

retailtimes

Q4 2017

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Amazing Applegreen



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Applegreen**
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The €600b Prize





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2017 - 2018



Welcome to the Quarter 4 2017 edition of Retail Times

It seems quite unbelievable that my two year tenure as Chairman of Retail Excellence is coming to a close in December 2017 and that this will be my final Retail Times editorial. The time has passed so quickly.

The chairmanship role was indeed challenging at times, but it was also incredibly rewarding and afforded me the opportunity to interact with a host of incredible people which included our Taoiseach, various Government Ministers, business owners and some of the best retailers in Ireland.

Throughout my time in this position, I have found our CEO David Fitzsimons, Deputy CEO Lorraine Higgins and the whole Retail Excellence team to be exceptional and among the most committed and hard-working professionals that I have had the chance to work with and I extend my sincere thanks to them for all the help and support they have given me. I would also like to thank the Retail Excellence Board and Council members who dictate which direction Retail Excellence should take on behalf of its members.

Thankfully Ireland has fully exited the financial downturn, but there are still many challenges that we as retailers must face. Staff retention, training, PRSI and commercial rates, the 23% VAT rate, data protection regulations, bank funding availability, geopolitical instability, minimum wage rates, competing with online retail, BREXIT, along with weakening sterling /dollar rates which negatively affects tourism



and conversely, incentivises cross-border shopping. These are just some of the prominent issues we have to address. The reality is, there will always be problems and that is why membership of a politically strong, retail relevant, powerful lobby group like Retail Excellence is so important.

Retail is a hugely important industry in Ireland. It employs over 282,000 people and contributes €5.7 billion euro to the exchequer annually. There are more than 45,000 retail businesses throughout the country with almost three quarters of them being Irish owned.

With unemployment rates falling to almost 5%, it is becoming more problematic to both retain and recruit staff. Retail Excellence are reinvigorating the "This is Retail" programme which promotes retail as a career for life and the successful "Retail Management"

programmes that are a proven method for enhancing staff skills and also improving staff retention.

While online sales are deemed a threat to high street retail, this medium also provides a huge potential sales opportunity for Irish retailers and Retail Excellence are working with both Enterprise Ireland and Government Departments, requesting initiatives to support both start-up online businesses and existing web sale operations that want to sell Internationally.

I am delighted to welcome JP Kennedy of TileStyle as our incoming chairman for 2018/2019. JP is an award-winning retailer with a wealth of experience and I look forward to supporting him in his role.

Ireland is currently accepted as a safe haven for tourists and with new flights recently started from Miami and other North American cities along with Hong Kong from June 2018 the future looks very bright for the tourism industry which in turn will boost all retail.

I sincerely wish all of you a successful 2017 quarter four of retailing.

Best regards,

Colm Carroll
COLM CARROLL
Chairman Carrolls Irish Gifts
Chairman Retail Excellence



BOARD:

Colm Carroll, Carrolls Irish Gifts | JP Kennedy, TileStyle | Paul Kealy, Tony Kealys
Fergal Doyle, Arboretum | Richard Wehrly, Wehrly Brothers Jewellers | Oonagh O'Hagan, Meaghers Pharmacy Group
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Joe Barrett, Applegreen | David Fitzsimons, Retail Excellence | Lorraine Higgins, Retail Excellence

TRUSTEE:

Sharen McCabe, McCabes Pharmacy Group | Kevin Jephson, Ardkeen Quality Food Store
Keith Rogers, Ecco Footwear

Congratulations to Siobhan Plunkett of **GSLs** who picked up a coveted "Women in Security" award in London recently.

Hobbycraft boss John Colley has quit after just two months in the role. Colley had previously served as Managing Director of **Majestic Wine**.

Bunnings recorded a pre-tax loss of £54m in its first full year results since entering the UK market.

Congratulations to **Mulligans Pharmacy Group** who recently acquired a new warehouse facility to support their significant online growth aspirations.

Amazon is currently recruiting for 1,000 new roles at its Bristol warehouse.

Thank you to Patrick McCormack, ex-CEO **Sam McCauleys Pharmacy Group**, for all his support while on the Board of Retail Excellence.

Halfords have recorded a 4.8% increase in like for like sales in the twenty weeks to August 2017.

The UK Pensions Regulator is to prosecute ex- **BHS** owner Dominic Chappell following his failure to provide certain information to the Regulator during their investigation into the demise of the department store business.

Sport Direct owner Mike Ashley has reportedly increased his stake in **Debenhams** to 21.04%.

Game has launched a concession partnership with **Maplin** in a bid to gain new trading locations.

Australian retailer **House** is reputed to be planning seventy-five new stores in the UK market.

Ardkeen Quality Food Store: Celebrating 50 years!

Robert and Pamela Jephson started Ardkeen Stores, as it was known then, in 1967, serving a largely rural community that was only beginning to become suburban. Much of the food sold was sourced locally or even from their own garden. However, by the turn of the millennium Ardkeen found itself literally surrounded by international retail giants – a very difficult place for a small, independent food store doing things differently, focusing on small, local suppliers. But as the 2nd generation Colin & Kevin Jephson took over the reins in the era of internet shopping and high street giants rather than sit back and wait to be swept away, they undertook a major refurbishment and refocused on their strengths of food provenance and great customer service. This year

Ardkeen Quality Food Store celebrates 50 years; a Retail Excellence Store of the Year, the first retail store to win a "Special Commendation" from Euro-Toques, the winner of The Irish Times, "Best Shop" and recommended by some of Ireland's top chefs, all because they believe in putting Ireland's food and the producers centre stage and treating producers with the respect their craft deserves. Today, the store stocks over 200 of Ireland's small batch producers and are shipping all over the world via their online portal www.Ardkeen.com. A happy 50th Birthday to all at Ardkeen Quality Food Store!



The second-generation lead Ardkeen Quality Food Store to 50 years

RECENT APPOINTMENTS AT CBE

Sean Kenna announcement as CEO is one of a number of key appointments at CBE

A number of new appointments have been announced at retail software company CBE. Sean Kenna has been appointed CEO and Dominic Feeney Managing Director. This follows the retirement of Gerard Concannon from the position of CEO; he retains the position of Chairman. In addition, Gearóid Concannon has been appointed a Group Director within the company with Shane McGowan being promoted to Systems Director and Oliver Sheridan promoted to Director of Retail. Headquartered in Claremorris, County Mayo, CBE was founded by Gerard and his wife Catherine in 1980 and has grown to become one of the major retail technology companies in Europe and now employs over 150 people. CBE designs and develops software applications for the supermarket, convenience, forecourt and hospitality sectors. CBE currently operates in Ireland, UK, Spain, Algeria, Canada and Australia. The appointments come at an exciting time for the company as they have announced plans to enter the American market. CBE has added 40 new employees to the workforce on the back of winning a number of major contracts and to aid their global expansion plans.



Promotion to Deputy CEO after eight short months

LORRAINE HIGGINS PROMOTED TO DEPUTY CEO

Retail Excellence recently announced the appointment of ex- Senator Lorraine Higgins to the position of Deputy CEO. Lorraine joined Ireland's largest retail industry representative body in January 2017 and her promotion to Deputy CEO in September marks a speedy move through the ranks. Commenting on the promotion David Fitzsimons, CEO, Retail Excellence said: "Lorraine's political and legal expertise and her very personable nature makes her an ideal selection as Deputy CEO. Lorraine's contribution to the organization in a short few months has been significant. Her leadership and communication skills are second to none and I am delighted to work side by side with Lorraine to support our extensive membership."

CARRAIG DONN LAUNCHES LOYALTY CARD IN 37 STORES NATIONWIDE

For the first time, Carraig Donn customers have the opportunity to earn points every time they spend in store. The company's aim is to build positive, lasting relationships with their customers by providing them with the right products when and where they need them, and the introduction of the loyalty scheme will be an extension of that service. Carraig Donn loyalty members will be able to accrue and redeem points on their purchases. They will also be alerted to exclusive fashion, jewellery and giftware store events along with tailored discounts and offers. Commenting on the launch of the new card, Managing Director Pat Hughes noted: "We are thrilled to introduce our new Loyalty platform which will allow us to reward and incentivise Carraig Donn customers. We recognise and value our loyal customers, and the new card will facilitate personalised offers and incentives. The loyalty card is now available in all stores nationwide and will also be available at our new outlet in The Swan Shopping Centre, Rathmines, which is due to open in October."



Carraig Donn launches into loyalty

Wyevale Garden Centres is reported to be close to securing new funding to shore up the gap having suffering trading losses of £100m last year.

DFS is to buy furniture competitor **Sofology** in a deal valued at £25m. Sofology has thirty-seven stores and a strong online business.

JOYCE'S SUPERMARKETS ACQUIRES NESTOR'S SUPERMARKETS IN GALWAY



Pat Joyce adds four stores to his growing portfolio

Joyce's Supermarket Group recently announced that it has entered into an agreement to acquire the assets of the Nestor's Supermarket Group in Galway. Nestor's Supermarkets, which are currently in receivership, include Nestor's stores at Fr. Griffin Road, Ballybane, Oranmore and Doughiska. Once the proposed transaction completes, Nestor's stores will be re-branded under the Joyce name. The completion of the proposed transaction is subject to certain conditions, including approval by the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission. Managing Director of Joyce's Supermarket Group, Pat Joyce, commenting on the planned expansion, said "We are always open to exploring opportunities for growth. Once the requisite approvals are obtained, we look forward to working with the employees at each of the locations to develop four new Joyce's Supermarkets. We pride ourselves in providing a wide range of locally-sourced products to customers throughout our existing stores and welcome the opportunity to offer the same level of quality in four additional Joyce's outlets."



Regatta is the latest retailer to install this innovative footfall counting software

Regatta Great Outdoors Rolls-out 3D Footfall Counting

Regatta Great Outdoors recently undertook research to see what technology and Irish based suppliers could meet their footfall counting requirements. Following a successful trial period, Detectag Retail Services were selected to install the latest 3D counters to all stores. Live data available via an online portal ensures a variety of analytical reports are available to provide in depth analysis on store performance and store locations. Another feature of the technology is the "Marketing Effectiveness Reports". These reports allow Regatta to gauge the effectiveness of their marketing campaigns by providing analysis of KPI's before, during and after each campaign. Regatta Managing Director Brian Fox said, "The availability of Sales Conversion Data, Passing Footfall Data, Customer Dwell Time and Cross Shopping Reports provide valuable insights to the Management Team when evaluating store performance and staffing levels." John Dempsey of Detectag Retail Services said: "The accuracy of the data and no minimum contract period are reasons why many Irish retailers are now installing our footfall counting solution. With over 2,400 counters installed throughout Ireland, we now have a very clear picture of footfall in all major towns, cities and shopping centers. This data is made available free of charge to our clients to assist with their store planning."

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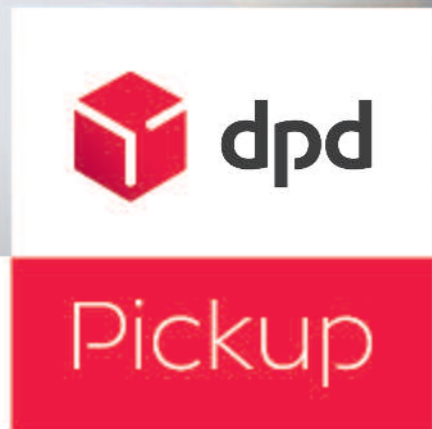
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All smiles at the opening of Choice Stores Cavan



CHOICE STORES opens eighth location

Choice Stores, the North East of Ireland home and seasons retailer, has recently opened their eighth store location. The new store, located in the Kilmore Centre on the Dublin Road, Cavan is the company's biggest yet. The grand opening included a visit from the Tully Twins from TV3's Googlebox and the ribbon was cut by Senator Diarmuid Wilson. Commenting on the opening Michael Brett said: "We are delighted to invest further in our expanding business with the opening of our first Cavan store. The opening has gone down really well and the customer response has been incredible."



Heather and Niall Lawlor open sixth Irish store

SOSTRENE GRENE IRELAND OPENS NUMBER SIX

Danish retailer Sostrene Grene has recently opened their sixth Irish store in Bedford Row, Limerick city centre. The retailer, which specializes in home accessories, kitchenware, gift wrap, DIY items, stationary and small furniture, is rapidly expanding in Ireland. The brand revolves around the story of the characters Anna and Clara Grene; two sisters who diligently work to create slight, bright differences to everyday life. Having travelled all over the world, the sisters are confident that the dynamic city of Limerick is the perfect place to open their next store. Sostrene Grene opened their first Irish store in Dun Laoghaire in 2015. Niall and Heather Lawlor, the Irish joint venture partners, say they are excited to bring Sostrene Grene to Limerick and add to their existing five Irish Sostrene Grene stores.

HUGH MAGUIRE WINS BIG>>>



Hugh Maguire's award winning smoked black pudding

Out of 12,366 products which entered the Great Taste 2017, the top honour of Great Taste Supreme Champion was recently awarded to a Smoked Black Pudding, a brand-new product from Ashbourne craft butcher Hugh Maguire. Celebrating the very best in food and drink, Great Taste, the world's most coveted food awards, reached its grand finale at the Great Taste Golden Fork Award Dinner held in September at the InterContinental London Park Lane Hotel, where over 350 guests from the world of fine-food gathered to hear the results of many months of rigorous judging. Commenting on the news, Hugh Maguire said: "This is a huge endorsement for the products we make and will greatly accelerate our wholesaling plans for our range of fine foods we produce."

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For more information contact Claire Nally, Retail & Hospitality Lead, Fujitsu – Claire.Nally@ie.fujitsu.com



shaping tomorrow with you



MAUREEN CAHALAN WINS JCI AWARD

Ballinasloe jeweller Maureen Cahalan was recently presented with a Junior Chamber Ireland award for service standards in her forty-two-year-old store. The award was voted for by the general public making it all the more impressive an achievement. The Ballinasloe Business Awards were sponsored by the Bank of Ireland. Speaking about the award Maureen said: "This is such a great honour for me and my wonderful team. It is a true endorsement of all the hard-work we invest and all the great developments currently happening in Ballinasloe Town."

MaxiZoo join the Top Oil Cannonball

One hundred and ninety supercars worth an estimated €32m recently travelled across Ireland as part of this year's Top Oil Cannonball Run. Car models which featured included McLaren, Porsche, Rolls Royce, Ferrari and Lamborghini. The Cannonball is a charity event with collections made at each stop of the trip. Spotted in the convoy were none other than MaxiZoo intrepid duo Tony Cross and Darren Spoonley. Nice legs Tony!

Tony Cross and Darren Spoonley drove the 1,000KM Cannonball route



RETAIL EXCELLENCE STRENGTHENS BOARD

Retail Excellence has recently confirmed five new appointments to the Board. The new appointees include Michelle O'Gorman, Director, Kilkenny Group, Michelle McBride, Retail Director, Butlers Chocolates, Jean McCabe, Owner, Willow Boutiques, Darren Smyth, Group Head of Retail, Shannon Group and Joe Barrett, COO and co-owner, Applegreen. Commenting on the appointments Colm Carroll, Retail Excellence Chairman said: "The management team and I are eager to ensure that we have a Board that is representative of all Members. These recent appointments add strength to the Board and will serve Retail Excellence and our near 2,000 company Members well. There is no surprise that each of the five operate retail companies with excellence at their heart."

David Fitzsimons, CEO, Retail Excellence welcomes Joe Barrett, COO and co-owner Applegreen onto the Retail Excellence Board

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the NUMBERS

- 84** The year on year percentage decline in new store opening in the UK in the second quarter of 2017
- 36** The percentage increase in online purchases by Irish consumers according to the Retail Excellence eCommerce Dashboard
- 4** The number of new Joyce's Supermarkets following the acquisition of Nestor's SuperValu by the Galway retailer
- 19** The percentage reduction in ASDA UK profitability in 2016 against 2015
- 300** The number of jobs ASDA UK is reported to be axing
- 50** The number of years Ardkeen Quality Food Store in Waterford has traded
- 75** The number of new stores M&CO, the fashion retailer, is planning to open in the UK
- 11** The date in November when over six hundred retailers will congregate in Killarney to celebrate the best in the Irish Retail Industry



Habitat launches Click and Collect

Homewares retailer Habitat has launched its first click and collect service allowing customers to pick up online orders in 2,300 locations. The Sainsbury's owned retailer is believed to be ramping up their ecommerce efforts and the launch of click and collect is a major step on their ecommerce journey. Habitat products can be collected in all Habitat stores, over two hundred Sainsbury's stores and in more than two thousand DPD pick-up points around the United Kingdom.



Suzanne Jackson's Wedding Celebrates Retail Excellence Members

The recent wedding of famous blogger and style icon Suzanne Jackson was a memorable affair for two Retail Excellence Members. Lamber De Bie, the Waterford and Kilkenny based Dutch master florist, was chosen to supply the wedding flowers, while McElhinneys in Ballybofey were chosen for the brides stunning wedding dress. Speaking after the wedding Lamber De Bie said: "It was such a pleasure to be selected by Suzanne to provide the flowers for such a high-profile wedding. I met Suzanne at the Retail Excellence Retail Retreat last year and we really hit it off. I am delighted to have contributed to such a magnificent day."

Stunning wedding dress and floral arrangement for a stunning bride

JOHN LEWIS BRANCHES OUT INTO HOME SOLUTIONS

Department store group John Lewis is trialling a tradesman service involving booking plumbers, painters, handymen, gardeners and electricians for customers. The Home Solutions service lets customers book John Lewis approved tradesmen via its app, website and call centre. John Lewis will also give a one-year guarantee for the service provided. A spokesperson for John Lewis said: "Our customers often ask if we can help them with tasks at home. We have taken a lot of care to find professionals to the standard that people expect from John Lewis."



JD SPORTS POST IMPRESSIVE NUMBERS

Sports retailer JD Sports recently reported very impressive trading numbers with pre-tax profits growing to €110m in the 26 weeks to end of July 2017, an increase of 33%. Year on year revenue increased by 44% to €1.4b. The company is planning to open a store a week across Europe. JD Sports Peter Cowgill said: "JD Sports is perceived internationally as the iconic retailer in this sector. The proposition that we take internationally is new, exciting and it offers a great customer experience."

JD Sports have significant growth plans for Europe



PRIMARK POWERS AHEAD

Primark enjoy a 13% hike in full year sales

Primark has confirmed an increase in full-year sales and margin following lower mark-downs, new store openings and enhanced trading activity. The retailer confirmed that despite less advantageous exchange rates, full year group sales are expected to increase by 13% against last year in the 52 weeks to September 2017. The value retailer said that sales increased due to increased selling space and a 1% increase in like for like trading.

FOOD SAFARI through London Streets

Retail Excellence and our retail excellence consultant partners, Echochamber, recently led a food safari through the streets of London. Nearly forty food retailers joined the safari which visited over fifty food stores and markets. Highlights on the day included the stunning Borough Market, the very impressive food pop-up Mercato Metropolitano and Neal's Yard Dairy. If you did not attend the safari but would like to see the stores which the delegation visited, simply contact the office or email Antoinette@retailexcellence.ie.



The Food Safari started with a "I Love Nata" custard tart



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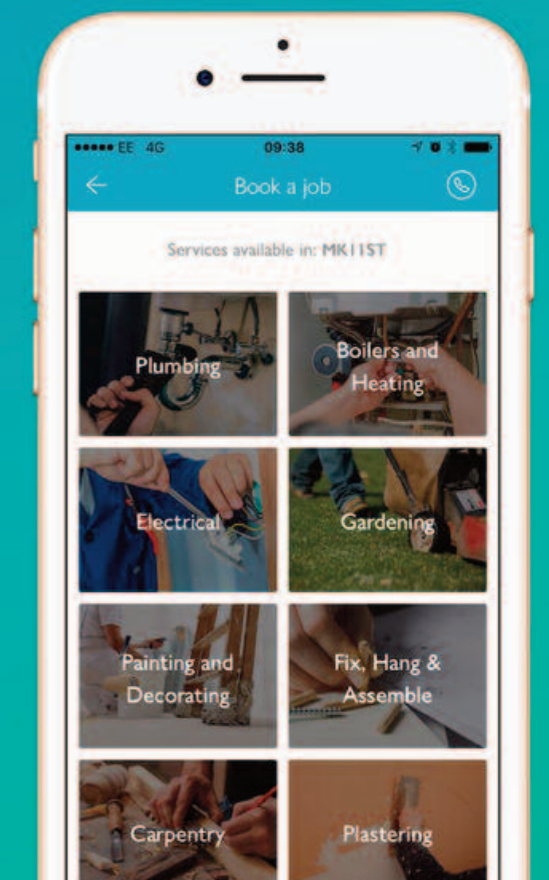
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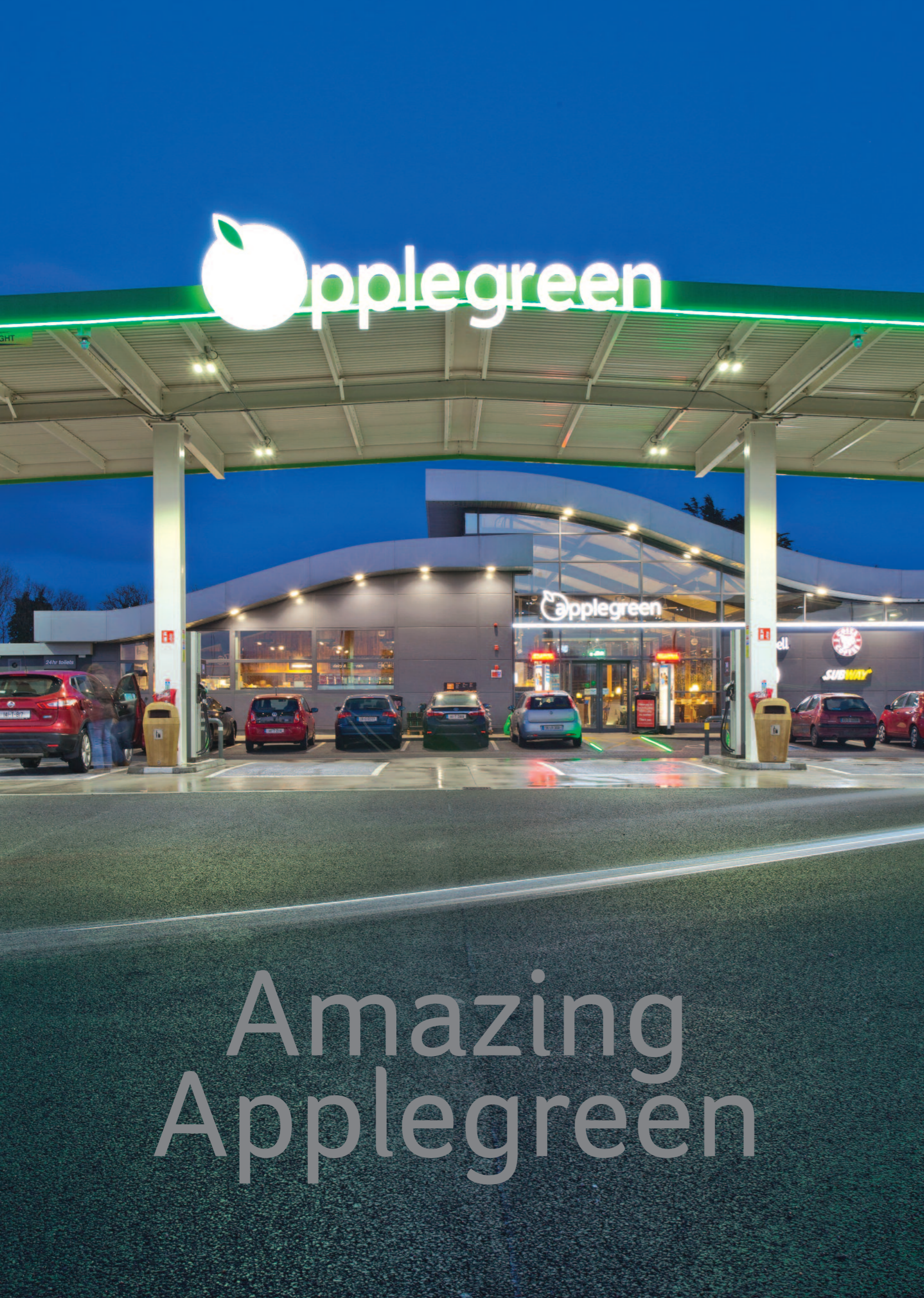
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Amazing Applegreen

Amazing Applegreen

From SME to IPO, an amazing Irish retail success story

By David Fitzsimons

I have a lot to thank my father Brendan for. It was he who introduced me to Bob Etchingham

It is always a pleasure to meet up with member companies, and no more pleasurable than sitting down with Joe Barrett, COO and co-owner of Applegreen.

In preparing for the meeting I thought long and hard about what to focus on for this feature, milestones in the past, future plans, the IPO, international expansion. In the end and after an extensive catch-up with Joe we covered all the bases.

To start at the start, I asked Joe to explain how did it all begin? "I have a lot to thank my father Brendan for. It was he who introduced me to Bob Etchingham, they had known each other through Esso. At the time Bob had two stations and I was drawn to his entrepreneurial spirit. I had another job offer on the table with a far higher salary and a company car. That said, the offer of equity in the fledgling business and the endless opportunities which we saw for the business led me to decide to go into business with Bob. From the start Bob and I saw how important food and coffee were becoming especially in more developed markets such as the US. At the time, the Irish forecourt industry was all about petrol but Bob and I knew that we could break the mould. We set to work and launched a Dunkin Donuts offer in our sites. That was followed by the launch of a Bewley's Express coffee offer and the first push button coffee machines in Ireland. A deal was brokered with Bobby Kerr who, at the time, was working with the Campbell Bewley's Company. Our relationship with Bewley's thought us a lot and shaped our food and coffee strategy for the future."

People

As I sit in Joe's office at Applegreen HQ Parkwest and listen to him talk about the early days of Applegreen there is a distinct and obvious passion which Joe exudes. The office walls are busy with photos and giant maps of the UK and

US, each map littered with pins, each pin a planned new site. One photo stands out. An image of Joe wearing his trademark smile standing beside two colleagues. "That is me with Adrian Grimes and Trevor Moore on their graduation day. They had just completed Diplomas in Retail Management with Retail Excellence and National College of Ireland. One of the most pleasurable things about working in such a fast-paced and growing company is the fact that there are so many opportunities for colleagues to grow within the organisation". Joe gets up from his desk to study the photo. He points to Trevor, "Trevor is now the President of Applegreen North East USA while Adrian is Head of Operations in the UK. Our people are so important to us. We now have over 3,500 colleagues and talent retention and growth is key



David Fitzsimons caught up with Bob Etchingham and Joe Barrett in Applegreen HQ

In fact, in the first week of October we will open in fifty locations in the US and UK markets

Own brand allowed us to sell milk for 50% less than branded products and yet make margin gains!

to our success. My colleague Dave McClean manages all people matters and has been instrumental in building such a great team at Applegreen. We now have an in-house Management Development Programme and a Food Academy with full-time food specialists. Every year we host an annual conference with all of our senior colleagues. The plans for the year ahead are outlined and we listen to our colleagues and take feedback and advice. It is always a great day and everyone leaves with a pep in their step ready for the year ahead."

I have been allocated a two-hour slot with Joe but Kirsty, Joe's PA, is quick to remind me that Joe has another appointment at 3pm. Scheduling time with Joe is a challenge. "I am in the US at minimum one week every month" explains Joe. "We have significant plans for the US market and it is a challenge not to get excited about our growth prospects. Teaming up with 7Eleven over there has been great. We now have twenty-five US stores operating and this will soon grow to sixty-seven sites. In fact, in the first week of October we will open in fifty locations between the US and UK markets. To put that into context, it took us fifteen years to get to our first fifty sites. In one week in October we will achieve the same number of new sites. I guess you can say we operate at a different pace now!"

The Milestones

I am eager to get a sense of what the key milestones experienced by Applegreen to date are and Joe is happy to share. "I guess the starting point was when Bob opened his first two sites in 1992. I joined Bob a year later and we grew the business slowly. We got lucky when we won the rights for Wimpy and not only did we operate a Wimpy offer in our sites, we also sold the franchise to other retailers, this gave us a great insight into food. In 2005 the Applegreen brand was born. Our



The NCI graduation ceremony at the Retail Excellence Awards 2013 with Trevor Moore, Joe Barrett and Adrian Grimes

first site was in Urlingford, Tipperary and this store really did set us in the right direction. Not only was the brand new but so also was the store format. We dedicated at minimum seventy percent of the space to fresh food. We provided more car parking, introduced free Wi-Fi and ensured that we maintained rigorous standards, especially how our toilets were kept. Overnight we saw a significant increase in footfall and a different buying occasion. Instead of refuelling and leaving customers were stopping and dwelling, in many cases customers now made the journey for food



The Irish sites still play a key role in the growth of Applegreen, including the location on the Tuam Road

and not just for fuel. Developing our own brand was a game changer. It gave us the courage to challenge ourselves, grow faster and launch into the dealer market."

"2007 was a big year as we launched our own central distribution centre in Leixlip. Having our own distribution centre won us significant efficiency gains and also allowed us to try new things. We launched own-brand milk and water. Who would have ever thought that customers would buy and drink milk from a carton with a fuel brand emblazoned on it, but they did. Own-brand allowed us to sell milk for 50% less than the main branded products and yet make margin gains! 2009 was a good year. We had noticed in the US that many companies who were growing fast all applied the concept of "conscious capitalism". In effect, they make a profit yes, but they also gave something back. Bob and I were eager to do likewise and we launched the Applegreen Charitable Fund. We donate 1 cent of every fuel and shop transaction to it and this led us to work with such great charities as Laura Lynn, Goal, Jack & Jill, Crumlin Children's Hospital and most recently Barnardo's, ISPC Childline, Debra Ireland and Northern Ireland Children's Hospice. As we grew the fund also grew. We raised €1m in the first five years and today we are able to raise the same amount in a two-year window. As we accelerate our growth further we will see our charitable fund flourish."

"In 2010 and over the coming years, we significantly elevated our food offer with the launch of partnerships with Costa, Subway, Burger King, Freshii and Chopsticks. By delivering a broader food offer and enhancing our sites with free Wi-Fi, toilets and enhanced parking we witnessed a significant increase in footfall."

"Also in 2010, we won our first motorway service area Government contract, in conjunction with TOP Oil. Six sites for twenty-five years. The only snag was the contract stipulated that we must design, build and open the six sites in a year! We signed on the dotted line and got to work and yes, we delivered the project on time. I guess what the motorway sites did for the business was to grow our turnover but probably more importantly it had a hugely positive impact on brand recognition. For the first time, I really believed that we were a national brand. The motorway site model works really well for us and hence we have concentrated on this format a lot in recent years."

Store Design

I am eager to get a sense of what level of creative design thinking has gone into each Applegreen store. Joe is happy to explain "We are very proud of our store design, it's always been a special area of interest for Bob. During the recession when many operators were cutting costs we decided to invest in a design

department. We bespoke our design for each site but stick to some rigorous rules. We will always dedicate as much space to food, the space will be very well lit, we will make the seating area as comfortable as possible – we are happy for customers to dwell. We also look at the ergonomics of any given store. Speed of service is key. As a company, we tend to use below the line advertising mechanics, and we put resources into the best food offer we can deliver in the very best environment. We are serious about food. We have a 'food passport' system which is a rigorous multi-level internal food training programme. To manage a site a candidate must have achieved their passport, if they don't have a passport, they will not manage a site."

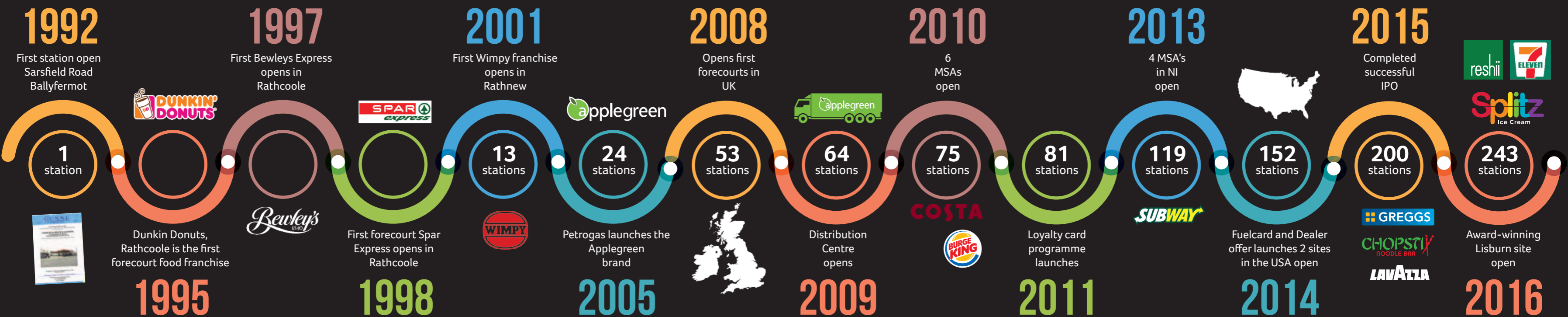
The Future

I am by now running out of time but decide to broach the topic of the wider industry and what Joe thinks the future looks like. He pauses for a while and then explains "Food will continue to grow as a sector, especially the day to night part.



The site in Hempstead New York with a Hydrogen Fuel Pump

Our Story





Co-owners Joe Barrett and Bob Etchingham have significant growth plans for the business

Over one hundred colleagues were granted shares

Joe Barrett will present the amazing Applegreen story at the Retail Excellence Retreat, Citywest, May 15th and 16th 2018

Applegreen has built a team of 3,500 colleagues who enjoy lots of career advancement opportunities



ISPCC Childline is one of many charitable partnerships which Applegreen has established

We have a significant opportunity to feed people three meals a day rather than just at breakfast and lunch. I can see the importance of technology growing. We are trialling different tech solutions to enable better queue management systems, demographic analysis of our customers, faster payments, more interactive loyalty and the like. I guess it is also clear that we will also see greater consolidation and not just in forecourt retail, but across all retail around the world."

Are you not concerned about electric cars and the like, I decide to ask? "Yes, we are monitoring them closely whether electric, hydrogen, or compressed natural gas, we are an energy provider and we will provide for what's required in the future. In fact, we have recently announced the launch of a hydrogen fuel pump in our Hempstead site in New York." Joe explains. "We believe that there will be continued growth in motor travel and with accelerated urbanisation, we will see greater commuting distances. The need for convenience will also continue to grow. We are well positioned to take full advantage of future trends."

Politics

We then get chatting about politics and I mention that Lorraine (Higgins, Deputy CEO) and I have a number of Budget '18 meetings forthcoming. Joe is clearly a man who knows what needs to get done. "Anything that can assist the retail industry to recruit and retain talent is a good thing. In that context, something needs to be done about the cost of renting in urban areas. Utility costs are also out of sync with other markets. The Government and the Gardaí have done much to reduce the

illegal fuel trade, but more can be done to stamp out the sale of illegal solid fuel. The 9% VAT rate is key. It has jump started the hospitality and tourism industries and should be retained." I get a sense that while all these are important matters, Applegreen will power on either way.

The Flotation

We then get to the biggest milestone of them all – the IPO flotation of Applegreen on the AIM and ESM markets. For this part of the conversation Joe gets up and walks to a large filing cabinet. He arrives back at his desk with the flotation prospectus. Marked clearly on the front are Goodbody and Shore Capital, advisors for the launch in Dublin and London respectively. Emblazoned across the cover in green lettering is Applegreen PLC. I ask Joe to talk me through his rationale to go the PLC route. "Bob and I did look at other alternatives. We explored private equity investment in the business and looked at bank debt but each and every time we came back to an IPO being the best mechanism to fund growth. Thus in 2015 we floated thirty percent of the company. Our launch price was €3.80 a share and we raised €90million in return for the 30%." Our meeting pauses and Joe reaches across his desk to grab his phone. Reading from a stock market App Joe calmly states: "Today the shares are valued at €5.50 a 45% increase in two years". I quickly try to figure out Joe and Bob's shareholding value but Joe is quick to explain that they used the IPO as an opportunity to thank many of their colleagues who had served the business well. "From day one of the floatation Bob and I agreed to gift some of our shareholding to long-serving



A very special day in the Applegreen journey. Applegreen becomes a PLC on the 19th June 2015 at the Irish Stock Exchange

colleagues. Thus, one of the benefits of the IPO has been to greatly assist us retain our top talent. Over one hundred colleagues were granted shares. They are as eager as anyone to grow the business and enhance shareholder returns."

While I struggle to do the maths, I do know that the man across the table from me has

become a multi-millionaire. I don't want to be vulgar in my questioning, but I do need to understand more. This is the same man I have known for over a decade. He has remained modest and giving, always asking is there anything he can do to help. I ask Joe has his life changed since the IPO. "No" Joe replies calmly. "I haven't splurged. Bob and I are eager to keep growing the business and

nothing else." He pauses for a while, quietly thinking and then leans forward towards me and slowly whispers "I did buy my father a new car".

I guess Brendan Barrett deserves a new car. After all he was the man behind the introduction of a lifetime.

Applegreen Templepatrick delivers all the key customer services including ample parking, free WIFI and over 70% of the footprint is dedicated to food



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Growth in the US market continues including the acquisition of the Brandi Pitt Stop business

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Together is Better

Susan Brereton, Retail Excellence Member Support Executive explores why retailers should join Retail Excellence



For over 24 years, Retail Excellence has been working with leading retail companies who operate in the Irish market and has become by far, the largest retail industry trade body in Ireland. Working with the most creative, progressive and innovative retailers in the market, we make every effort to deliver activity which is wholeheartedly based on member needs.

I am often asked the question 'what is the value of becoming a member?'. As with membership in any organisation, the value of belonging to Retail Excellence is inevitably proportional to the degree of participation and involvement in the activities and events provided. However, for those who choose to make use of the full range of benefits offered, the value of Retail Excellence is indeed impressive.

As a member of Retail Excellence, you will belong to a professional body comprising of 1,750 retailers operating in excess of 13,000 stores from across all of the retail sectors in Ireland. By becoming a member, you become part of the dynamic changes that are transforming the retail landscape in Ireland and contributing to shaping the future of a vibrant and competitive world class retail industry.

Membership includes access to a wide range of advice and support services including complimentary over the phone HR support & Legal advice to assist you with the day to day running of your business, coupled with our members only online resources on our website. Helpful Research insights from our quarterly Productivity Review allow for the opportunity to benchmark your performance in your retail sector. Our Copyright Exempt Music can save you up to 70% when compared with IMRO/PPI charges. We also provide access to cutting edge educational opportunities including our Retail Management Development Programme, now in its sixth year and also our Advanced Retail Management Programme. Both programmes demonstrate how to approach the practical side of retail and the opportunity to hear innovative, challenging and engaging content from national and international retail experts.

We have strengthened our team recently with the promotion of former Senator and barrister, Lorraine Higgins, to the position of Deputy CEO. Lorraine joined the company in January 2017 and has headed up the Public Affairs and Communications division successfully since then. This has allowed for the opportunity to influence policy and make meaningful changes by representing the needs of our members at Government level.

For members who are taking their first steps selling online at home to those selling internationally, we provide eCommerce support and education for all retailers including bespoke eCommerce training sessions with Google with Facebook & Twitter which cover practical and relevant topics to assist you with growing your business online. Retail Excellence are also the only provider in Ireland of the eCommerce Europe Trustmark. Research has shown there is up to 26% increase in conversion rates by displaying a Trustmark logo.

Our regular email updates keep you informed of the latest news and events in happening retail and offer the most up-to-date developments that we are working on for you. While our Member Groups & Networks including eCommerce, Loss Prevention, Garden, Human Resources, Pharmacy, Jewellery, Town Revival and Visitor & Tourism provide thought leadership and guidance in your field. You can also connect with other members and grow your professional network with our specialist retail events including the amazing Retail Retreat.

If you want to be the very best that you can in retail, Retail Excellence provides the supports, tools and resources to help get you there, by advancing your business and enriching your knowledge with life-long learning resources. For more information on the benefits of membership and our events, please see our website www.retailexcellence.ie or contact susan@retailexcellence.ie I 00353 (0) 65 6846927. We are here to support our members.



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FEATURE E-COMMERCE



David Campbell, Retail Excellence eCommerce Manager



List of the 2017 Google Incubation participants

GOOGLE INCUBATION PROGRAMME

Retail Excellence recently partnered with Google again to run another highly successful Incubation Programme. Over the past few years the course has seen fantastic results from participants and the members on this year's course include Willow.ie, Evergreen Health Foods, Cherish Me, Dixons Carphone, Elverys, The Butler's Pantry, McSport, Bannon Jewellers, House of Ireland, Kerrigan Meats, Dubray Books and Harry Corry. The Programme has excellent support with three Google experts delivering content and following each presentation the participants have their own

individual Google assistant which is invaluable. The sessions are designed specifically to prepare participants for Black Friday, Cyber Monday and Christmas to ensure they have the most effective online strategies implemented.

The excellent group of retailers on the course this year is a key factor in ensuring maximum benefit will be obtained due to the dedication from all involved. The Google team monitor performance between each session to ensure all checklists are completed with any queries assisted. Both organisations have had an excellent relationship over

the past few years helping Irish retailers grow their online sales both in Ireland and internationally. David Campbell, eCommerce Manager at Retail Excellence commenting on this year's course "I am delighted to be part of the Incubation Programme this year. We have a brilliant group of retailers and the support from the Google team is superb. I have no doubt that all participants will progress strongly from the sessions and I look forward to helping them enhance their online journey in the future".

MEMBER GDPR MANUAL

Retail Excellence recently launched their GDPR document to their membership with the Deputy Data Protection Commissioner, Dale Sunderland. The Data Protection Commissioner's Offices and

Ecommerce Europe have approved the document and its content for circulation to Irish retailers. The document, compiled by Retail Excellence Corporate Partner, Grant Thornton, will help retailers around Ireland achieve compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations which are due to come into effect on 25th May next year. GDPR means that any company processing personal data will be required to comply with the provisions of the Regulations. Failure to adhere to same could lead to retailers facing fines of up to €20 million or 4% of global turnover, depending on which is greater.

Speaking at the launch of the document with Deputy Data Protection Commissioner, Dale Sunderland, Deputy CEO of Retail Excellence, Lorraine Higgins said "This new development on the legislative landscape changes the way everyone deals with data. Our member retailers deal with data on a daily basis with their emails, loyalty schemes and employee information thus it is of huge importance to us that we have them prepared so as to ensure they are fully compliant and insulate them from prosecution". The launch of this GDPR document demonstrates the commitment of Retail Excellence to help retailers better understand the implications of the regulations and identify the steps required to become compliant so risks of breach are minimised.

Upcoming eCommerce EVENTS

- 27th September – Retail Excellence eCommerce Conference
- 6th October – Twitter Training Morning
- 18th October – Maples and Calder GDPR Briefing
- 26th October – Selfridges UK Case Study Visit

Seven Stages to Success

- Stress test your website server
- Schedule emails, social media posts and text alerts
- Ensure all graphics / banners are pre-tested
- Prepare all staff to handle customer service enquiries
- Contact logistics partners for updated pick-up & dispatch hours
- Daily deals: Promote multiple ranges for added value

CYBER WEEK & CHRISTMAS 2017

2016 was the first year that globally, Facebook saw more mobile conversions than desktop conversions for the entire Christmas period. Similar figures have been reported in the Retail Excellence/StudioForty9 eCommerce Dashboard report with a 45.52% YOY increase in mobile sessions for July 2017. A recent study by Facebook on UK customers revealed that 30% agree their mobile device allows them to make more informed purchase decisions during the Christmas period. The same study indicated that 26% of people use their mobile for Christmas shopping because it's more convenient than shopping in-store with 39% highlighting that social media is influential in their Christmas shopping.

With the festive period nearly upon us, you should have rich customer data and strong intent signals from your digital campaigns earlier in the year, as well as re-targeting campaigns running from the first phase of Christmas activity. These can be setup by using Custom Audiences and Dynamic Ads on Facebook. It is important to be aware of new shopping holidays across the globe such as Singles Day which is also called '11/11' as it happens every year on 11th November. Singles Day started in China and it is now spreading to Europe. Another example being Amazon Prime Day which fell on 12th July this year with sales growing by more than 60 percent from the same 30-hour window in 2016, with a record number of Prime members shopping across 13 countries.



Official launch of the Retail Excellence GDPR manual

Black Friday is the biggest shopping day of the year which falls on 24th November. Up to 45% of Black Friday conversations across social media happen in the four days before the event itself. Look to sustain interest over a longer period of time with Black Friday gift guides brought to life via interactive online tools such as Instagram stories, Facebook competitions, Twitter polls and countdown timers.

It is no secret that Black Friday is big for Millennials. Data also informs us that shoppers aged 55+ show more retail focussed conversations across social media platforms in November than any other Christmas month. Make sure to focus on your audiences needs with specific messages, for example: Gifts for grandkids etc.

The final week of November sees the last regular pay day before Christmas, driving a fresh wave of shoppers online and into stores. If you haven't reserved a Black Friday audience using reach & frequency, you might want to switch to manual bidding to ensure you use your marketing budget efficiently at a point when many advertisers will be competing for core audiences like young women and mums. The online phenomenon continues with Cyber Monday on 27th November and it is important to consider how you can create differentiation across a long weekend of opportunity after Black Friday.

Marketing Checklist

- Watch fast-growing but nascent online shopping Christmas transporting from other markets
- People are buying from their phones while on the go. More than ever, efficiency is the new competitive advantage
- Use mobile to create convenience around in-store shopping; for example, guide people to buy online and pick up in-store
- Use your social media feeds to dynamically showcase product catalogues and to shorten the path from discovery to purchase
- After Christmas, re-engage shoppers who have expressed interest and entice them with special January steals

For all queries eCommerce related, please contact Retail Excellence eCommerce Manager, David Campbell – david.campbell@retailexcellence.ie



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Digital Media Award
Best Conversion Strategy

Littlewoods Ireland
Global Landy Award
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FEATURE TOP100 STORE UNCOVERED



Name: **LOUISE BRENNAN**
Company: **Fabiani**
Position: **Owner**

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS? Fabiani is contemporary lifestyle and clothing boutique. We have an in house coffee bar, 'Mudshot' as well as an in store brow and lash bar, 'UB Brows'. We also hold Yoga

classes in store three days a week. We want to offer our customers an alternative to the traditional boutique, where you go for one singular purchase and purpose. By becoming more multi-faceted as a store, we try to give our customer's greater choice and a better retail experience.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THE RETAIL INDUSTRY? I first started in retail as a teenager, when I took up a Saturday job in a boutique in Longford town. I fell in love with it instantly. I always knew I would return to the retail world one

We want to offer our customers an alternative to the traditional boutique where you go for one singular purchase and purpose

day, but the chance didn't come till 10 years later when the opportunity arose for me to take over Fabiani.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB? Definitely being on the shop floor and engaging with customers. It's where I started and it's still my favourite thing about working in retail now.

WHICH RETAILER (NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL) DO YOU ADMIRE MOST AND WHY? I love Anthropology and always admire their visual merchandising and efforts in retail theatre. I also think that Avoca has been incredibly successful in creating a strong brand, and their experiential concept is something I have always admired.

WHAT'S ON YOUR BUCKET LIST? I recently travelled to Bali to do some trekking, I would love to trek to Machu Picchu – that's definitely on my bucket list now!

IF YOU COULD HAVE A SUPERPOWER, WHAT WOULD IT BE? To be able to speak every language.

LOUISE BRENNAN



Name: **PEADAR MULVIHILL**
Company: **Pat McDonnell Paints, Athlone**
Position: **Store Manager**

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS? Pat McDonnell Paints is considered "Ireland's Brightest Paint Store" and its customer base is made up of home consumers, painters/

decorators and a range of paint and hardware stores throughout the country. The company has grown into a network of seven stores leveraging its positioning statement: "We care more. We know more. We have more". In a nutshell, this captures the company competes. i.e. customer service, expertise and product range.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THE RETAIL INDUSTRY? I worked in a variety of retail positions before I got a part-time summer job with Pat McDonnell Paints. I really enjoyed it and worked my way up over the years. There are some great challenges and I'm looking forward to them all.

*We care more.
We know more.
We have more*

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB? That would be the Customers! Customers with a capital 'C'. I have to say I genuinely love coming in to work. I love working with the team in-store and serving the customers is really great. It's a great achievement and allows us to display to customers what really effective customer service looks like.

WHICH RETAILER (NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL) DO YOU ADMIRE MOST AND WHY? Apart from Pat McDonnell Paints... Canadian-owned, Brown Thomas. I like their approach...the way they operate... their stores, their staff, their image... they're very professional.

WHAT'S ON YOUR BUCKET LIST? I know I should be saying scuba diving on the barrier reef or climbing Kilimanjaro or whatever, but I've done all that stuff. Would this be the place to say I'd like to open my own store!

IF YOU COULD HAVE A SUPERPOWER, WHAT WOULD IT BE? If I could see into future that would surely be a game-changer! That, and the superpower of multi-tasking!

PEADAR MULVIHILL



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FEATURE

TOP100 STORE UNCOVERED



Name: **PAUL LENEHAN**
Company: **Sienna Home Furnishings**
Position: **Managing Director**

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS? Sienna Home Furnishings is a family-run furniture & bed retail business based in Waterford city. We offer expert advice and tailored products to the discerning furniture buyer who wants choice and personalized

interior solutions. Helping the customer make the right choice for them and their home is really important to us and so we give lots of time, personal attention and our expertise to help them achieve this. We constantly strive to achieve excellence at every stage of the customer journey and we always go that extra mile.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THE RETAIL INDUSTRY? My wife Janice and I moved to Waterford in 2002 and while shopping for furniture for our own home, we identified a gap in the market for a quality furniture store in Waterford. We both had a keen interest in interiors and I always had an ambition to run my own business. I had been European Customer Service Manager for a pharma multi-national and I believed that we could apply our professional approach and our belief in excellent customer service to create a high quality retail business in this sector. We were very fortunate to have been joined in business by my wife's parents and her brother, making it a true family business.

Helping the customer make the right choice for them and their home is really important to us

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB? The part of my day that I enjoy most is spending time with customers either on the shop floor or in their homes. Making a decision on a furniture purchase is a "big-deal" for most people and being part of the process and helping them make the appropriate choices can be very rewarding particularly when you get to see the final outcome.

WHICH RETAILER (NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL) DO YOU ADMIRE? Within our own sector, a business I really admire is Andersons of Inverurie (Aberdeen, Scotland). Similar to ourselves, Andersons is a family run independent furniture business, although on a much larger scale than our own. They have achieved great success in their business by continuing to differentiate themselves from the large multiples in the sector through the sheer passion for what they do.

WHAT'S ON YOUR BUCKET LIST? In my free time, I love to cycle and visiting France is another passion of mine and my family. One of my many ambitions is to complete the "Velodysee", which is a 1,200km cycle route which takes you from Roscoff in Northern France along the western Atlantic coast, right down to Hendaye on the Spanish border.

IF YOU COULD HAVE A SUPERPOWER, WHAT WOULD IT BE? If I had to choose a superpower, I think I would like the ability to be in several places at the one time – this would make life so much easier and more straightforward!!! I could be in Sienna with a customer, playing football with my sons or cycling in France with my wife all at the one time....Happy Days!!!!

PAUL LENEHAN



Name: **CHRIS O'DRISCOLL**
Company: **Garvey's SuperValu Tralee**
Position: **Manager**

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS? Garvey's SuperValu is located in Rock Street, Tralee since 1992. Garvey's is an Independent family owned store and operated business, and is part of the Musgrave Group. During the summer of 2016 the

Garvey Group invested 2.2 million euro in our store. We are renowned for providing a first class food offering with superior customer service and excellent value. This is achieved through the skills and wholehearted commitment of our employees.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THE RETAIL INDUSTRY? In the summer of 1999 I started working in Garvey's SuperValu Listowel packing customers bags at the checkouts. Slowly and surely year by year gradually taking on more responsibility I found myself as a Store Manager in our Centra in Newcastlewest and currently the manager of the recently renovated Tralee shop.

Being able to motivate and encourage others to reach their potential and seeing them succeed.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB? Interacting with both staff and customers on a daily basis. Setting personal and business goals and striving with my team to achieve them. Learning and being innovative in the current fast paced ever-changing retail environment. Being involved and supporting the local community and charities including Tidy Towns and Recovery Haven. Being able to motivate and encourage others to reach their potential and seeing them succeed.

WHICH RETAILER (NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL) DO YOU ADMIRE MOST AND WHY? The Garvey Group. Seeing how far the group has developed since becoming a member in 1999 and how they've adjusted and evolved to being a leading innovative retailer in Ireland. Seeing the vision of senior management of where we are and where we are going in the future is really refreshing and forward thinking.

WHAT'S ON YOUR BUCKET LIST? Manage Liverpool or Kerry (LOL), Learn a musical instrument, Parachute Jump, Travel the World

IF YOU COULD HAVE A SUPERPOWER, WHAT WOULD IT BE? To be able to fly..... (to avoid traffic mainly)

CHRIS O'DRISCOLL

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SUSTAINING AND GROWING THE ECONOMY IN 2018 AND BEYOND



Lorraine Higgins,
Deputy CEO
Retail Excellence

Budget negotiations have been ongoing for some time now with a never-ending list of priorities being submitted by various Ministers to the Department of Finance. Retail Excellence acted presciently when we held a Budget 2018 briefing for all members of the Oireachtas in July. The session was strongly supported by every political party which demonstrates the growing importance of the largest private industry employer in Ireland amongst our decision-makers and influencers.

The attendees were receptive to our challenges to include the ramifications of Brexit, most notably sterling devaluation, increased online spend being fulfilled by businesses operating outside Ireland and the volatility of retail trends which are making it increasingly difficult to forward plan.

Whilst our Budget proposals include a number of key priorities and none can be discriminated against in terms of their importance we are, however, making three major asks of the Government:

1. Reduction in the 23% VAT rate

The 23% VAT rate was introduced as a financial emergency measure some time ago but it is now critical for the wellbeing of Irish retail and the Exchequer that it be reduced. Currently, a trend is fast developing whereby consumers are travelling north of the border to shop whilst others are buying over €14million online from businesses operating outside of Ireland every single day. In relation to online spend this amounts to a loss of €1.2 billion in VAT receipts per annum for the Exchequer and is only set to rise if corrective action is not taken.

This huge leak in spend is happening because of aggressive marketing by U.K. based retailers on Irish social media sites, sterling devaluation and the existing VAT differential between the two jurisdictions. To exacerbate the situation further some consumer goods in the UK attract 0% VAT whilst the same product might attract 23% here putting the UK at a distinct competitive advantage. This is part of a larger issue regarding the need for the VAT system to be overhauled but in the interim it is essential for the future of Irish retail that measures are taken by Government to address the issue.

2. Increased supports to get retailers e-tailing

At present, 22% of Irish SMEs have no presence online. Of the 78% who have an online presence ¾ of those sites are not capable of processing payments which means they cannot take advantage of the €602 billion being spent by European consumers over 2017. This is of manifest disadvantage to Irish retailers at a time they are facing ferocious competition from UK based retailers. Consequently, we

We believe not only is a funding scheme or a Government provided loan scheme urgently required to make retailers online enabled but state agencies must also assist retailers journeys.



believe not only is a funding scheme or a Government provided loan scheme urgently required to make retailers online enabled but state agencies must also assist retailers journeys. The provision of supports which have been traditionally made available to manufacturing and processing companies like market, linguistics, logistics and network supports in other EU countries would help retailers develop new markets and drive sales while ultimately, leading to further employment within the digital realm.

3. Reducing the cost of doing business

It is imperative that the cost of doing business in this country is kept as low as possible to help retailers offset the worst excesses of a post-Brexit hangover. The annual determination of the Low Pay Commission ought to be reduced to every two years which would give retailers certainty and an opportunity to plan for that time period. Furthermore, the increase in the NMW ought to be offset against the PRSI rate which should accordingly fall. The cost of insurance premia needs to be addressed with rigorous legislation introduced providing for active deterrents for those contemplating exaggerating their claims for increased quantum. Moreover, our overall competitiveness as a country is of concern despite reports to the contrary. Strong macroeconomic performance is hiding the reality of the threats posed to our competitiveness. Proactive measures must be taken to ensure that the foundation of our future growth is secure.

Retail is often overlooked in favour of the other pillars linked to the economy; FDI and export-focused businesses. But the time has come for us to work to leverage the industry's enormous importance in economic terms: the 282,000 jobs dependent on retail and the €5.7 billion we contribute to the Exchequer on an annual basis. Budget 2018 presents an opportunity to acknowledge this.

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Team Retention and Recognition

Maximising the €500 benefit-in-kind tax break



If you utilise Revenue's €500 Small Benefit Exemption (SBE), are you maximising what it can do for your business? If you're not using it, why not?

The SBE allows companies to give one non-cash bonus/gift of up to €500 to each employee each tax year. While this appears to be straight-forward, many companies still misinterpret or fail to use it efficiently. The result is high costs and often a failure to maximise the benefit for employees.

There are companies of all sizes who, when audited, get a surprise tax bill specifically for failing to use the SBE correctly. In the past three years, companies have been billed hundreds of euro to millions in the most extreme case.

The SBE tax break, if used correctly, can be a tool to drive company initiatives or encourage employees to help the company control costs in specific areas. It can be an extremely low-cost way to recognise excellence in the workplace.

Some ways that it can be used include:

- **Employee referrals:** A reward to staff which reduces recruitment costs. Generally, referred employees settle in better and are happier
- **Perfect attendance:** This isn't a "showing up" bonus, it's a way to drive a culture in your company that encourages perfect attendance
- **Milestone awards:** Get employees to celebrate big and little successes to focus them on the next initiative

Dale Carnegie (Leadership training guru) once said, "people work for money but go the extra mile for recognition, praise and rewards."

The SBE is used by most companies in the form of a multi-store gift card given to employees. Corporate gift card purchasing figures indicate that less than 25% of the estimated €1.02bn tax break is used by companies. This means there is c.€766m in this tax break that is not being used by corporate Ireland.

Solutions Providers

FromMe2You Gift Card specialise in recognition and rewards. They offer the best solutions to maximise the success of your initiative. Fromme2You will give you advice on the best way to use the SBE and how to ensure that your company gets the most out of it.

How can you help your company?

DO

- Allocate a budget that will be spent on the SBE
- Decide on three things you want to achieve out of this initiative
- Communicate the initiative to staff and set it as a manager KPI
- Talk to a service provider that operates in the area of staff recognition to maximise success and value for money
- Most importantly, manage the process and keep driving it

DON'T

- Allow managers to do their own version of the awards
- Give other token gifts during the year without accounting for them
- Use a system that allocates smaller rewards that are immediately accessible to employees during the year. If an employee has access to the awards during the year, the SBE is used once the first award is given
- Waste the opportunity on a card that excludes certain groups of employees



For further information, contact: **John Paul L'Estrange**, Head of Corporate Sales, FromMe2You
Recognition & Rewards email: jplestrange@me2you.ie



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- Plumbing maintenance and emergency call out
- Painting service

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- Cleaning supplies (Toilet rolls / Blue Rolls / Dispensers / Chemicals) Daily/ weekly/ fortnightly office and retail cleaning
- Shop floor cleaning and polishing
- Contract window/ Glass cleaning
- Exterior car park Power cleaning
- High Pressure steam cleaning
- 6 monthly/ yearly Deep Cleaning Service
- Carpet cleaning and shampoo
- Car park maintenance (Grass | Hedge Cutting etc..)
- Granite stone Cleaning
- High Reach Exterior window Cleaning (60ft)

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 Martin Tynan, Property Team Tynan Moran Auctioneers, Kimmage, Co. Dublin, Ireland



FOCUS ON DATA ANALYTICS AND HOW IT CAN BE USED IN THE RETAIL BUSINESS

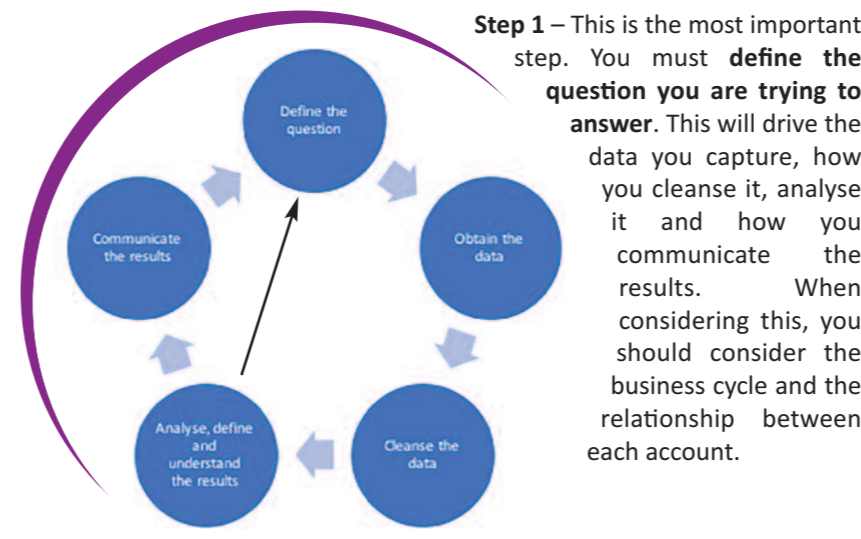
Retail Excellence Ireland identifies that there are approximately 37,400 active wholesale and retail enterprises in Ireland. With the Increase in online sales in recent years, traditional retail growth has struggled since early 2008. Indeed in 2016, Retail Excellence Ireland identified a notable reduction in the pace of retail sales growth during the entire second half of the year, down from 3% in the period January to June 2016 to 1% in the July – December period.

There is good news out there though, total household spending is on the increase. Total spending for 2016 was €95.7billion and for the first 6 months of 2017 the total spend was €98.4 billion.

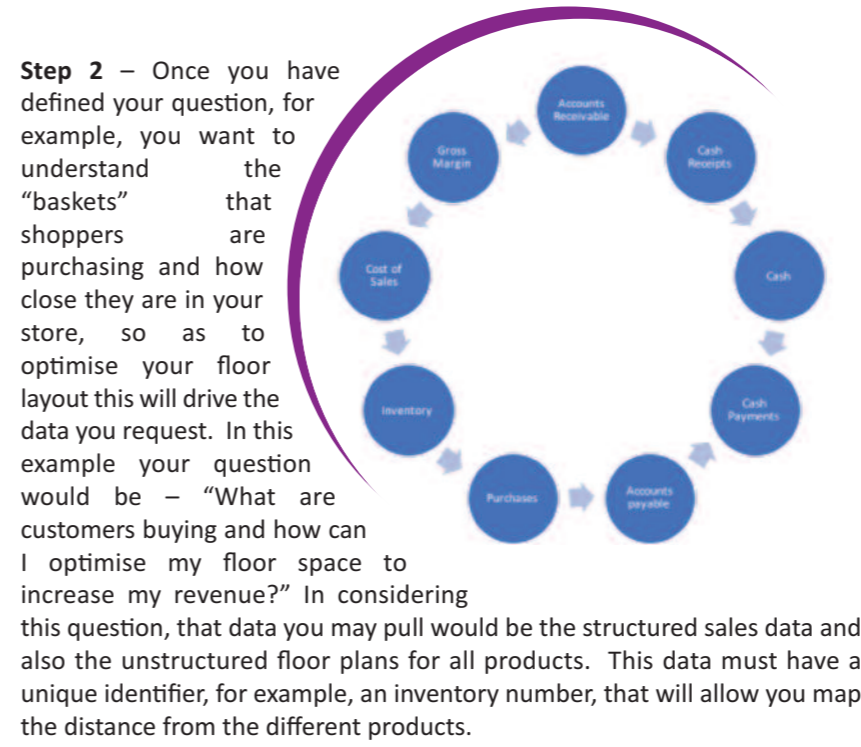
To ensure that you are ready for this, we offer the below insight into analytics, what it is and how it could help you in driving an increase in your revenues or a reduction in your costs.

What is Data Analytics? When we discuss analytics, we are referring to qualitative and quantitative techniques and processes used to enhance productivity and business gain. Data is extracted and categorised to identify and analyse behavioural data and patterns with techniques varying according to organisational requirements. In otherwords, data analytics is the process of gathering and analysing data and then using it to make better decisions.

In considering whether to use data analytics we must identify what we are trying to do and what question are we trying to answer? This question will drive the remaining steps in the data analytics process documented below. It is a five step process and indeed is an interactive process, in that when you begin analysing the data, outputs from this may drive a change in the questions you require to be answered.



Step 1 – This is the most important step. You must **define the question you are trying to answer.** This will drive the data you capture, how you cleanse it, analyse it and how you communicate the results. When considering this, you should consider the business cycle and the relationship between each account.



Step 2 – Once you have defined your question, for example, you want to understand the “baskets” that shoppers are purchasing and how close they are in your store, so as to optimise your floor layout this will drive the data you request. In this example your question would be – “What are customers buying and how can I optimise my floor space to increase my revenue?” In considering this question, that data you may pull would be the structured sales data and also the unstructured floor plans for all products. This data must have a unique identifier, for example, an inventory number, that will allow you map the distance from the different products.

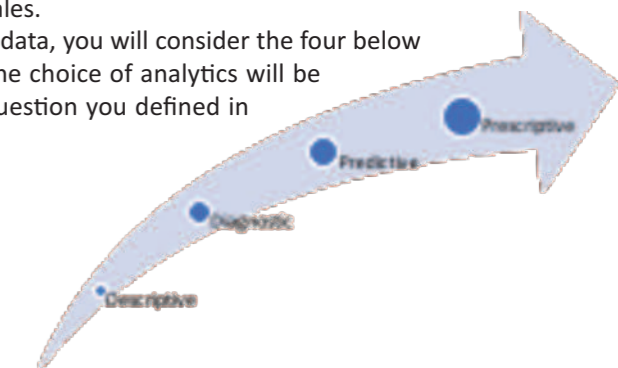
What are the different types of data you have access to?
 Structured data – This refers to any data that resides in a fixed field within a record or file. It includes data contained in relational databased and spreadsheets.

Unstructured data - This is all those things that can't be so easily classified, e.g. Photo's, webpages, voicemails, emails, Blog entries, facebook comments etc.

Step 3 – Once you have captured the data, you will cleanse it to ensure that only the data that you require is included in the solution.

Step 4 – You analyse the data, and begin to understand the results, this step will involve gaining a better understanding as to what is happening in your business and in our experience, may lead to you coming up with some possible suggestions as to preparing a different floor layout to ensure optimum sales.

When analysing your data, you will consider the four below types of analytics. The choice of analytics will be determined by the question you defined in Step 1.



Analytic Type	What is it?
Descriptive	Reporting of past events to characterise what has happened.
Diagnostic	Can provide insight in to why certain trends or specific incidents occurred – ability to identify the underlying transactional detail. Analysing data by cutting differently, e.g. by product, by customer, by region.
Predictive	Extraction of information from large volumes of existing data, application of certain assumptions and drawing correlations to predict future outcomes and trends – When did you sell most, how many staff do you need? Should you change your floor layout?
Prescriptive	Using predictive analytics to determine what the demand will be, prescriptive identifies which actions will help drive this prediction.

Step 5 – Communicate the results
 In conclusion, harnessing the data you have available to you will allow you to guide your strategy going forward, it will enable you to increase your revenue as well as reduce your costs. Remember implementing data analytics into your business to drive your strategy is no longer a question of when but how.



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FEATURE HUMAN RESOURCES



TOMMY SMYTH

Put some PR into your HR

Some people or businesses are more adept at selling themselves than others. Sales skills come more naturally to some.

Many multiple and international Retailers use social media, descriptive language and marketing material to sell their business, and the jobs within, to would be employees.

From the calls through our office in the past few months, it appears that the labour market is moving and retailers are looking at ways to attract and retain talent.

Retail Excellence Ireland has empowered Irish retailers to put their best foot forward and accentuate the positives of their products and their business. The purpose of this article is to challenge retailers to ensure they positively market the jobs, opportunities and careers they can offer candidates that sets them apart from the competition.

If you do it for your products and services, why not do it for your jobs!

Concentrate on the positives!

A smaller, local retailer can offer;

- Concentrated, on the job training
- Flexibility of hours/days
- Guaranteed hours/days
- Mentoring from the owner
- Guaranteed place or area of work
- Quicker access to HR/Buying/Marketing tasks
- Stronger relationship with customers
- Greater knowledge of all aspects of the retail cycle

Don't be fooled by all multiples that promise wage rates of €11 or €12 per hour for sales assistants. This may not be the starting rate but instead an aspirational rate that an employee progresses to after 2/3/4 years. Also remember that some retailers may pay a higher hourly rate but will not guarantee set hours per week. Our experience is that small, local employers remain very competitive when it comes to starting hourly wages.

Don't be shy to publicise any perks you offer;

- Health Insurance
- Discounted Products



- Discount swaps with other businesses
- Christmas bonus or voucher
- Free lunch or snacks
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Extra annual leave at anniversary of service.

Organise your internal training

Retailers provide great, on the job training, for their employees. I always challenge clients to formalise this training into checklists, sheets or a manual. Induction, product (by department), sales, safety, fire extinguishers, till, merchandising, ordering, deliveries, customer service etc.

Instead of providing this on a verbal ad-hoc basis, organise and professionalise the intellectual property you have developed over years and harness it into an expert training bible to maximise the development of your team.

Tell your stories

When advertising for a new member of your team, embrace social media. Tell the story of your business and positive stories from your team about their experiences working with you. Do you have a manager that started at the bottom? Have you a HR, Marketing, IT or Finance colleague who started on the shop floor? Make sure the social media world knows the opportunities, rewards, training and skills a job with your business can provide.

In a marketplace where employee movement between roles is heating up, it's important for all employers to look at the business they have built and make sure to publicly accentuate the positives and benefits of working with them. Take your recruitment seriously. By attracting, then recruiting the best, your business will benefit down the line. Not just market your products, market your jobs!

We are happy to discuss any of the above information further via our complimentary phone support service to Retail Excellence Members on 0214634154



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HAVE YOU GOT YOUR 2018 DIARY YET!



... Well if not, it's time to order it so you can get the Retail Excellence 2018 event dates in to it on time! But while you are waiting to take delivery of it, Retail Excellence has a few dates in 2017 for you to put in your current one.

Retail Times caught up with **Helen O'Dowd**, Head of Learning & Events and we were shocked to hear that believe it or not, Budget '18 is just a few days away and, as is now tradition, Retail Excellence is hosting the highly successful annual Post Budget Briefing & Member Catch Up. Briefing us on the event, Helen explained 'We are adding a new dimension to the event this year. We have added the option for our Members to join us on a Safari through Dublin City when we will visit experts in visual merchandising such as Folkster, Magee, Arnotts, Fallon & Byrne and many more on our travels. We look forward to a wonderful, informal evening ahead then at The Restaurant at The Kilkenny Shop on Nassau Street when we will catch up with old friends (and welcome new friends!) over dinner and a glass of wine during which Members will contribute their take-aways from Budget '18 and Declan O'Hanlon from Grant Thornton will also brief us'. So that's definitely one for your diary – Tuesday 10th October!



There's been a noticeable increase recently in the sale of ball gowns and cocktail dresses! The simple explanation to this is that the Retail Excellence Awards Ceremony is taking place in The Malton Hotel in Killarney on Saturday 11th November. Again, a new element to this event has been added in that all Retail Excellence Members are invited to spend the afternoon in the company of Matthew Brown, Echochamber. Matthew will deliver a session 'Best Retail Practice in Ireland' and provide everyone with lots of real examples of how the Top30 Store Finalists have proved that they are indeed the best in the land. After touching up the make-up and brylcreeming the hair, show time begins at 18.00 where over 600 excited but anxious guests will gather for the most prestigious event in the Irish Retail Calendar.



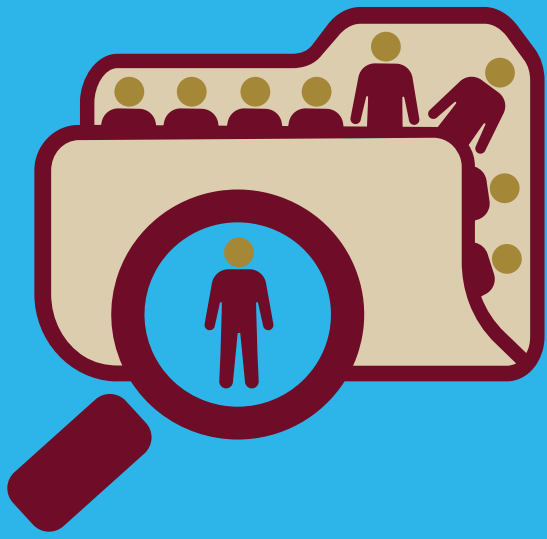
Meanwhile, Retail Excellence is building a highly educational Activity Calendar for 2018 which will include the annual trip to The Big Retail Show in New York (January 14 – 16th) when all Retail Excellence delegates can partake also in a one day Retail Case Study Visit around 'The City That Never Sleeps'. Helen explained to Retail Times that anyone interested in travelling with the group should contact her straight away for further information.

The Retail Management Development Programme will be delivered in Spring '18 as will a number of specialist Case Study Visits in Ireland and the UK.

The Retail Retreat will take place this year on Tuesday 15th May and Wednesday 16th May. 'This is going to be our biggest undertaking ever' Helen told us. 'Last year, we quickly outgrew Croke Park when almost 1,000 delegates attended so for 2018, we are moving to City West where we can deliver multiple plenary sessions as well as a host of amazing keynote speakers. Our Expo area is also going to increase greatly in size so this will give our delegates the opportunity to meet with the very best suppliers to the Retail Industry.

2018 is going to be a year when we will deliver only the best speakers and events to our Members! We always love to hear from our Members so if they have any queries on events they can contact me directly on 065 6846 927!





RETAIL EXCELLENCE STRATEGIC PARTNER DIRECTORY

CONTACT : _____
TEL : _____
NOTES: _____





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★	Branding, Store Design, eCommerce	IDEA	Ciaran Flanagan 01 2500050	info@idea.ie www.idea.ie	Insomnia, Bord Bia	41
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★	Cash Logistics Services	GSLs	Siobhan Plunkett 0862507048 Denise McCarthy 0871465085	splunkett@gsls.ie dmccarthy@gsls.ie www.gsls.ie	Applegreen, O'Briens Wines and Spirits	41
	Connected Retail Solutions	MJ Flood Technology	Keith Hanley 01 4663526	khanley@mjf.ie www.mjf.ie	Applegreen, Three	41
	Consumer Market Research & Training Consultancy	Customer Perceptions Ltd & Optimum Results Ltd	Emma Harte +353 42 93 39911	emma.harte@customerperceptions.ie www.customerperceptions.ie	DAA, RAI	41
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	Customer Service Platform	Pubble	Shane O'Leary 087 684 3811	shane@pubble.co www.pubble.io	Tony Kealys, Horkans Lifestyle and Garden Centres	42
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	Digital Marketing Agency	Wolfgang Digital	Alan Coleman +353 1 663 8020	alan@wolfgangdigital.com www.wolfgangdigital.com	iClothing, McElhinneys	42
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	Distributor of Retail Technology	IOResource Ltd	Philip Murphy 0404 20700	philip.murphy@ioresource.com www.ioresource.com	Irish Distillers Pernod Ricard, Woodies DIY	42
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	Employee Time Recording Systems	Timepoint	Colin Ryan 021 4232865	colin@timepoint.ie www.timepoint.ie	Applegreen, Flying Tiger Copenhagen, Supervalu	43
★	Energy (Electricity and Gas) Supplier	Energia	Michael Nugent 086 387 9285	michael.nugent@energia.ie www.energia.ie	Ladbrokes, Supermacs	43
	Energy Procurement	Exemplar Energy	Jonathan Fitzpatrick 087 2768778	jonathan@exemplarenergy.ie www.exemplarenergy.ie	Arboretum Home and Garden Centre, Shaws Department Stores	43
	EPOS and IT Consulting	MCBE Consulting	Dermot McCarthy 087 2412582	dermot@mcbeconsulting.com www.mcbeconsulting.com	O'Briens Wine, Beer and Spirits, Petstop	43
	EPOS, Mobile Retail and Payments	Eirpoint	Niall Cannon 065 686 8880	ncannon@eirpoint.com www.eirpoint.ie	Dubarry Ireland, Patrick Bourke Menswear	43
	EPOS and Integrated eCommerce	Positive Systems Solutions	Damien O'Driscoll 01 6296058	damiem@pss.ie www.pss.ie	Croom Cycles, Conns Cameras	43
	ERP for Retail	TRC Solutions	Steven Maguire 01 296 3155	smaguire@trcsolutions.ie www.trc-solutions.com	Horkans Lifestyle and Garden Centres, Carroll's Irish Gifts	43
	EPOS Solutions	Davidson Richards	Jo Bateman 0044 1332383231	job@davrich.co.uk www.davrich.co.uk	Arboretum Home and Garden Centre, The Orchard	44
	EPOS Solutions	Retail Integration Limited	Patrick Heslin 01 429 6800	patrick@retail-int.com www.retail-int.com	O'Briens Wine, Beer and Spirits, Mothercare	44
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	Loyalty Technology	Azpiral	Kevin Nolan 061 633 355 086 829 7453	kevin.nolan@azpiral.com www.azpiral.com	Total Health, Topaz	46
	Managed Print Services	Bytek MPS Ltd	Liam Clarke 01 608 7777	lclarke@bytekmps.ie www.bytekmps.ie	Bradleys Pharmacy, DID Electrical	46
	Market Research	Behaviour & Attitudes	Luke Reaper 01 205 7500	luke@banda.ie www.banda.ie	RTE, Meteor	46
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	Money Counters, Forgery Detection	Dualtron Ltd	Ronan Byrne 01 823 7150	ronan@dualtron.ie www.dualtron.ie	Banba Toymaster, Vila Clothing	47
	Mystery Shopping, Store Assessments	Crest Mystery Shopping Ireland	Michele Cawley 065 684 6927	michele@crestireland.com www.crestireland.com	Retail Excellence, Harvey Norman, Store Assessments	47
	Packaging	JJ O'Toole Ltd	Vicki O'Toole 061 229 333	info@jjotoole.ie www.jjotoole.ie	Arboretum Home and Garden Centre, Newbridge Silverware	47
★	Parcel Delivery Service	DPD	Tim Dare 0906 420500	tim.dare@dpd.ie www.dpd.ie	Retail Excellence	47
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	Print, Design, Websites	Snap Print, Design, Websites	Christine Mulvaney 01 466 0525	christine@snap.ie www.snap.ie	Esquires Coffee, McCabes Pharmacy Group, Primark	48
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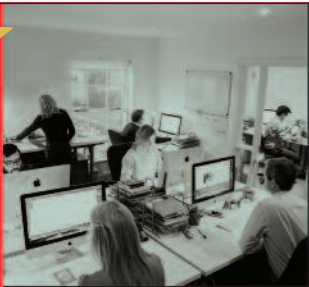
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3. Current suppliers to many of the largest high street banks and retailers
4. Fully insured and licenced business
5. 100% Irish owned and operated business

» Your Cash, Our Service

- » Cash collection and delivery to your bank
- » Full Count, reconciliation and customised
- » Reporting as standard.
- » Note and coin supply
- » Transportation and storage of high value items
- » Event servicing
- » 7 day service to meet your requirements



CASH IN TRANSIT SOLUTIONS

Reduce the risks to your staff, yourselves and your valuables



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