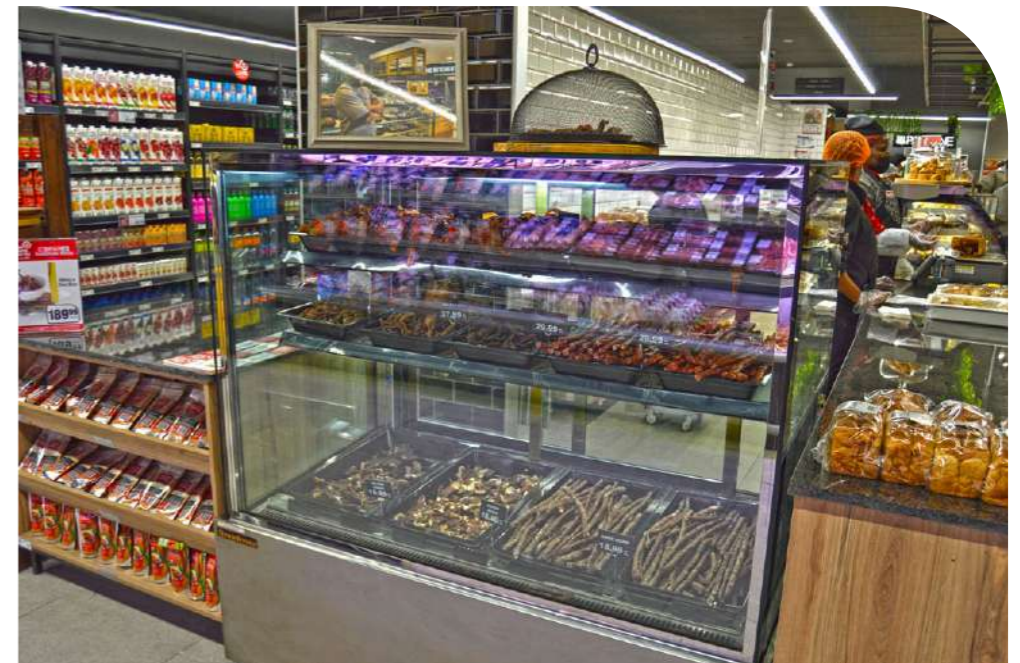


Above: Diageo team with in-store promotions in Tops liquor.

Right: There is a wide range of biltong and droë wors available in-store.



Sign reminds customers of SA's favourite pastime.



Left: The new Chikka chicken offers shoppers a healthier range of baked chicken products.

Right: Butchery meat stacked with many in-store specials.





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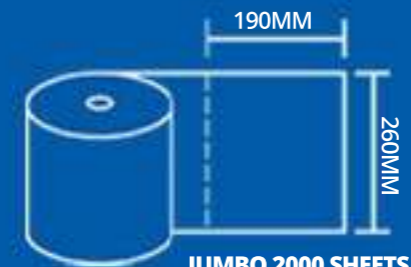
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“This includes the ‘My School’ donations programme, through which we encourage customers to support their local school of choice by nominating a school to receive a portion of their SPAR spending.”

“For us, operating in a community means being part of a community and supporting that community. We look forward to once again serving the community near our Randpark Ridge store and becoming part of their futures,” concludes Rob.



Above: Promotional pamphlet advertises in-store specials.

Right: The attractive Dairy Lane sign.

Top right: Coco-Cola No Sugar promotional giveaways.

A welcome back celebratory cake.



Top of the crop sign – with only the freshest vegetables available.



Top left: Castle Light promotional display.

Top right: This display reminds shoppers about Spar's in-store rewards.

Lower left: New Spar in-store sticker programme.

Lower right: Stealth Wipes keep shoppers safe



Thank you for choosing Spar Randpark Ridge.



Range of international foods.

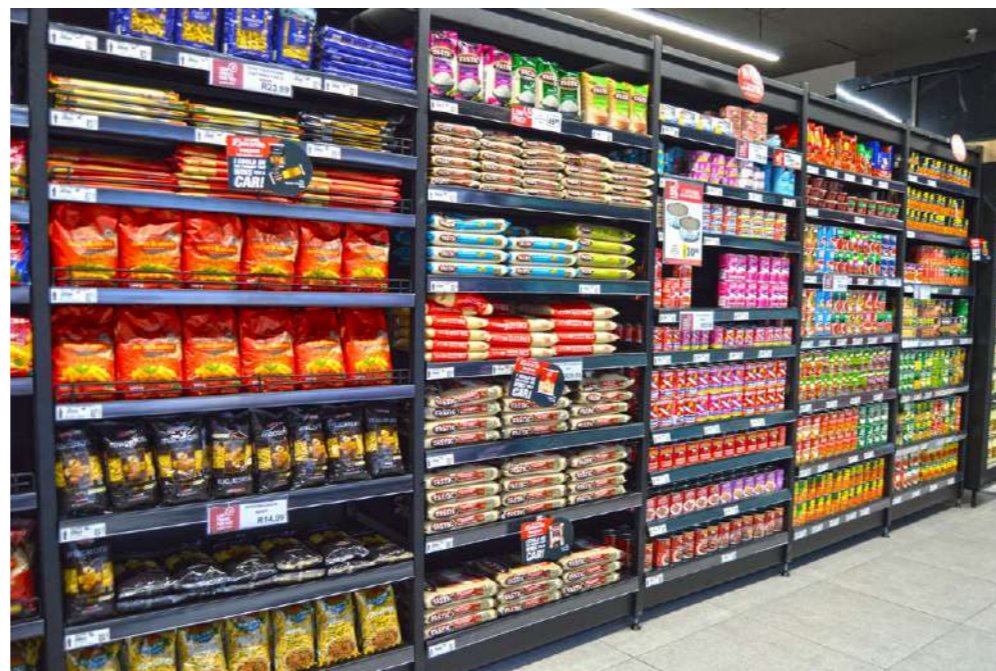


Spar Freshline's extensive range of baked goods for sweet treats.

Wide range of cakes on offer.



Spar's in-house brand of quality snacks.



Rice and pasta stocked with tins foods and pasta sauces.



Tea Time Cakes new offering of grab-and-go sweet treats.

In-store baker Phindile M is proud of her delicious creations.



How to fight the big boys ...

Be different

The city of Cagliari in Sardinia, Italy, is not very big. Just over 400 000 residents live within the metropolitan area of Cagliari which spreads over 20kms covering 17 municipalities.

The large-scale food distribution picture for the city is quite crowded and includes two Conad superstores, an Iper Pan, a Nonna Isa and all the discounters, whose focus is mainly around price and promotion strategies.

One exception to this rule is the new Tuttigiorni (translation 'Everyday') store, recently opened by the Abbi Group, a member of the Crai Group. Crai is a co-op society of food retailers formed in 1973 and today is listed amongst the top ten Italian food outlets (2 300 stores and 1 100 drug stores).



The new store is based on an omnichannel strategy that combines digital presence and a physical store. The Abbi Group has converted its e-commerce strategy into a 'social commerce' strategy, as will be outlined later in this article.

The 'social commerce' concept defines two areas of emphasis ...

- the digital store, where customers can use an electronic portal designed to add value to the user's experience, with many suggestions for healthy and good food and everyday convenience. The site encourages direct communication with local producers, thanks to a substantial number of QR codes that connect the user to the producer's website for social dialogue.
- the physical store, with every day low prices, throughout the year without promotional leaflets nor short-term special offers with expiring dates.



“ Crai is a co-op society of food retailers formed in 1973 and today is listed amongst the top ten Italian food outlets. ”

Images courtesy of Tuttigiorni Cagliari



The sales area is 1 000 square metres and stocks 7 900 SKU's. The store has many private label products which include in-house exclusive brands such as Crai cold meats (1 500 SKUs), Italian Pleasures – premium products that

reflect flavours from the whole of Italy (300), Heart of the Island – Sardinian specialities (200), Rose of Taste – bakery products, including bread baked on ovens fired with wood (250) and Leader Price KVIs (150).



The service areas have been carefully stocked with big sellers for the area, such as the butchery (150 SKUs); the deli (250), the bakery (50) and the sushi counter (50).

Only 50% of the store assortment consists of nationally branded products.

Special services ...

- The best marketing tool that differentiates this store from others is the availability of a 'store director' (in our parlance, probably the store manager) who is available every morning from 09:00hrs to 10:00hrs for coffee with customers, aimed at the exchange of ideas and suggestions. One cannot get more personal than this.
- Another service offered, is that customers can book a time for a meeting with an expert nutritionist to receive tips for healthy and proper nutrition.
- An eco-compactor is provided for plastic bottles in a drive towards recycling and respect for the environment. Home deliveries and the use of a loyalty Everyday card complete the offering.



“ The store manager is available for an hour every morning for coffee with customers, aimed at the exchange of ideas and suggestions. ”

Images courtesy of Tuttigiorni Cagliari

- Finally, an invitation to the shoppers – for each bag brought from home, the customer will receive a refund of 5 cents and the first 5c will be donated by the store to a worthy environmental cause.

The store is estimated to produce Euros 15m (that's over R21m per month) – not bad for a store of 1 000m². **SR**



Create simple social media content

Engage with your community and attract new customers to your store



By Arnaud Blanchet
Founder and CEO
of Shop-it

On social media, your followers are the best advertisers for your store. In a 2021 survey, to the question “what have you done on social media in the past month?” 45% of the respondents answered ‘liked company posts’ and ‘followed companies’, and 30% answered ‘shared company posts’.

Creating attractive content on your Facebook page or WhatsApp broadcast messages is key to engage with your followers. If they enjoy it, they are likely to share your posts with their family and friends who could be your next customers. Being recommended by people will bring credibility and trust to your supermarket or wholesale store.

In the previous articles, we explained how your store can benefit from the rise of eCommerce and how to easily set up your social media accounts. Today, we will explain how to create engaging content on social media to attract more followers and gain new in-store customers.

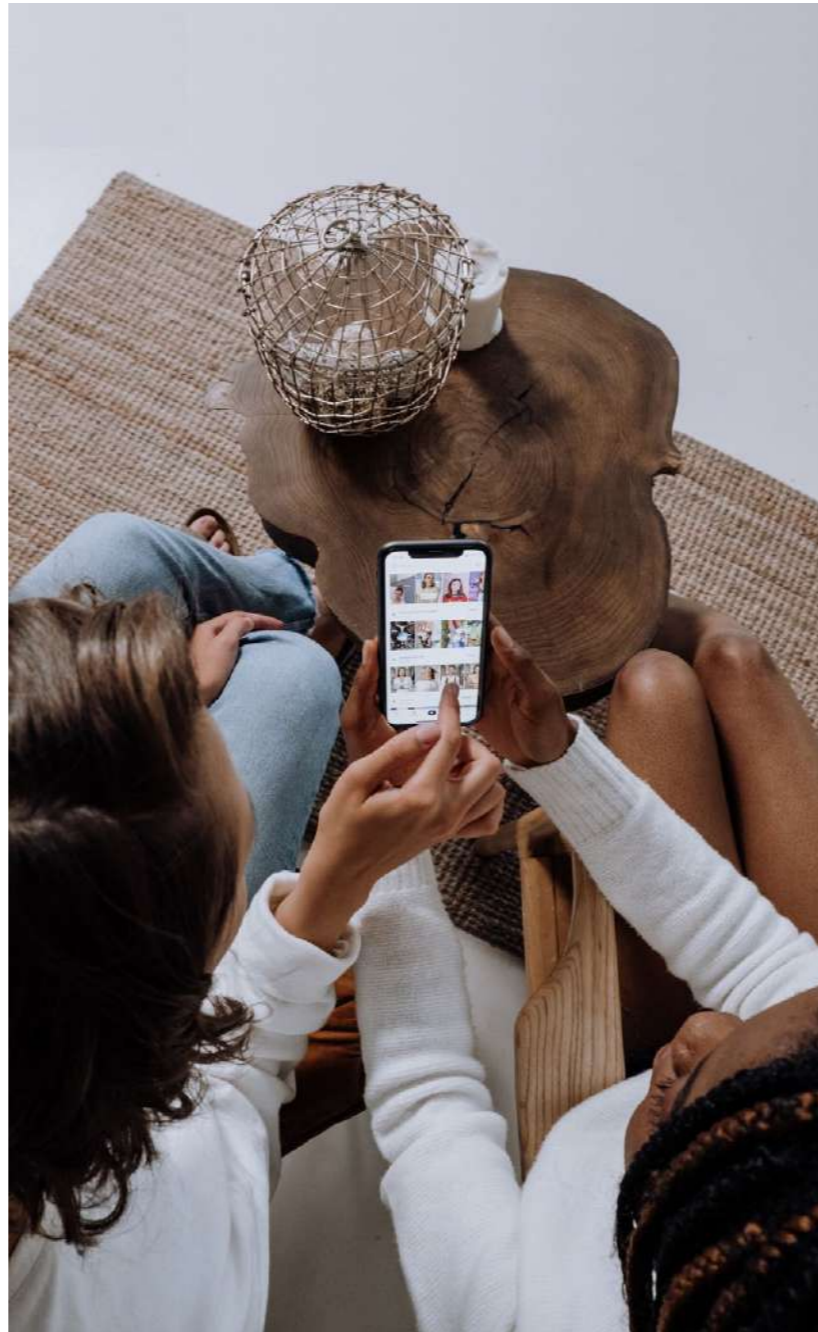


Image courtesy of Cottonbro, Pexels

Create various types of posts to keep your followers engaged

Your content is engaging if it makes a user to stop scrolling and to take the time to interact with it. In concrete terms, engagement is an action by a social media user that shows his interest in your content. On Facebook it can be likes, comments, and shares.

Engaging content creates a community that reacts positively to your social media posts. It is precisely this feeling of belonging, this special relationship that you will create with your audience, that will allow you to convert your community of followers into customers.

For this reason, engagement is the lifeblood of your business online ... it allows you to get feedback from your followers and the more engagement you get, the more likely Facebook will show your content to other users who correspond to your customer target and enable you to grow your community.

Engaging content is different from one page to another, because each customer target can be different. When you begin on social media, the rule is to try and learn. Create diversified content to



engage your community, but also to find what the best content is for your audience. There is so much content you can post on your social media.

Let's give you some examples:

- **Information posts.** Social networks have become search engines. When you are looking for information about a shop, it is natural to go to their Facebook page. That's why informative posts about your business are important. Keep your community updated about your opening hours, your location or any changes that could happen related to your business.
- **Products posts.** Promote your products by highlighting them on a post in your social media accounts. You can highlight their price and advantages, but also give some tips about how to use it. For example, if you sell food products, you can highlight some of them by sharing recipe ideas with your community.
- **Puzzles and surveys.** You can play with your community with puzzles or surveys. It is a very efficient way to exchange with them and learn to know them better. The better is to play with your products. For example, you can invent a puzzle to make your community find the price of a product. Or you can post a survey to know which one of your products your community prefers. This type of content will engage your community. To go further and have a maximised engagement rate, you can offer a prize to the winners.



Image courtesy of Ketut Subiyanto, Pexels

- **Promoting your shop.** Your social media accounts are the windows of your shop online. Publishing photos of your storefront, your employees and your shelves is a good way to promote your store. Moreover, it will give credibility to your business and make people want to come and visit you. You can also share in a post the positive reviews you received from customers.

All of these types of posts correspond to three objectives you must keep in mind when you create content. Your posts must make people ...

- interact with you
- know you better, or
- visit your store and buy your products.

Combining these objectives is the key to producing engaging content.

How can you easily create some content for these posts?

You can begin with taking photos with your smartphone and publishing it with a short text. It's simple, free and efficient.

If you want to go further, you can use graphic design tools like Canva (<https://www.canva.com>). It's a free and simple website to create designs for your business. You can also contact a digital marketing agency or a graphic designer to help you in creating content.

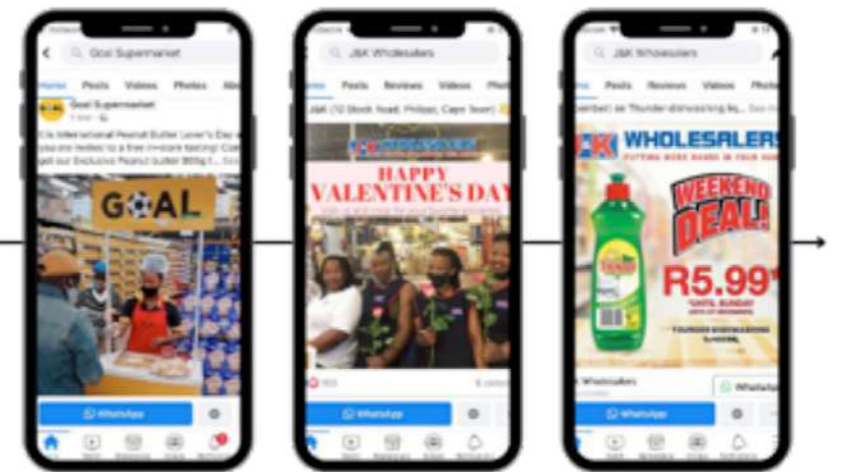




Image courtesy of Pixabay, Pexels

Create better content

Learn from your followers' feedback and their engagement with your posts

The first step was to try different types of content on your social media account. Now that you know what you can try, the second step is to learn from your trials.

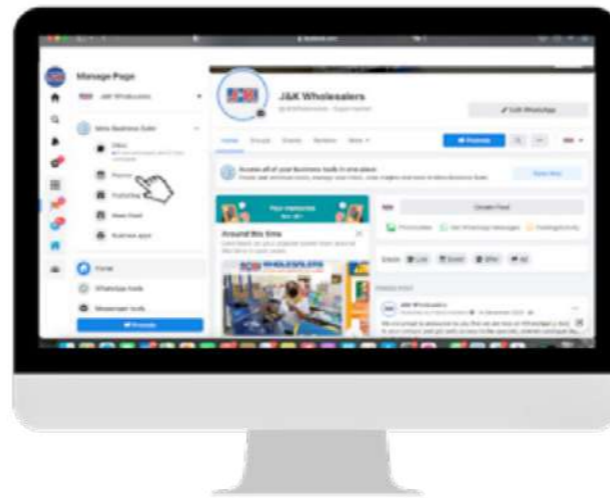
Looking at the results of each of your posts is really important to know what the content your community prefers is. On Facebook, consult the Insights page to check the performance of your posts, there is a lot of information available.

The reach, the reactions and the engagement rate can tell you if your post worked or not and which one worked the best.

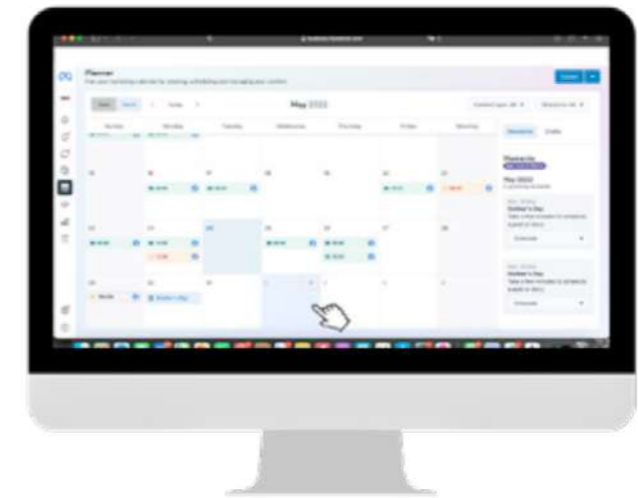
Testing different texts and visuals for the same post is also a good way to know how to adapt your content to your community. For the same post idea, you can create several visuals and see which one works the best. For example, test to advertise your specials with three different posts:

Tutorial for scheduling a post on Facebook using the planner feature.

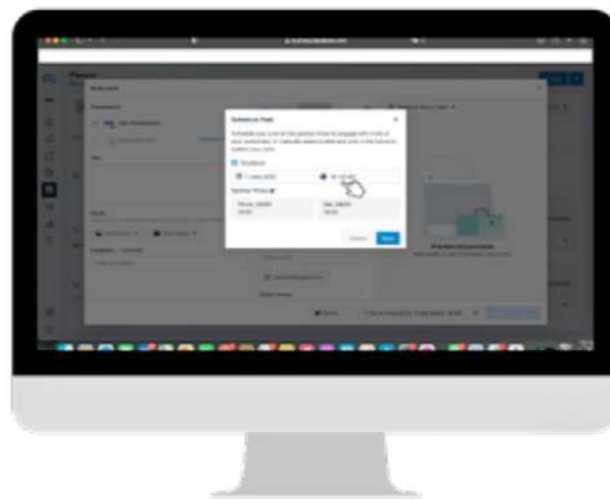
Step 1 **Go to 'Planner'**



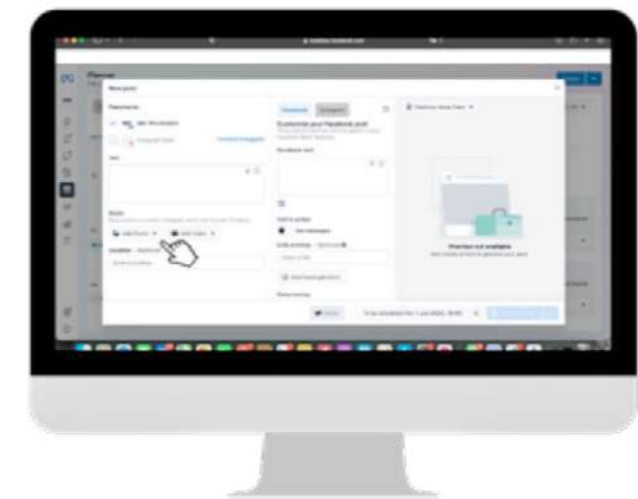
Step 2 **Click on the day you want to post**



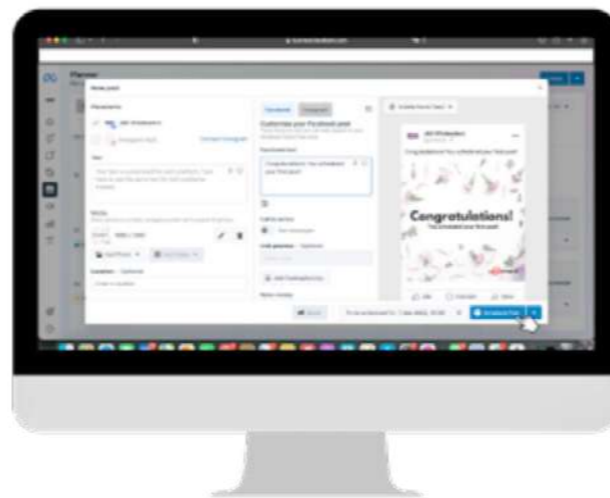
Step 3 **Choose the hour and click on save**



Step 4 **Download your image and write a text**



Step 5 **Schedule the post**



eCommerce solutions for independent retailers and wholesalers in Africa

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- a text post only with the list of products and prices,
- a post with a text and one visual presenting all the products on special
- a post with a text and photos of each of the products on special.

The insights of these posts will tell you what your community prefers and what is more efficient. To best adapt your content to your audience, listen to your followers and interact with them.

In a Facebook post or in your WhatsApp broadcast, you can directly ask your community what they are interested in (what items they would like to have on special next month, for example). And if they see that you take their opinion into account they will be more willing to engage with your page and recommend you.

You must build a relationship with your community. To do so, here is another bit of advice ... don't forget to answer the comments and messages you received and be as reactive as you can!



Image courtesy of Tracy le Blanc, Pexels

Be consistent and post regularly to remain interesting and attract more followers

Creating engagement is also a question of regularity. No one is interested in following a page which gives content only once a month. You must show to the users that your page is active and post often to remain attractive.

Planning your activity is essential to save you time and be as efficient as you can. You can directly use the planner feature on Facebook to automatically post your content for you at a date you choose in advance.

If you are not comfortable enough with the Facebook planner you can use a traditional calendar on your phone or on a paper to make sure you don't forget to post regularly. The perfect quantity of posts is at least two per week.

To conclude, the content you share on social media is a very efficient way to connect easily with your customers and their contacts. Social media can reach a very large audience for free and you can easily track your performance, it has therefore become more efficient than paper leaflets and newspaper ads.

The more content you produce and post, the more effective you will become.



Image courtesy of Mikotoraw Photographer, Pexels

Indeed, you will learn more about your customers' interests with every post you publish. Take this opportunity to create better posts and offers that will attract more followers and customers.

Next month, we will share with you how to boost your reach on social media by organising a digital marketing campaign. It will enable you to reach even more potential customers and attract more customers in-store. **SR**

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



Fresh data highlights 109% rise in online bread sales



Ged Nooy
South Africa MD

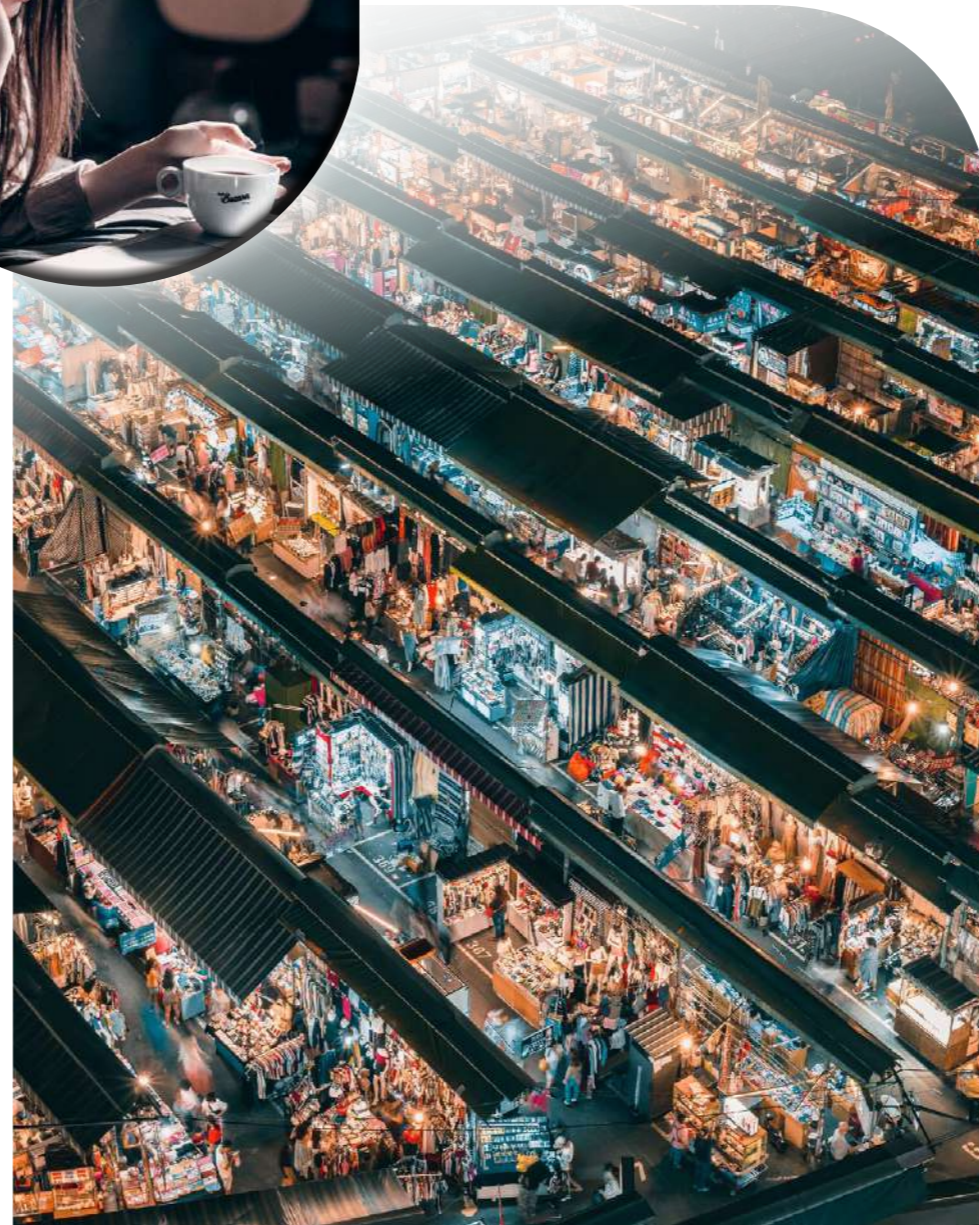


“Online sales for food categories grew by 53% in the latest three months”

The South African eCommerce sector has exploded over the last two years and to help manufacturers and retailers keep track of this NielsenIQ has established a robust eCommerce data tracking solution in partnership with some of South Africa’s largest brick and mortar and online retailers. This is made possible by NielsenIQ Retail Trade Desk which provides benchmark tracking of the actual point of sales of most of the largest retailers in South Africa including their online sales.

NielsenIQ South Africa MD Ged Nooy reports; “Within the retailers that we track, online sales contribute a low single digit figure to their overall turnover. That said, over the latest three months (week ending 3 April 2022) Total Trade desk sales grew by 14%, with the online component growing by 37%. Of that, online sales for food categories grew by 53% in the latest three months.”

The biggest movers in the online sales for specific food products in terms of year on year growth were Long Life Milk which saw online sales up by 35% and Instant Coffee sales increasing



by 52%. “This can be attributed to a significant number of consumers who are still working from home, either full time or partially and are taking breaks and making beverages like coffee that they would normally make at work. Online orders allow them to make quick and convenient top up purchases of these products to fuel these occasions,” explains Nooy.

In comparison, the rate of in-store purchases of Long Life Milk means it is the eleventh top performer in terms of overall growth while Instant Coffee is at eighteenth position so interestingly they’re declining in terms of total in-store but growing significantly online. The other top performer online was bread which saw a 109% increase in value growth. “Given that unit sales only grew by 82% this indicates that Inflation is at play,” says Nooy. Another category that grew or was more in demand in

Image courtesy of Allan So, inset by Elijah O’Donnell, Pexels.



the online space, was alcohol, with five of the top twenty products in eCommerce being alcoholic beverages. These products have experienced large growth but this must be seen in context as this is off a low base as the sector recovers from successive alcohol bans.

What's really going on?

Despite the already stellar growth of online, 38% of consumers still say they still prefer to shop at their local store. The reason for their reticence was revealed in a NielsenIQ Consumer Outlook study based on online research conducted in December 2021. This saw 35% of respondents saying they shop in physical stores more as they can't rely on online delivery times, while 28% said they prefer bricks to clicks as there are a different set of products (available) to buy online versus in a physical store. On the plus side, 26% said they shop online to limit their exposure to risks in-store - 26% and 23% because they are home to receive deliveries, clearly as a result of their homebound location during South Africa's successive lockdowns.

In addition, 44% of respondents in the same survey said that they still anticipate working from home in the future. This bodes well for the entrenchment of the burgeoning online grocery shopping options in their purchase repertoire. However, for those returning full time or partial in office work, we may well see a shift in demand for specific delivery times. This will bring into question in-store and delivery capacity to fulfil orders at those different times of the day.



Image courtesy of Hassan Ouajbir, Pexels

It's all about choice

Looking ahead NielsenIQ continues to see the rising importance of online sales in South Africa, but bear in mind the penetration of online is only for the total South Africa consumers i.e. 30% of South Africans on the internet daily which understandably points to a higher LSM profile.

The broader context is that lower LSMs account for 30% of the total basket spend in South Africa but have little to no access to online shopping offerings and are shopping in traditional trade outlets like Spazas.

In terms of key factors for eCommerce growth in the future, NielsenIQ has found that choice is high on the list of purchasing influences. From an online perspective, shoppers are aware of the breadth of assortment available digitally at their fingertips. Nooy says; "The need for a wider

variety of products increases and making this one of the main factors for choosing an online channel. The statistics show the rise of importance of this factor for online shopper which creates a better online experience."

'Virtual shelves' also need to be properly stocked

It's imperative for manufacturers and retailers to manage their assortment online and NielsenIQ has therefore introduced its eCAT (category) management solution as well as Brand Bank and Label Insights tools to allow for effective and efficient category/stock management online.

Nooy comments; "This allows us to help manufacturers and retailers undertake category management online with the same thinking and best practice online but with an awareness of the different shopping occasions and experiences." Metrics included in the solution are frequency of online shopping, length of time on a particular site, which pages consumers visit, which categories they are exposed to and which are achieving the highest sales. NielsenIQ has recently launched a joint pilot project with a market-leading beverage brand and - one of South Africa's largest online retailers to foster the development of this technology in the South African retail sector. **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.



State of the Retail Nation monthly report



- South African retail sector records R519-Billion in annual sales
- Stabilisation in alcohol sales recovery
- Top manufacturers seeing strong double-digit growth

NielsenIQ South Africa has released its monthly State of the Retail Nation report which shows total annual sales of R519-Billion at South African retail outlets ('latest month' 4 weeks ending 1 May 2022) which represents a 13% annual increase. At a more focused level, in the latest month, the data indicates sales of R42-Billion representing a 10% increase when compared to April 2022.

These insights emanate from NielsenIQ's Market Track, the largest retail (grocery) data source in the country and the only currency used by all South Africa's major retailers. This benchmark data comprises more than 10 000 branded retail outlets (e.g. supermarkets and garage forecourts) and more than 143 000 independent stores (e.g. Spazas & Taverns) across South Africa's nine provinces and measures more than 80% of all retail grocery transactions.



Image courtesy of Artem Beliaikin, Pexels

Knock-on effects of liquor bans

A globally unique phenomenon in the local retail sector is the ripple effects of the successive and unprecedented liquor bans during 2020 and 2021 on the local market. This has resulted in rapid increases in sales figures for liquor brands since the suspension of these bans and a period of apparent rapid growth as sales returned to normal.

NielsenIQ South Africa MD Ged Nooy comments; "What we see now is a stabilisation of this rapid recovery, given that April 2022 is the first month that alcoholic beverage sales growth has slowed down compared to the same period in 2021. However, sales

within this sector have not returned to pre-Covid levels or exceeded previous levels, and we are not quite back to pre-ban level liquor sales with them lagging pre lockdown levels slightly."

He adds that what is interesting to note is that the palate of South African liquor consumers has perhaps been changed for good due to lack of access during the country's liquor bans. For example, Gin sales have now surpassed vodka sales.

"In addition, while beer is undoubtedly still the largest liquor category in terms of sales, consumption patterns around this alcoholic beverage have changed with a continuation of the trend toward larger 'long lasting' bottles that consumers resorted to when supply was scarce."

Another interesting gain amidst staple product categories is a sharp increase in sales of Bread which showed a 24% increase in April 2022 versus the same month in 2021 within the Modern Trade sector, and a 35% increase in sales value within the Traditional Trade sector.



Top 20 manufacturers

The NielsenIQ report also shows that 18 of South Africa's Top 20 manufacturers - which account for 66% of total sales - have posted growth in the latest month. 12 of these manufacturers are seeing strong double-digit growth, with the highest seeing 31%. "The COVID-19 era has stimulated the market in some ways, with people cutting back on out of home consumption. We continue to see growth through entrenched retail consumption at home," explains Nooy.

Inflation nation

NielsenIQ measures inflation monthly and calculates it based on the difference between Rand value sales growth vs. unit sales growth = or quite simply how much more consumers are spending in terms of Rands paid per pack than they were the month before. This shows that of the top 20 categories in product categories Cooking Oil has experienced 36% inflation (over the last month) with value sales of Cooking oil up 43% in the last month. Other product categories experiencing high inflationary impacts on price are frozen chicken 16%, and laundry detergents 11%.

It is also important to appreciate that these increases were before the latest hefty fuel price increases in June 2022. Nooy surmises, "Based on the current record high petrol price, manufacturers will not be able to absorb the effects of the perfect storm of increasing input costs as they have before and we can expect to see a rapid onset of inflationary impacts on prices."



Image courtesy of Artem Beliaikin, Pexels

Traditional trade triumphs

An interesting aspect of this month's report is that it points to a return to buoyancy within the Traditional Trade sector i.e. unbranded stores (e.g. spazas, taverns, independent grocers and forecourts) with total sales for the latest month growing by 13% (versus the same month in 2021) and total annual retail sales of R119-Billion (last 12 months) which represents 21% annual growth.

This stems from independent retail gaining through TT shoppers increasing their basket size and consumers shifting back into this channel.

Nooy explains, "The lockdowns of the Covid-19 era resulted in restricted movement of shoppers and forced them to use only one retail outlet for shopping. "We have seen a return of shoppers to traditional trade outlets as life returns to normal they are now able to shop where they want. Within supergroup categories in the TT sector, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages retain number one and two positions respectively, followed by shelf staples and the third category: Biscuits, Confectionary and Snacks which make up the bulk of the basket (42%) bulk and Tobacco which makes up 38% of basket.

Changed consumers

Overall, South African shoppers have undertaken some big shifts since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020. One of the biggest of these shifts continues with local consumers still going into stores less often, which points to curtailed lockdown shopping occasions despite the removal of restrictions.

Nooy elaborates, "The reality is that South Africans are shopping at fewer retailers but spending more per trip, with the average value of the South African shopping basket increasing by R131 since April 2020. Despite a steady increase in value per buyer over the past two years, volume is not rising at the same rate, as consumers are forced to pay more and stretch their products. It will therefore be interesting to see how consumers react in the next month amidst a global perfect storm of inflationary pressures." **SR**

Pie category expected to continue to experience constraints



Dr Dana Braithwaite
Research consultant
BMi Research

Although Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted and the pie category has seen some recovery, since the 15 – 20% decline in 2020, sales volumes are yet to recover to pre-pandemic levels.

Continued lockdown conditions, including limited operating hours and seating allowances at restaurants, growing unemployment and many people still working from home in 2021 meant that the category's recovery was muted. According to Dr Dana Braithwaite, research consultant at BMi Research, a full recovery to pre-lockdown levels is not expected in 2022 either.

"Although pies remain an affordable and good value-for-money offering, the fact that the category has yet to recover to pre-pandemic levels illustrates just how constrained consumers continue to be and how little disposable income they have currently amidst a significantly increased cost of living including higher fuel and energy prices and consumer price inflation which rose to 5.9% in March, up from 5.7% in February," says Braithwaite.



Image courtesy of Pixabay, Pexels

Although pies are a convenient meal replacement, the hot pies are typically an impulse buy and reliant on available disposable income, she adds.

As sales volumes fail to grow, pie manufacturers are under pressure as a result of factors that are largely out of their control such as persistent load shedding and higher input costs, she says, adding that the growth of larger players is therefore likely to be on the back of the closure of smaller players.

There are a variety of reasons for the category's slow recovery, she reveals. In South Africa the pie market is primarily driven by on-the-go consumers. The category was hard hit by lockdown restrictions which banned the sale of hot pies in 2020. Smaller pie manufacturers, many of which are family-owned and run businesses, were particularly hard hit. Many of those who focused solely on the manufacture of pies to be sold as hot pies have not survived.

Pie manufacturers that had the capacity to shift to producing frozen pies, or offered alternative products, had a better chance of survival, she says:

“Bakeries that offered pies as part of a wider product range, for example, have come through the lockdown better than small producers that manufactured exclusively for outlets that sold hot pies.”





Image courtesy of Craig Dennis, Pexels.

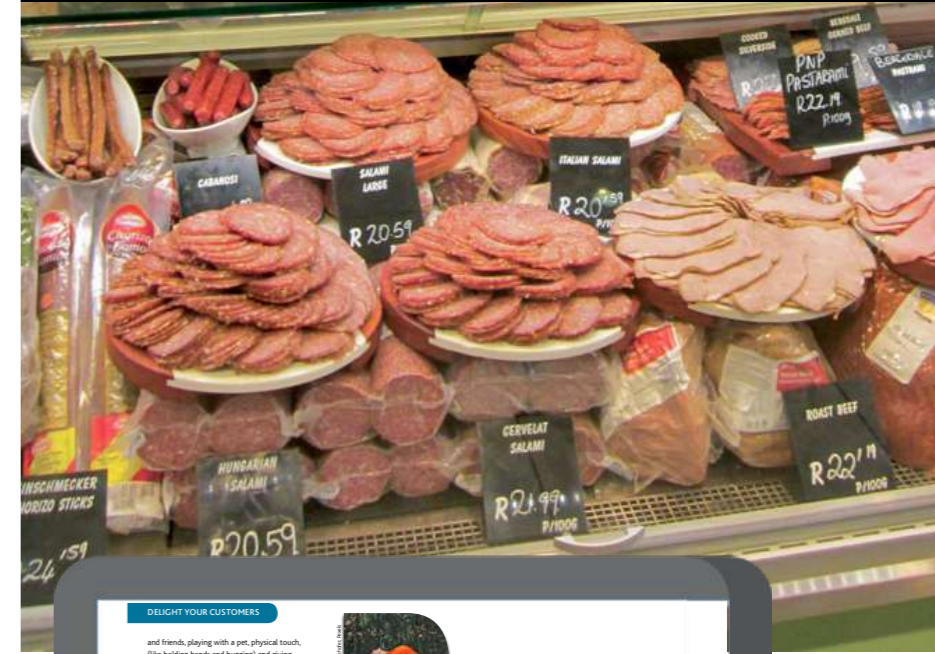
During this period new product development was put on the backburner and niche, premium-priced lower margin pies were removed from product ranges in favour of higher volume ranges. As input costs have risen and margins squeezed, pie producers have been cognisant of price sensitivity and have therefore adjusted pie sizes in an effort to avoid having to raise prices. While pies have traditionally come in three sizes – large, medium and small – volume share has shifted to smaller sizes, she reveals.

While garage forecourts continue to be a good retail channel for the pie industry, they are a relatively small channel compared to other pie outlets. Although they have the best growth potential of all pie retail channels even garage forecourts will find it hard to grow volumes in

As input costs have risen and margins squeezed, pie producers have been cognisant of price sensitivity and have adjusted pie sizes in an effort to avoid having to raise prices. While pies have traditionally come in three sizes – large, medium and small – volume share has shifted to smaller sizes

the current economic environment, she predicts. “For the pie category to see a meaningful recovery will require economic growth so that consumers have more disposable income available. Consumers, however, are facing rapid increases in the cost of living. The April 2022 Household Affordability Index revealed that the average Household Food Basket increased in price by 8.2% compared to April 2021, and was up 2.1% between March and April this year alone. The rising cost of fuel, electricity, and cooking oil – the latter as a result of the war in Ukraine - combined with an unreliable power supply, don’t bode well for either pie manufacturers or consumers with all indicators pointing to the fact that the pie category’s recovery is likely to be slower than expected,” concludes Braithwaite. **SR**

SUPERMARKET & RETAILER



DELIGHT YOUR CUSTOMERS

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 bit of serotonin (which makes it more likely that we pay it forward again). But even an *abstract* who *abstract* someone *being kind* and

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.

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

“Endorphins trigger positive emotions”

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

“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

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