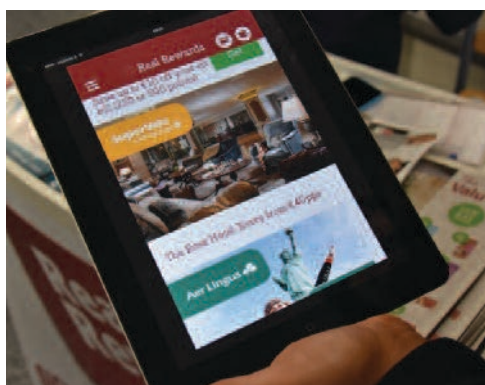


Embracing Change in Retail



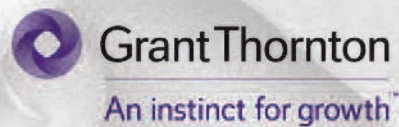


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2017 - 2018

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MAPLES



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Watson**



Welcome to the Quarter 1 edition of Retail Times

May I commence by saying what an honour it is to have been selected as the Chairman of Retail Excellence. It is my intention to support all our members over the next two years and, working with the Retail Excellence team, to do all that is possible to assist you and your business.

As someone who is dependent on a vibrant domestic economy, I am fundamentally aware of the issues relating to consumer confidence and spending. It is thus so important that our Government lead us through Brexit with great care and sensitivity.

It is my belief that, while a Government focus on Foreign Direct Investment and Export is very important, there is an immediate and real need for there to be a far greater focus on the domestic economy. We need immediate assistance with our growing cost base. A case in point is the 23% VAT rate which is 3% higher than the UK market and was increased to this level as a temporary fiscal crisis measure. Higher costs in the Republic of Ireland are leading to price divergence between both markets and in turn a leakage of spend outside of our country.

In the context of Brexit there is a



need for the implementation of creative ways to target new markets.

There are no reasons why Irish retailers cannot be supported to export across the EU online. In 2018 EU citizens will spend over €600 billion online and we need to win a share of this prize. For that reason, I urge Enterprise Ireland and other State bodies to rethink their rules and get behind the Irish Retail Industry.

Our CEO David Fitzsimons and Deputy CEO Lorraine Higgins have

worked hard on the matter of commercial insurance and specifically Public Liability Insurance. This insurance has been open to many abuses over the years which has led to expensive premia and in some cases member companies resorting to self-insurance. I am pleased that the Government will soon unveil new measures to stamp out insurance fraud and better support Irish businesses.

I very much look forward to meeting with members at upcoming events and specifically I urge all members to keep the 15th and 16th May free to attend the annual Retail Excellence Retail Retreat at Citywest, Dublin. It will be our biggest event ever and one which is simply unmissable.

I look forward to working with you over the next two years. As your Chairman I will dedicate significant effort to ensure Retail Excellence remains focussed on supporting you and your business.

Best regards,

JP Kennedy

JP KENNEDY
Managing Director, TileStyle
Chairman, Retail Excellence



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MAPLES



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JP Kennedy, TileStyle | **Colm Carroll**, Carrolls Irish Gifts | **Paul Kealy**, Tony Kealys

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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

Toys 'R' Us Inc plans to shut at least 26 of their UK larger format stores commencing in early 2018 as the retailer goes through bankruptcy proceedings in the US

An Post parcel deliveries rose by over 17% in 2017 vs 2016 as Irish consumers got to grips with Black Friday and Cyber Monday online sales

Freshly Chopped, the Irish salad chain, has signed a multimillion euro franchise deal with BWG. The new deal will see BWG Group become Freshly Chopped's exclusive distributor and supplier

John Lewis is endeavouring to charge all concession partners a £1.50 charge for each online order the concessionaire receives

Maplin recently reported a marginal increase in sales of 0.3% of £236m to March 18th. EBITDA slide by 7% to £12.3m as the retailer reinvests in the brand and its digital channels

Topps Tiles suffered a 15% fall in full year profits of £17m to September 30th last

Amazon is investigating claims that it's logistics partner's drivers earn less than the legal minimum wage

It is being reported that the **Mary Portas** "Save the High Street" campaign has failed after almost one thousand stores shutdown in participating towns over the past five years

Aldi UK and Ireland has reported profit growth to £214m in 2016 with revenue growing to £8.7m in the combined UK and Irish markets

Garvey's SuperValu Tralee crowned Retail Excellence Store of the Year

In front of close to six hundred retailers in Killarney, Garvey's SuperValu was recently confirmed National Store of the Year winners at the annual Retail Excellence Awards. Competition was intense this year with a record entry and some amazing stores making the finals. Life Style Sports Cork, Willow Ennis, Avoca Dunboyne and Fabiani Longford were each awarded a Top5 store award. Commenting on the awards David Fitzsimons Chief Executive Retail Excellence said: "The standard of entry to the awards this year was the very best ever. The involvement of Echochamber in the judging process was also a real positive as everyone who entered the awards and got to the Top100 phase received meaningful and very useful advice as to how they can improve their store format. It is a real credit to the team in Garvey's to win the coveted National Store of the Year title. Not only is it the best store in Ireland but it is one of the best if not the best supermarket format in the world." Entry to the 2018 Awards will commence in March 2018.



The new Lego Build Zone has been very well received by customers

Lego Build Zone arrives in Wexford

Byrne's Books & Toys have opened their first "Lego Build Zone" at Byrne's Enniscorthy. The new area features increased display space for Lego as well as two play tables and thousands of bricks for Lego fans of all ages to play and build with for free at any time. Byrne's will also be offering Lego building classes every week in store, in partnership with the Brickx Club. Commenting on the development Damian Byrne, Proprietor said: "The response from customers has been massive with footfall and Lego sales more than doubling since launch. We are already planning another "Build Zone" for our Wexford branch as well."

RETAIL EXCELLENCE LAUNCHES BIGGEST RETAIL RETREAT & EXPO EVER

Retail Excellence has announced that the annual Retail Retreat & Expo will take place in Citywest on Tuesday 15th May and Wednesday 16th May 2018. This two day event will deliver presentations from global leaders in the fields of innovation, careers, futuristic retail, eCommerce, technology, loss prevention, food and much, much more. Retail Times recently met Helen O'Dowd, Head of Learning & Events with Retail Excellence who explained 'This is a really high impact event with speakers such as Brian Cody, Bob Phibbs The Retail Doctor, David McWilliams Economist, Margaret McDonald current president of Victoria's Secret, John Barlow Amazon, Andrew McMillan ex John Lewis, Matthew Brown The Echochamber and Magnus Lindkvist all contributing. We have 7 stages running concurrently to deliver the most forward thinking and fearless presentations!' Helen continued 'It won't all be hard work though - we have the inspirational Paul O'Connell as our after dinner speaker.' Check out www.retailexcellence.ie for full details and also to avail of the special 2 day ticket offer which is available only until 31st January 2018. This conference is not to be missed if you want to succeed in retail!

Magnus Lindkvist trendspotting futurologist will weave together important current trends to forecast what life, society and business might look like in the future at the Retail Retreat & Expo 2018



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Garvey's scoop Store of the Year Award

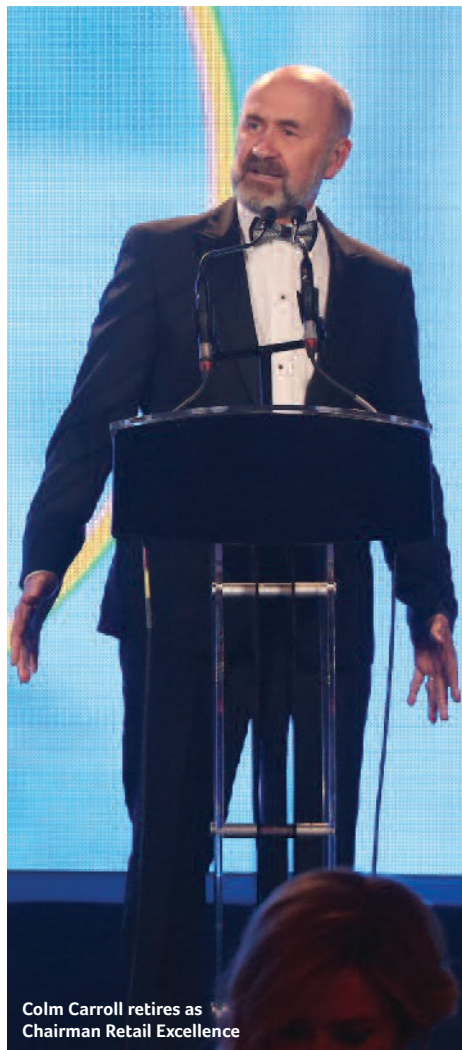
GameStop and Make-A-Wish announce Partnership in Ireland



Freestyler footballer Jamie McDonald helped launch the partnership

Make-A-Wish and GameStop Ireland have recently announced a new corporate partnership in five European countries, including Ireland. To kick off this partnership, GameStop will donate €1 for every FIFA ultimate team jersey sold in-stores and online through 31st December, benefitting children with life-threatening medical conditions in Ireland. To celebrate the partnership GameStop brought Jamie McDonald, famous football freestyler, over from the UK to meet his fans. "GameStop has made an incredible impact on the lives of children, families and communities through its support of Make-A-Wish in North America," said Make-A-Wish International President and CEO, Jon Stettner. He continued, "GameStop's interest in expanding its support of Make-A-Wish to Europe, demonstrates the commitment both GameStop and Make-A-Wish share in bringing strength and transformation to children with critical illnesses. We couldn't be more excited and grateful to have GameStop at our side helping to make more life-changing wishes come true in Europe." Thomas Mallon Marketing Manager GameStop Northern Europe said: "GameStop are proud to support the Make-A-Wish foundation and to introduce this partnership in Ireland. We hope that not only will we be able to make the gaming wishes come through for the children of Make-A-Wish, but with this donation on each jersey sold contribute to many other wishes and raise awareness of the great work of the Make-A-Wish foundation".

COLM CARROLL RETIRES HIS CHAIRMANSHIP OF RETAIL EXCELLENCE



Colm Carroll retires as Chairman Retail Excellence

In accordance with Retail Excellence protocol Colm Carroll recently retired from his role as Chairman Retail Excellence after serving a two-year term. Colm will be replaced by JP Kennedy, Managing Director, TileStyle. Commenting on Colm's retirement David Fitzsimons, Chief Executive Retail Excellence said: "It was an absolute honour to work with Colm Carroll over the past two years. Colm was so generous in accepting the position and has guided the organisation so professionally over the past two years. Colm is an incredibly successful and busy man and for him to invest so much time in Retail Excellence over the term is so much appreciated. I have personally learned so much from Colm over the past two years. He is a great leader and quite simply a true gentleman. On behalf of our Board, Member Council and Membership I thank Colm for his significant contribution to Retail Excellence".



Black Friday exceeded all expectations with retailer's executing cutting edge digital marketing strategies across multiple platforms. Promotions were launched as early as November 10th and ran until December 5th to maximise sales both online & in-store. Big winners included Pharmacy, Cosmetics & Electronics with YOY sales increases of up to 60% and Logistics partners reported YOY increases of up to 40% in deliveries. David Campbell, eCommerce Manager at Retail Excellence commenting on the report "It was fantastic to see our retail Members utilising the Retail Excellence online resources which increased sales by up to 60% in certain sectors". The entire Black Friday report by Gerard Keohane of StudioForty9 is available to read at www.retailexcellence.ie or by contacting david.campbell@retailexcellence.ie.



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2018 RETAIL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UNVEILED

Managers who attended the 2017 programme receive their certs

Retail Excellence has unveiled the details for the upcoming Retail Management Development Programme. This programme which is now proven to be transformational for managers, owners and ambitious team members will be delivered in the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Blanchardstown over an 8 week period in March and April with the 5th day being attendance at the Retail Retreat on 15th May. Amongst the topics covered are strengthening management skillsets, developing aggressive sales growth strategies, monitoring and improving store performance, KPIs and creating bespoke action plan. Helen O'Dowd, Head of Learning & Events recently explained the detail which is covered on the programme 'We have the very best of specialist speakers throughout the programme – Tom Smyth will cover HR, Michael Neary, Loss Prevention Manager at Harvey Norman will explain how prevention by engagement is the way forward, Alf Dunbar will speak on empowering and leading a first class service culture and Matthew Brown will deliver a powerful presentation on retail trends. This programme is packed with clearly defined and real life information to measure, drive and progress both the delegates and their business'. For full information on the programme content or to book, just log on to www.retailexcellence.ie or contact Helen on Helen@retailexcellence.ie | 065 6846927.



Golden Discs opens three new Irish stores



Golden Discs recently announced the opening of three

brand new stores in Ireland. The first opened in November on North Main Street in Wexford with a further two locations opening in The Square, Tallaght along with a new city centre flagship store on Henry Street, Dublin. These three additional locations will bring the total number of Golden Discs specialist stores to sixteen nationwide, supported by their recently launched new web-store goldendiscs.ie and concession stores in 80 Tesco locations all over Ireland. "Demand for music continues to grow and we are really excited to be opening new stores to service that demand. The vinyl renaissance shows no signs of abating and we are refocusing our efforts to grow the category by offering customers a more extensive range of catalogue, re-issues and new release both in-store and online" said Stephen Fitzgerald, CEO of Golden Discs.

Stephen Fitzgerald announced significant expansion of Golden Discs

VICTORIA'S SECRET opens in Grafton Street



Victoria's Secret finally lands in Grafton Street

To much fanfare Victoria's Secret, the American lingerie brand, opened the doors of its flagship Dublin store recently. The 2,700sq meter lingerie emporium comes with shocking-pink colour scheme and very glamorous art-deco details. The walls are covered with super model images while flat screens play the latest footage from the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show. A spokesperson for the fashion giant commented: "The store design is unique to Dublin and takes sexy to a whole new level. The facade seamlessly combines charm with glamour, reflecting the building's original mid-century character."



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Damien O'Driscoll of Positive Solutions and Joe Kelly of ProStrategy announce partnership

PROSTRATEGY & POSITIVE SOLUTIONS SOLUTIONS ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP

ProStrategy and Positive Solutions (PSS) recently announced their partnership to provide a complete and integrated omni-channel retail solution, incorporating EPOS, back office & online for the Irish retail industry. The solution utilizes LS NAV and offers full e-commerce integration and full mobility. The award-winning solution is embedded within the Microsoft's Dynamics NAV ERP system. Current users of this technology include Nike, Adidas, IKEA and thousands of small and medium retail businesses worldwide. Both companies are investing heavily to bring this technology to retailers in Ireland. The companies jointly have plans to employ ten additional retail technology professionals within the next year to bring the total workforce to over seventy professionals.



Luke Moriarty accepts the Fingal Business Person of the Year Award

Local SuperValu retailer, hotelier and Retail Excellence Board Member Luke Moriarty has won the coveted JC Savage Fingal Business Person of the Year Award for 2017. The award was presented at the Fingal Dublin Business Excellence and Corporate Responsibility Awards, hosted by Marty Whelan, in November. Originally from Kerry, Luke Moriarty is Managing Director of a family retail and hospitality business he founded thirty years ago, in 1987. The Group now comprises three SuperValu supermarkets and two 4 star hotels, employing over 650 people in north and west Dublin. Accepting the prestigious award, Luke Moriarty said it was particularly welcome as the family business celebrated its thirty year anniversary in 2017. "Moriarty Group is a team effort and everything achieved over the past thirty years has been thanks to a dedicated team of people around me, who share my vision of service and standards that go above and beyond at all times." Luke Moriarty also acknowledged that he was delighted to win a prize named in honour of JC Savage, a man who was legendary in independent grocery retailing and an inspirational businessman. The award category, which was sponsored by Dublin Airport, was created to honour an outstanding business professional in the Fingal region, whose business activity brings significant benefit to employees, customers, suppliers and the community.

Smiggle's second Irish Store to open in the Ilac

Australian stationery chain Smiggle has recently opened a second Irish store in Dublin City's Ilac Centre, following the successful launch of the brand at Dundrum Town Centre earlier in 2017. Since expanding to the United Kingdom three years ago, Smiggle has grown rapidly there and now has ninety UK stores. The chain plans to open as many as 20 stores in Ireland over the next three years, according to owners, Premier Investments, who operate a number of leading retail brands. The new 868 sq. ft. Smiggle outlet is located in the Ilac Centre's Central Mall, beside the Claire's Accessories store and opposite the Liverpool FC store. Dublin's iconic Ilac Centre recently marked thirty five full years of city centre retail, and five new units were created in a €1.5 million extension and refurbishment of the Moore Mall South. This latest new retail offering brings to seven the total number of new stores which opened in the Ilac Centre in the second half of 2017, and sees the popular shopping destination now fully occupied.



Smiggle opens in Ilac Centre which is now fully let



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the NUMBERS

20

The millions of euro increase in revenue for Supermac's in 2016 vs 2015

1

The number of Starbucks opening in China every 15 hours over the next 4 years

5.4

The % rise in air passengers at Irish airports in the third quarter of 2017

6

The date in March when the Retail Excellence Management Development Programme commences

200

The millions of pounds sterling being invested by Harrods, the stores biggest ever revamp

1.5

The pounds sterling John Lewis is trying to charge concessions for every online order

Joanne Hynes wins prestigious totalhealth Award



Rory O'Donnell, Chairman totalhealth Pharmacy Group, Joanne Hynes of Joanne Hynes totalhealth Pharmacy and Eddie Campbell, United Drug

The totalhealth Pharmacy Group recently held their annual Gala Ball & Pharmacy Awards Ceremony in the Radisson Blu Hotel Galway. The celebratory event was attended by over 300 pharmacists and employees of the totalhealth Pharmacy group nationwide along with industry partners. Dáithí O'Sé, Rose of Tralee host and RTE personality proved to be a very popular host and MC for the evening. The focus of the night was the Pharmacy Awards Ceremony which was a celebration of excellence within the group. The big winner on the evening was Joanne Hynes totalhealth Pharmacy, Ballinrobe who won the coveted Pharmacy of the Year Award.

Heroic Paul Telfer Saves Woman's Life

Mercury Security Management's Paul Telfer, security officer at Life Style Sports in Cork's The Capitol shopping centre, was on his patrol when he spotted a woman collapsing from an apparent seizure in the busy store. Life Style Sports Store Manager, Saoirse O'Shea commented: "Paul's reaction to this event was as quick as any first responder I have ever seen. He immediately grabbed the lady and eased her into the recovery position. He began to assess the situation and noticed she had begun to turn blue. Upon noticing this, he reacted quickly and opened her mouth and found she was swallowing her tongue whilst having the seizure and pulled her tongue out. We couldn't thank Paul enough for what he did that day, he is nothing short of a hero. Only for Paul's quick reactions this would have been a much more serious incident."



ASIA MARKET ANNOUNCES REVAMPED STORE

Asia Market has recently unveiled their revamped Drury Street, Dublin store. Asia Market is the largest Asian food suppliers of fresh, frozen, dried and canned goods to the restaurant, catering and retail industry in Ireland having been founded in 1981. Commenting on the news proprietor Eva Pau said: "We are a family run business and we are very excited to announce that we have recently revamped our much-loved city centre supermarket. If you haven't visited us in a while or just need an excuse to stock up on ingredients, drop in and experience the sights and aromas in what is the destination for Asian food in Dublin." The news follows on the back of the company's foray online with the launch of their new website <http://www.asiamarket.ie>.

Asia Market lights up Drury Street

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TOPAZ'S CASH FOR CLUBS PROVES A SUCCESS WITH AZPIRAL

Topaz Cash for Clubs, now in its third year, gives customers the chance to win thousands of Euro for their local club through their existing loyalty program. The tokens were automatically assigned to the customer's account and allocated to their club of choice at the till all facilitated through AzpiralPRO's integration to the ePOS. Commenting on the news, Strategic Partner of Retail Excellence, Kevin Nolan of Azpiral, said: "The Cash for Clubs initiative displayed Topaz's deep understanding of their customer's values and in return resulted in huge engagement throughout the country. Overall 2,928 clubs were enabled, 21,480 members assigned a club and 182,861 tokens were allocated." This year's winners Bray Hockey Club were awarded the grand prize of €10,000 through Cash for Clubs.



CASH FOR CLUBS

Azpiral and Topaz delivering for clubs

The new format Best Menswear store at Jervis Shopping Centre

Best Menswear opens in Jervis Shopping Centre

Best Menswear, one of Ireland's leading menswear retailers, has recently opened their eleventh store location. The new store, located on the 1st floor in the Jervis Shopping Centre, is the company's first standalone store in the city centre since the closure of Clerys. The new store boasts a large contemporary mixture of on trend brands for the discerning gentleman as well as large windows facing Wolftone Square allowing plenty of natural light into the store. Commenting on the opening Kate Rooney of Best Menswear said: "We are delighted to invest further in our expanding business with the opening of the Jervis Shopping Centre store. The opening has gone down really well and the customer response has been incredible. We have concentrated and invested in the brand profile and image in the last two years and we couldn't be happier with the results. We believe the new flagship store in the city centre will offer something new and exciting within the sector."



Minister Paschal Donoghue and FBD CEO Fiona Muldoon open the new FBD offices

FBD Insurance opens first Sales Office in Central Dublin

Minister for Finance & Public Expenditure and Reform, Paschal Donoghue recently opened FBD Insurance's first local sales office in Drumcondra, Dublin. FBD provides tailor-made protection for small and medium business owners through specialised business insurance experts and this new sales office is a Business Insurance Hub. Speaking at the opening, CEO Fiona Muldoon said: "We are delighted to open our first sales office in central Dublin, in response to our customers' requirements and our growing relevance in Dublin as a specialised small and medium business insurance provider. This is a significant investment in both our sales office branch network and in our customer relationships. Face to face is how we believe our commercial customers want to do business with us. FBD is committed to the small business sector as a vital sector of the Irish economy whose insurance needs we know and understand."



Life Style Sports Store Manager Saoirse O'Shea thanking Lifesaver Paul Telfer

Rachel Doyle presented with Lifetime Achievement Award

Arboretum founder and longstanding Retail Excellence member Rachel Doyle was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the recent Retail Excellence Awards in Killarney, Kerry. A video profiling the amazing journey Rachel has taken Arboretum through was shown on the evening including personal congratulations on her contribution from none other than An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar. Commenting on the award Colm Carroll, Chairman Retail Excellence said: "It is very uncommon for Retail Excellence to bestow a Lifetime Achievement Award. In fact, this is only the third time in twenty years. The first award was presented to Tipperary man Patrick Hanley who went on to forge a great career in retail culminating in his appointment as CEO of Harvey Nichols. The second award was bestowed on Senator Feargal Quinn and it was my great honour to present the third ever Lifetime Achievement Award to Rachel Doyle. Rachel stands for everything that is great about the Irish Retail Industry and what she has achieved over the past forty years is nothing less than sensational."



The third ever Lifetime Achievement Award was recently presented to Rachel Doyle

Coffeeangel and Friends of the Earth announce KEEPCUP INITIATIVE

Last November, together with Friends of the Earth Ireland, Coffeeangel launched their #YourCupOurFuture campaign. The campaign educates and motivates customers to use their own reusable coffee cup in a bid to reduce the number of paper cups in circulation. Commenting on the initiative Caroline Sleiman, Director Coffeeangel said: "It is impossible to ignore the impact the human race is having on our environment, and whilst the challenges and changes required are immense, we wholeheartedly believe that through the power of small, personal initiatives we can help make a difference. That is why we have decided to donate 20cent to Friends of the Earth Ireland, on behalf of our customers, from every Coffeeangel coffee served in a reusable KeepCup as part of our new 'Your Cup Our Future' initiative. This is a very different approach to Keep Cups with a view to the bigger picture and reducing paper cups wastage. The response to date has been very encouraging with our customers really embracing the idea."



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For more information contact Caragh O'Carroll, Retail Sector Lead, Fujitsu
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shaping tomorrow with you

Embracing Change in Retail

By ANDREW JOHNSTON, MANAGING DIRECTOR, JOHNSTON SHOPFITTERS



Garvey's SuperValu - Tralee

tail

Retailing is changing at a faster pace than I appreciated before Cyber Monday. I sat at our kitchen table tweaking this article while watching my three teenage daughters play pass the credit card while shopping on line for wedding outfits on their own digital devices.

Why were they shopping online? They love to shop! You cannot try things on? How do you judge the quality? These things did not seem to matter. They go to shops to meet their friends, hang out, eat and occasionally buy in store.

There is a whole generation been lost to physical retail. Do not misunderstand me, I do not believe the physical store is dead. There are lots of simple cost-effective solutions available to enable us to create more engaging and relevant retail environments to entice this generation into the physical store.

The store of the future is not 12 to 18 months away, it is here now. ***The store of the future needs to be, a place to be, a place to buy, a place to hang out and a place to learn.*** While this may appear an impossible list to accomplish, there are a few tools which help to begin the process of managed change within stores to develop a more relevant, informative, and engaging retail environment.



Retail Store Audit

This involves a little bit of homework, “*what gets measured gets done*” is a phrase we are all familiar with. We need to change the metrics for measuring a store’s performance. Sales per square meter versus sales per linear meter. Shops come in all shapes and sizes. Different lengths and widths while totalling the same square meters will have different linear meterage totals. This is the important metric for sales analysis. How much wall space and floor space is available. Look also at the actual shelf and display arm depths, will narrower ones work as efficiently? Good functional design will make staff more efficient, reduce cash tied up in stock, reduce shrinkage and improve store productivity. One retail group we work with achieved a reduction of 50 hours in staffing per week, a 15% reduction in stock holding in store and a 6% increase in turnover, simply by implementing *functional design principles*.

Now when we know what a store can accommodate we can develop a functional store layout with detailed space planning, identifying areas for storytelling, hero products and communication. Measuring what we have in store and deciding if our display solutions are fit for purpose forces us to think about our shops differently. One trick I ask customers to do is take some pictures of their shop, go for a coffee and flick through the photos. You will now see your store as your customers do. We often become blind to things we see every day.

Create the Retail Environment

Store Design is simply a tool that helps brands create space that elevates their products. Shopping should be a visual treat that stimulates all the senses, not aisles of shelves with product stacked high. A recent Bloomberg report on “*America’s ‘Retail Apocalypse’ Is really just the beginning*” highlights almost twice as many store closings as openings so far, this year. Delving deeper into these store formats, you notice that the types of stores



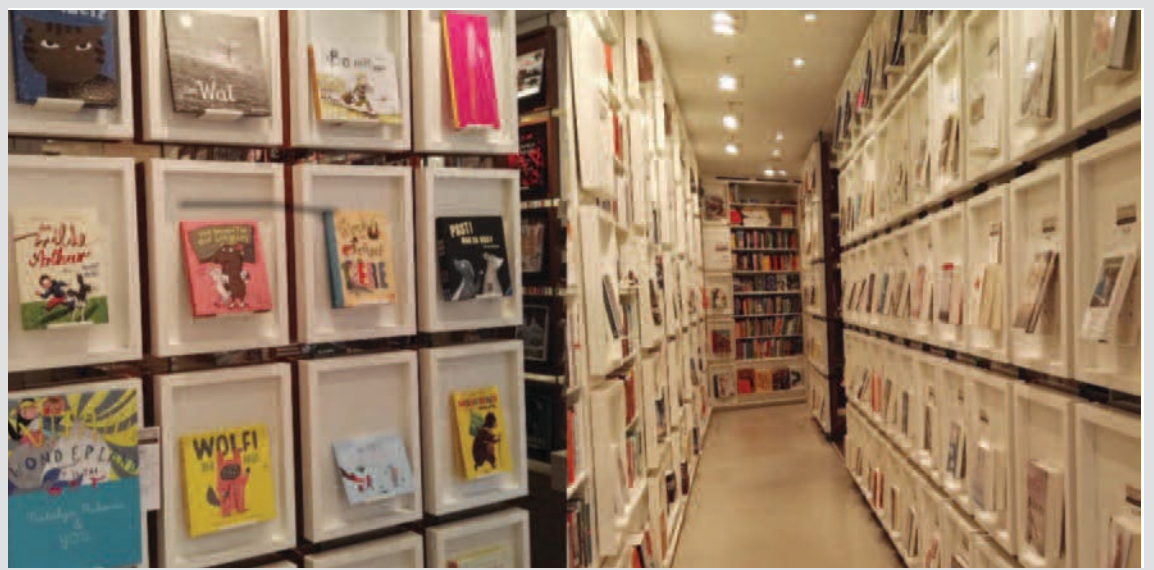
Storytelling



The redevelopment of the North Quay will see cruise ships berth in the city



Demystification



Stories



Hirmer Klein



closing are in fact no longer relevant to their customers. They no longer communicate with their target customer nor provide a shopping experience they want. The retail environment has changed, and customers are more demanding. We need to embrace these changes and design retail environments for the future.

You never get a second chance to make a first impression. The shop front, signage, and window display form that first impression. Keep them clean and simple. In store an economic way to improve the environment is with LED Technology. Correct lighting will create the mood and the selection of materials will convey quality. Use appropriate sounds for your store.

Storytelling

Design solutions based on a functional layout will enable space to be allocated to communication. There are lots of options for instore communication from digital screens, moving images to simple graphics. A favourite store of mine for clever communication is Pirch New York. They are a Kitchen, Bathroom, and Outdoor appliances store. They believe shopping should be joyful not stressful and also fun. What a great concept that some retailers seem to have forgotten. In Pirch they use Demystification panels to help customers decide what attributes of a product they really want and what they mean. The graphics bring you through simple steps that help you decide on one appliance over another. A very low tech well thought out solution that enables customers to learn in store. This in store learning inspires confidence and trust in the brand while keeping things as simple as 1,2,3. But storytelling is more than just graphics and digital screens it is about visual merchandising where there are no rules, just be creative and clear in the message. Customers hate clutter and also too much noise in communication. Text should be informative, quick to read and relevant. Storytelling is simply informing your customer about your store, your products and what you are about. If you have green credentials communicate them. If your store supports a community scheme or charitable organisation that also.

Embrace technology

Every generation embraces technology faster than the generation before. The phone took 40 years to reach 10 million users. The fax 22 years and the PC 7 years, while the Web only needed 5 years. Watching millennials, you quickly see that they are using technology that was not even invented 5 years ago. By bringing technology in store we can create environments that become more relevant and engaging to them. Sephora uses **Augmented Reality** for trialling different makeup looks. When you choose the look you like you can email your friends. Bobbie Brown has used **Lift and Learn** in their Sheppard Bush Shopping Centre



Bobby Brown-Lift & Learn



Willow Shopfront

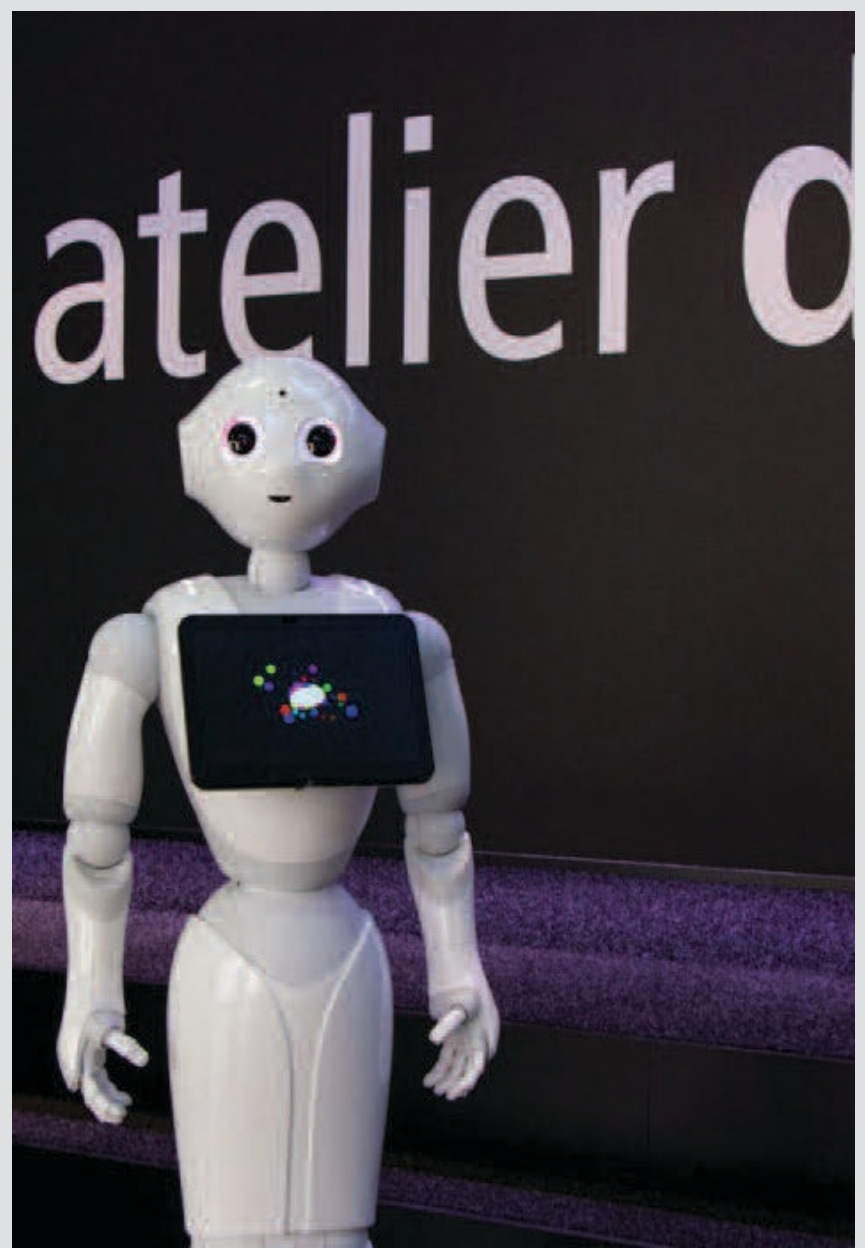
outlet to enable customers to compare the different attributes and benefits of multiple products on screen. Both technologies increase customer dwell time in store and provide information in an engaging format. For retailers this is a win win. Like all new technology they are reducing in price annually and I can see a huge adaption in store within retailing over the coming years. Digital payment methods and options are now readily available so finally within store design there is a move to remove the barrier of a counter in certain retail stores.

Personalization

This must form part of the retail mix within stores of the future. The machinery investment varies greatly depending on the product offering from customising your car interior to as simple as a name on a jersey. One great example is in Willow in Ennis where you can personalize your watch by first choosing the face and then the strap. This type of customer engagement in the design enhances our retail experience and makes shopping fun.

Hospitality

The final trend that is happening now and will continue in the future is Hospitality offerings in store. I was in New York recently and I was struck by the level of change in Eataly. There were lots of places in store to sit down and enjoy their fare. They have introduced an Espresso bar where you can choose the beans, buy them and enjoy a coffee all while being informed of the unique differences between the coffee. But that may be expected in a store that is a vibrant Italian marketplace. They also do cookery classes in store where you can bake your own Christmas cake.



Embrace Technology-Pepper

Hospitality areas are popping up in all types of retail stores from banks to men's shops, where retailers realise that adding in a hospitality element will create a place for customers to hang out, meet friends, learn about their products and buy / spend.

Personalization-Willow



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Caragh O'Carroll Fujitsu

Personalised targeting represents a significant opportunity for retailers, and changes like the impending GDPR can help retailers in these efforts. GDPR will require retailers to meet certain strict regulations regarding their customer data and how it is managed and maintained. Current trends show that data is driving sales and marketing for retail, meaning that those who comply with GDPR will be best placed to capitalise on personalised targeting. Bad quality data on the other hand, will either cause inaccurate results or could damage your brand.

Utilising customer data to create a personal touch impacts on customer retention, customer loyalty, and helps businesses' bottom line. GDPR isn't bad news for retailers, as it will show customers a greater level of transparency than ever before. Companies that show that they value the individual's privacy and how they use their data will build a deeper trust with customers and help to attract new customers.

With customer expectations of a personalised and transparent experience, it's important that retailers get their data management strategy right and on a sound footing. Building in analytics capability, if not part of the company's strategy already, should be considered. Whether that's based on loyalty, personalised offers, areas visited in

store, items browsed online ahead of a store visit or popularity of different items... there are lots of options and lots of solutions to help you achieve a personalised offering to help you differentiate from competitors.

Another benefit is the harmonisation of laws across all EU member states which brings consistency to the legislation, meaning that retailers have easier time complying with the data protection laws inside EU countries they do business in, even though in practice, some local differences will continue to exist.

Here are three tips:

1) Get started – assemble a team and get briefed about the needs

2) Get an understanding – think about what data you collect and use

3) Get planning – will you have enough skills yourself or do you need help?

Fujitsu work with some of Ireland and the UK's largest retailers, both online and high street. To find out how Fujitsu can help your business to prepare for GDPR, visit ie.fujitsu.com/GDPR or email us as at gdpr@ie.fujitsu.com





FEATURE E-COMMERCE



David Campbell, Retail Excellence eCommerce Manager

DPD E-Shopper Barometer Report

DPDgroup, Ireland's leading parcel delivery brand reveals the rapidly changing landscape of online shopping in Ireland and Europe in a new E-Shopper Barometer Report which interviewed 23,450 participants across 21 countries. The survey highlights micro trends including the most surprising online purchases, the frequency of online shopping by internet users, as well as preferred payment methods across Europe.

General Irish market trends:

- With 8.1%, Ireland's declared share of online shopping among total shopping is below the European average (9.6%).
- Ireland has a medium level of Internet penetration (81%).
- The Irish are amongst the most avid online shoppers for fashion in Europe.
- 83% of Irish shoppers always or regularly buying on the same websites.

Cross-border delivery:

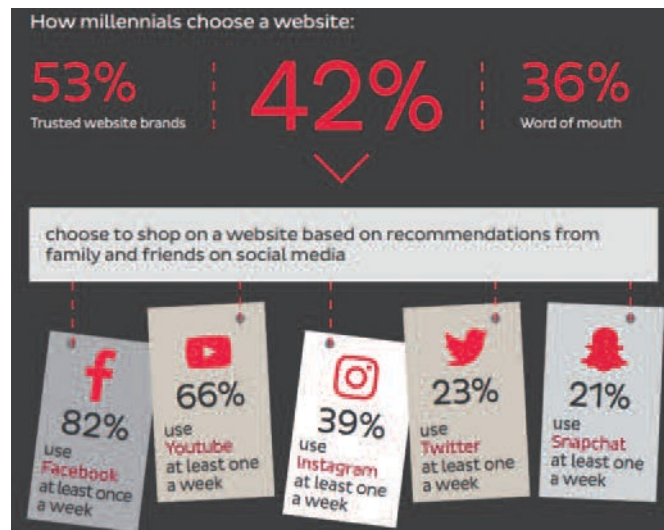
- 75% of Irish e-shoppers has already bought at least once from a foreign website, and unsurprisingly, most commonly from the UK.
- The main drivers for buying abroad are the attraction of better deals and the availability of specific products, whereas the main barriers are concerns over delivery, return and security.

Latest purchases:

- Delivery was free for 55% of Irish e-shoppers' latest purchases (a low percentage compared to other European countries) and home was by far the favoured place of delivery (75%), followed by work (10%).
- 6% of e-shoppers returned their latest purchased purchases, of which fashion was the type of goods that was returned the most.
- Drivers and barriers to further eCommerce development
- Transparent product pricing and delivery costs and clear return policies are the criteria considered most important when buying online.
- Features most likely to prevent from buying online are websites facing technical problems, complicated return processes and a lack of stock.

Focus on payment and delivery options:

- Paying online by digital wallet (PayPal, Alipay) and Visa/ MasterCard are the preferred payment methods.
- Home delivery is currently the most successful place of delivery, but the
- 74% would be more inclined to purchase from a website/retailer that offers a 1-hour delivery window/timeslot.



IEDR DIGITAL HEALTH INDEX Q4 2017

IEDR's dot ie Digital Health Index measures the health of Irish SMEs' digital presence by analysing the number of digital assets (like websites, apps and social media accounts) owned by them, and their perceived quality.

The big picture

- The dot ie Digital Health Index has risen to 49.0, the highest ever score. This has been driven by Irish SMEs' increased use of digital assets, particularly social media and data analytics.
- SMEs are also more confident in the quality of their digital assets, versus their competitors, and their contribution to business.
- Despite these improvements, most SMEs (60%) are still not engaging in e-commerce. This is at a time when Ireland's e-commerce industry is expected to grow to €14bn by 2021. Unfortunately, about 60% of this is going overseas.

Consumers and online business

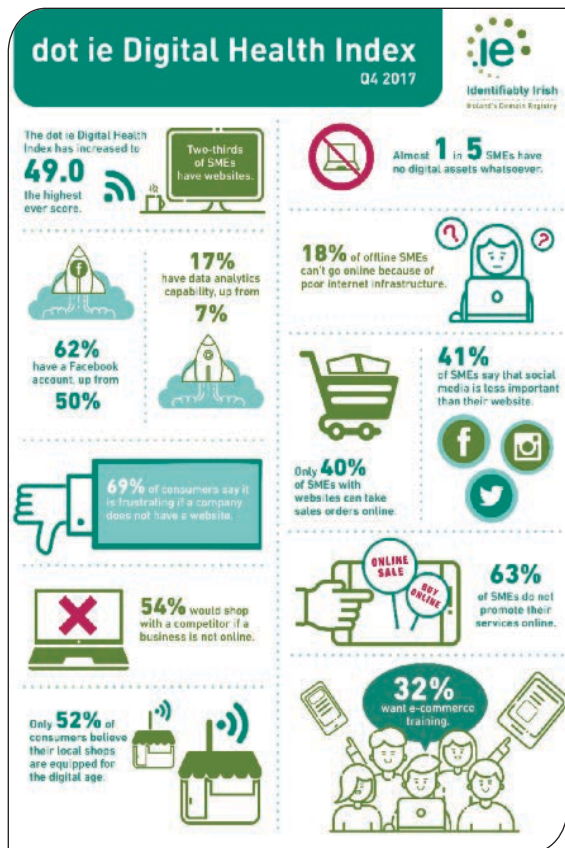
- Irish consumers are not waiting for SMEs to digitise their sales offerings: more than half (54%) would shop with a competitor for the same product or service if their preferred retailer was offline.
- 69% say it is frustrating if a company does not have a website, and two-thirds say this makes a business look outdated.
- 59% of consumers said that if a business has no online presence, they would be less likely to use their services or do business with them offline or in-store.
- The majority (44%), are most likely to refer directly to a business's

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website for information, ahead of search engines like Google (40%).

Irish SMEs' online presence

- Two-thirds of SMEs have websites, 62% have a Facebook account (up from 50%) and 17% have data analytics capability (up from 7%).
- Almost 1 in 5 SMEs have no digital assets whatsoever—neither website nor social media presence.
- However, micro-businesses with a website make on average an extra €26,825 a year.
- Only 34% of SMEs can take online payments and only 32% can accept an online reservation.
- 18% of offline SMEs can't go online because of poor internet infrastructure.

Making positive changes

- To increase skill levels and digital self-sufficiency, IEDR recommends the rollout of a national digital skills campaign, with a range of physical and digital how-to guides for different industry sectors.
- Mentorship and resourcing: industry and government must work together to ensure that SMEs are receiving shoulder-to-shoulder guidance, and that the hardworking local agencies have the expertise and manpower to provide it.
- A quarter of SMEs in Connacht and Ulster rate their internet connection as 'poor' or 'very poor': the National Broadband Plan must be fast-tracked in these areas.

CYBER WEEK RETAIL REVIEW

The American tradition of retail discounting after Thanksgiving known as Cyber Week has become a global phenomenon which continues to generate more interest each year amongst Irish retailers and consumers, with 2017 being the biggest year to date. 2016 was an eye opener for many retailers and those who invested heavily in digital campaigns reaped the rewards. Multiple stores reported their busiest trading day in history on Black Friday and 2017 saw an increased shift towards online purchases.

The big winners were Pharmacy/Cosmetics, Electronic & Tech and the Fashion sector.

These groups invested great time and effort into developing cutting edge digital marketing campaigns with some starting as early as November 10th. Advertising across Google AdWords, Social Media, Email, Radio, TV and Newspapers were just some of the platforms used this year.

Certain pharmacies reported YOY sales increases of up to 60% while Electronic & Tech performed strongly with YOY sales increases between 20%-50%. Similar to 2016, there was a reduction in flat rate discounts across the board such as 15%-20% off all stock which is not always viable dependant on product margins etc. There is now a noticeable shift towards product specific "Daily Deals" which is perceived as additional value for consumers.

A lot of retailers ran week long campaigns from Monday 20th November – Monday 27th November. Multiple businesses sent out emails on the Sunday night before their deals launched the next morning and highlighted their special discounts to try create hype and excitement amongst consumers. Cyber Week deals ran as late as December 5th due to positive sales online still being generated from digital advertising. It's evident that both retailers & consumers have become more educated in terms of marketing and online shopping. Consumers will actively engage in

extensive product research comparing the best deals with many Social Media influencers sharing their discount lists to their followers across various platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat.

This year there was real value on offer for consumers with many still holding out for the biggest deals released on Black Friday. Logistic companies reported an increase of up to 40% in deliveries with many operators checking in months in advance with clients to ensure sufficient operations were in place to handle the increased orders. Logistic firms offered

additional pick-up & drop-off options for clients to ensure orders were dispatched as stated on consumer's receipts. Web agencies were well prepared for the huge spike in website traffic by undergoing extensive stress testing on servers to ensure they could handle the busy peak trading times.

Gerard Keohane in StudioForty9 conducted an excellent Cyber Week

Report monitoring eight eCommerce websites from 2014 - 2017 and highlighted how their sites performed across the period. Based on the survey, if you turned-over €10k on Black Friday Weekend, from the Thursday to the Monday, in 2014, on average your growth would have been to €36k in 2015, to €48k in 2016 and just short of €70,000 in 2017. This was an average growth figure among a random sample of retail / B2C sites.

It was great to see retailers utilising the Retail Excellence advice for Cyber Week preparation. Key tips included stress testing websites, scheduling Emails, Texts & Social Media updates, preparing all staff to handle increased customer enquiries and to keep in regular contact with logistic operators so that stores would be aware of flexible delivery options. In general, Black Friday appeared to be more successful than Cyber Monday with the majority of retailers reporting YOY sales increases in the double digit figures.

Average growth in ecommerce KPIs across a random selection of 8 Irish Ecommerce Sites for Black Friday Weekend 2014 to 2017

		2014	2014 to 2015	2015 to 2016	2016 to 2017
Revenue	% Growth		263.99%	32.49%	44.92%
	Example Growth	€10,000	€36,399	€48,225	€69,885
Sessions	% Growth		82.05%	17.51%	19.45%
	Example Growth	15,000	27,307	32,088	38,330
Conversion Rate	% Growth		57.19%	22.23%	8.15%
	Example Growth	1.00%	1.57%	1.92%	2.07%
Average Order Value	% Growth		-8.08%	10.25%	4.03%
	Example Growth	€150	€138	€152	€158

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

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European Search Award
Best Search for Retail

Digital Media Award
Best Conversion Strategy

Littlewoods Ireland

Global Landy Award
Best Integrated Campaign

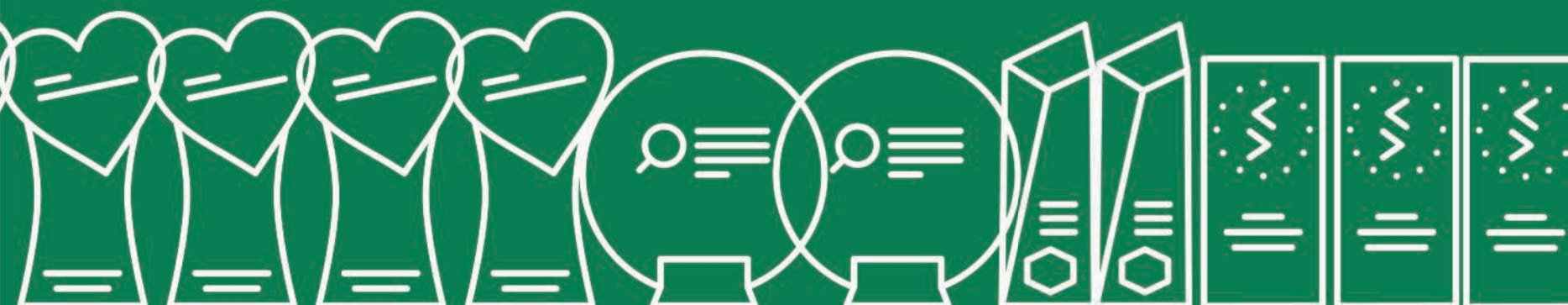
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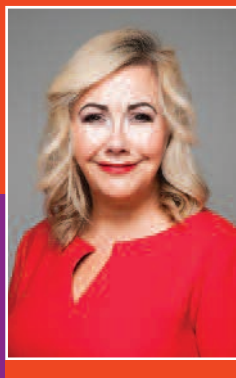
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FEATURE

AWARD WINNER UNCOVERED



Name: **SANDRA DEVENNEY**
 Company: **McElhinneys Department Store, Donegal**
 Winner: **Store Manager of the Year 2018**

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS?

McElhinneys Department Store is an Irish independent family run department store, employing almost 200 employees located in Donegal.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THE RETAIL INDUSTRY?

I started in sales when I went to school working part-time for a cosmetic house on a Sunday. My passion for sales grew whilst I worked as Cabin Crew in the airline industry. I became a star seller and won various awards for initiatives and incentives. I was promoted at quite a young age this was uncommon in the airline industry so I learned very quickly. I left the airlines and returned to cosmetics and this is where my passion for sales and people was cultivated.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB? I love my team and the passion and loyalty that they have for the company and the customers, they inspire me every day. One of our values is "Customer Obsessed" and every day without fail I witness this on the shop floor. The funny thing is that they don't shout it from the roof tops because it's normal practice within McElhinneys and when I read out compliments or put them up on our team page on Facebook they seemed so shocked that a customer would take the time to write in or call in or in many cases

They are great ambassadors for Irish, independent family run businesses

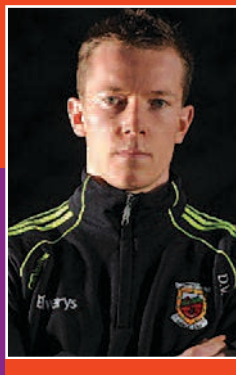
send gifts. We don't believe in the term "going over and beyond" because this is our norm and the culture of our people.

WHICH RETAILER (NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL) DO YOU ADMIRE MOST AND WHY? I am going to stay national with this one and say Arboretum. I admire that they have taken a garden centre and turned it into a lifestyle experience. They have stuck by their core values and have never lost sight of their heritage. Rachel Doyle is similar to our own leader (John McElhinney), inspiring and full of vision. She leads from the front not the top and she never stands still. Her family has learned through doing and they now are willing to take everything she has taught them and take it to the next level. They are great ambassadors for Irish, independent family run businesses.

WHAT'S ON YOUR BUCKET LIST? As a mum and wife to 3 surfers our family dream is to visit Hawaii for many reasons but my main one is because I want to see my family surf the famous Banzai Pipeline simply known as "pipeline". This is a notorious wave within the surf world as it has a very shallow beach break allowing for large waves. I personally also love the Polynesian culture and cuisine and the very fact that the temperature sits at an average 30° with a soft breeze means once I get there I will probably never leave!

WHAT DOES WINNING THIS AWARD MEAN TO YOU AND YOUR TEAM? I have said many times since winning the award that it represents the brilliance of our people. It proves that putting people, whether it be your team or your customers, at the centre of every decision you make will always be a good thing. It also proves that hard work, dedication, passion and never standing still pays off.

SANDRA DEVENNEY



Name: **DONAL VAUGHAN**
 Company: **Vaughan Shoes**
 Winner: **Retail Excellence New Website of the Year 2018**

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS?

Vaughan Shoes is a multi-branded Omni Channel footwear Retailer. In other words we sell high quality branded footwear instore

and online. Our bricks and mortar stores are all based in Mayo and our online store has allowed us to expand both nationally and internationally.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THE RETAIL INDUSTRY? My parents bought an existing shoe business Colleran Footwear in our home town Ballinrobe in 2006. When I finished college in 2009 I started working in the shop for a year to take stock and decide what I wanted to do. I liked it so much that I'm still here.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB? I really like the way you can introduce a new idea in retail and you will be able to see the results immediately. Those results have to be measurable but it gives me a great kick when the little tweak results in a big improvement in efficiency

a great kick when the little tweak results in a big improvement in efficiency or customer service.

or customer service. I believe strongly that it's this agility and decisiveness that gives the independent retailer a huge competitive advantage over the large multi nationals.

WHICH RETAILER (NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL) DO YOU ADMIRE MOST AND WHY? I have mentioned them previously in articles but it has to be Smyths Toys. Their first ever store is right across the road from our Claremorris store and it's inspiring to see an Irish independent retailer grow into an international giant.

WHAT'S ON YOUR BUCKET LIST? I have a few sporting and business goals. They are the priority at the moment. Enjoy the journey rather than just the destination.

WHAT DOES WINNING THIS AWARD MEAN TO YOU AND YOUR TEAM? Winning this Award is absolutely brilliant for all the team at Vaughan Shoes. It is recognition for all their hard work and effort over the last two years. Sometimes when you win awards it may feel like you have reached the top and where do we go from here, but the vibe and attitude I have been getting from all the team at Vaughan Shoes is that we want take our standards and customer service to a new level. We believe we can. We are only getting started.

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Name: **RACHEL DOYLE**Company: **Arboretum Home & Garden Heaven**Recipient: **Retail Excellence Lifetime Achievement Award****A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS?**

Arboretum Home and Garden Heaven is one of Ireland's leading garden centres which earned the title of Bord Bia's first Five Star Garden Centre and recently won the coveted titles of Retail Excellence Garden Centre of the Year 2017 and also Company of the Year

2016. A family run business with a dedicated team, Arboretum provides the complete lifestyle experience with an award winning café, home furnishing and giftware offering, fashion outlet and pet zone entwined with a qualified team of plant experts all under the one roof. Arboretum is very customer focused which is why we have one of the highest engagement levels in retail globally. In recognition of this, Arboretum was shortlisted and won the honor of representing Ireland in the European Business Awards.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN RETAIL? As a young girl I worked in a grocery shop in our local town of Hacketstown. Here in McCall's shop I learned the basics of customer care & how a business functioned. I saw firsthand how diverse a business could be from selling all the essential groceries (weighing out tea, biscuits, pig meal & so on). There was no cash register to add up customers purchases, so everything was recorded in cash books or charged in the "Day Book" to people's accounts. Having taught in national school for 2 years, I went back to study Horticulture when I was 22 years old. This was perfect for me, the right fit, as I loved nature and everything to do with plants & gardening which I learned from my hero, my Dad. When Frank & I got married, it was obvious to me that we should start up a garden centre as there was none in Carlow or the surrounding area. My up & over garage door was my shop window, my shop, my pottery shed and it worked! As the business grew, we moved into Carlow town to where the population was and then moved back to

To be in the same listing as Patrick Hanley, CEO of Harvey Nichols and former Senator Feargal Quinn makes me truly honored.

Leighlinbridge. I am also very lucky that Frank decided to come into the business and he is a very astute man and also a great people person! Neither of us had any type of business background, but we both appreciated our customers and believed in Feargal Quinn's motto that the "Customer is King!"

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB? I love working with the three most important men in my life; Frank, my husband and our two sons; Fergal & Barry and over the years, we have built a dream team! We only attract the nicest people and are very careful when taking on new team members ensuring that they will complement our current team. I love being around people and chatting so for me, I'm one of the luckiest people in the world as I don't consider it work!

WHAT RETAILER/NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL DO YOU ADMIRE THE MOST?

Nationally, I have to say Feargal Quinn. I have had the privilege of meeting him several times. I think what he has done for retail and customer service is phenomenal. I remember the first time I read his book "Crowning the Customer" I was so excited. These principles still hold dear to me today.

International; Danny Meyer who is the CEO of Union Square Hospitality Group. His first food offering was called "Shake Shack"; a hot dog cart in Madison Square Park in Manhattan.

His book "Setting the Table" is brilliant & while it's based around food, the principles can be applied to any business. This values innovation and insights to the challenges he experienced and how he dealt with them is brilliant!

WHAT'S ON YOUR BUCKET LIST? I travel a lot & I love learning from other countries, so I will continue to do that! I'm writing a book which I'm enjoying but just not getting enough time to get it finished! And most of all – to enjoy my five grandchildren, watch them grow and be part of their lives.

WHAT DOES WINNING THIS AWARD MEAN TO YOU & YOUR TEAM?

Of all the accolades & awards we have received over the years, for me, this has been the most amazing! I feel honored & privileged to receive this Lifetime Achievement Award and the fact that I'm only the third person (and first woman!) in 20 years makes it all the more special. To be in the same listing as Patrick Hanley, CEO of Harvey Nichols and former Senator Feargal Quinn makes me truly honored.

RACHEL DOYLE

Name: **CLAIRE BREATHNACH**Company: **ARI (The Loop, Dublin Airport)**Winner: **Retail Excellence Rising Star of the Year 2018****A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR BUSINESS?**

ARI is one of the most significant players in the global travel retail industry. We own and manage duty free and duty paid retail outlets in Europe, The Middle East, Asia Pacific and the Americas. Within ARI I work on projects across Terminal 1 and

Terminal 2 in the Loop Dublin Airport

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THE RETAIL INDUSTRY?

Before joining ARI, I worked for 3 years in a local cinema. This was my first experience interacting with customers to provide a service. I was exposed to all facets of a small operation from selling tickets at the box office, serving treats at the concession stand, cash handling, opening and closing, and stock management. In a sector that competes with online platforms such as Netflix and as we were a small business in comparison to our larger competitors, I learnt very quickly that providing a pleasurable and memorable experience was of utmost importance. After graduating with a master's degree in business management I knew that I wanted to pursue a career in a fast paced and dynamic environment.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB? The list is endless really. I love everything about my job, from the people I work with, the projects I work on, the learning and development opportunities, and the chance to contribute to initiatives that help to drive sales, increase staff engagement, and create an outstanding experience for our customers. I am challenged every day in a different way and I am constantly pushed out of my comfort zone. I have a lot of autonomy and flexibility which I believe are key components to job satisfaction.

I learnt very quickly that providing a pleasurable and memorable experience was of utmost importance.

WHICH RETAILER (NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL) DO YOU ADMIRE MOST AND WHY?

From a downtown perspective, I would have to say Arnott's. The store has a charming history, is Ireland's oldest department store and is synonymous with Dublin; an anchor for shopping on the Northside. There is something very nostalgic about entering its iconic doors on Henry Street, with its hundreds of brands and of course at Christmas time they undoubtedly have the best Santa around!! What is so admirable about Arnott's is during the recession they were burdened with a large debt however they have seen a tremendous turnaround with the introduction of new brands, and carrying out store improvements. This has resulted in them achieving a strong sales growth enabling them to continue to be a key landmark in Dublin City; something to be admired!

WHAT'S ON YOUR BUCKET LIST? Be Time Magazine's Person of the Year...Kidding! Well never say never. But I would like to achieve something big that has a positive impact on my business, the community, or even the world. I first just need to figure out what exactly that 'big idea' is. My bucket list is a real mixture of both personal and career. I'd like to give a TED talk, have a coffee with Karren Brady, work on an overseas assignment, grow my professional portfolio, give YouTube vlogging a shot, become an expert in my field, learn to surf, progress to a leadership position, and try to 'unplug' completely for an entire week!

WHAT DOES WINNING THIS AWARD MEAN TO YOU AND YOUR TEAM?

Winning this award really represents the culmination of two years of hard work and determination to add value. I would almost go as far as to say that is the highlight of my career with ARI. However, I never would have been able to achieve it without the constant support, guidance, and encouragement of the team that I work with. They have all played such a large part in my development, including my very first manager Jackie McDonagh who was cheering me on all the way from Montreal. Winning the award is a reflection of their willingness to help further my career as much as it is a reflection of my desire to thrive in ARI.

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- monitoring of performance management;
- banking and key supplier negotiations;
- securing systems and data; and
- VAT and PAYE/PRSI reviews.



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Damian Gleeson, Partner
E damian.gleeson@ie.gt.com

John Duffy, Director
E john.duffy@ie.gt.com

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TOP 8 PLANNING TIPS FOR YOUR STOCKTAKE

As the calendar year end approaches and that dreaded time for undertaking your stocktaking, we asked Patrick McDermott of Stocktaking.ie for his insight as to why stocktakes are so painful for some companies.

McDermott states that there are several reasons why stocktaking is dreaded and has summed them up in these top tips which should challenge your thinking.



1

No plan is made

Decide when the stocktake is to be undertaken, by whom, and what do you want from the end of it, i.e.; a valuation for your accountant or your POS (Point of Sale) updated.

2

Insufficient resources

Is it part time staff, full time staff, are they trained to count accurately, do you require additional hardware, will the staff roster be effected if the stocktake is undertaken out of hours, management presence.

3

Is there a requirement for IT assistance?

Do you need to advise your POS company about the stocktake? Additional hardware required? Competence with linking the hardware with the scanners, staff training on the scanners.

4

Have a plan for store preparation

No preparation = high cost. Non scanning product, plan for an IT failure, deliveries being received on the day to be counted or not, shelf/rail tidiness, sort and straighten all stock items and make barcodes readily available.

5

Know the cost in advance

Staff time, managements time, closing during trading hours affecting customers, downtime - staff not being productive.

6

Non barcoded stock items

Such as food, beverages, hardware or stock in a yard, we recommend that customers use EasyCount.io. A simple counting app that assists in counting and collating non barcoded stock items in an efficient and seamless manner so as double entry is avoided and no additional hardware is required.

7

Auditing

Who's conducting the rechecks, how can they do it?, print-outs, check on the scanner, what if there are errors?. If the stocktake is undertaken during trading, how will the integrity of the stocktake be protected?

8

Communication

Know what's required, have answers about the above and then communicate this with your team. Provide them with reason that the stocktake is so important which will instil confidence in them and result in a better quality stocktake.

Besides the obvious reason of knowing how much stock you have versus what your POS system is telling you, stocktaking delivers one very important function for every business, accurate stocktaking provides companies with CONFIDENCE.

Without confidence businesses are shooting in the dark and these businesses are not as operationally efficient as they cannot compete with businesses who are confident in managing their stock levels and supply chain, while being comfortable that they have optimal stock levels.

Of course, Stocktaking provides other obvious benefits, like tidier and more organised stores and store rooms, happier staff as they have easier access to the stock and they know where to locate it.

The increased staff stock awareness that comes with a professional stocktaking system will drastically reduce, if not remove altogether, the potential for running out of stock.

Then there is the question of in-house stocktaking versus outsourcing?

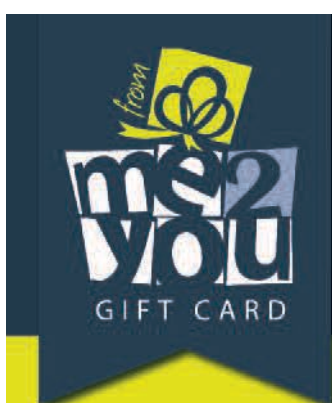
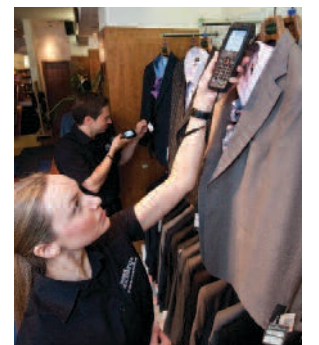
In-house stocktaking is most definitely better than no stocktaking, or just doing the annual stocktake as demanded for the annual returns. However, can you be sure that staff doing the stocktakes are trustworthy, can they complete stocktakes efficiently and accurately? Are you using your staff most effectively by getting them to stocktake, their skills are used better at what they were hired to do - like retailing?

Getting in quality professional stocktakers is always more cost effective in the long run and avoids the adage "penny wise and pound foolish".

Professional Stocktakers are just that, professional. stocktaking is what they do every day. At Stocktaking.ie we spend a huge amount of time and money, not only stocktaking, but analysing how we stocktake, the equipment we use, the systems we use, the type of people we use. We do this because we understand that to be successful in business we need to compete, we need to offer more value to our customers than other methods of stocktaking. Being independently certified to ISO 9001:2015 standard, ensures that best in class practices and procedures are used to deliver a quality stocktake every time.

A successful stocktake is required and it's through correct planning and communication that each stocktake is a cost effective, accurate process that delivers value for your business.

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HOW TO OPTIMISE A STORE NETWORK FOR A NEW WORLD OF OMNICHANNEL RETAIL



FEARGAL O'NEILL, MANAGING DIRECTOR, GAMMA

I've been optimising and analysing store-network locations for over twenty years and for the most part the requirements haven't changed significantly. Typically, the analyst identifies the existing network, the target market segment and the desired travel time for customers. With a few other constraints, and using some smart statistics, geographic gaps are identified and ranked until you have your desired optimum target locations.

Using specialist software and location data on stores, competitors and demographics, alongside the store's own sales data, one can usually devise a solid network design strategy. Broadly, the same approach is relevant for most categories of retail, with the target market and travel time being the main differentials.

Multichannel Location Analysis

Times have changed and location planning now involves designing store networks that better reflect the changing nature of retailing, with ever evolving e-commerce models offering a multitude of customer interaction points. This makes the process considerably more complicated. For many retailers, it's not enough to just consider over-the-counter sales or uniform formats for stores when designing a network for the future. Gartner identified this field on their hype cycle and highlighted "Multichannel Location Analysis" as an upcoming trend topic in its Peak of Inflated Expectations 2016.

Cutting through the jargon, Multichannel Location Analysis is basically a new approach for optimising and monitoring store networks with reference to all retail channels, considering much more than just the over-the-counter channel as was the norm in traditional network planning.

Whilst there are many good general articles on the changing face of retail in a multichannel world, few have suggested a comprehensive approach to rethinking the entire physical network based on the changing interaction requirements of the customer.



Shoppers, and especially those who have grown up with online shopping, are increasingly demanding more convenience from retailers. Notably,

- They expect quicker delivery (US analysts BRP predict that 65% of retailers will offer same-day delivery within the next two years).
- Many want to collect it (Click n Collect is the fastest growing e-commerce channel in the UK).
- Others want options for collection that suit their lives (Commute 'n Collect, Parcel Collection Points, C 'n C, Ship from Store, Same Day Delivery to Office or Home).

So how do these changing consumer demands impact on the location and design requirements of physical store networks?

Retailers first need to rethink their customer interaction requirements. How and where they need to engage with them on their terms? What should each store or "point of engagement" look like? They need to assess their existing networks to assess how each location fits in with the new design, be it a hub and spoke approach or a simpler model. And they need to assess how to configure each to provide the services required at that point. For many, this may mean exiting significant amounts of space that are no longer fit for purpose. For others, it may mean sharing space with other retailers, e.g. banks in supermarkets or concessions in department stores.

What is certain is that retail location planning as a strategy has changed forever. It has become more complicated and more multi-dimensional and now requires a broader and more flexible view on the required retail presence.

Those who are evolving quickest will be able to engage best with a generation for whom convenience, flexibility and service are paramount. And ultimately those will be the ones positioned to best succeed in the retail landscape of the future.

New Store Formats

Treadgold and Reynolds frame the challenge succinctly noting that, "The transformation of physical retailing from inflexible networks of conforming stores to highly diverse networks of points of engagement, some of which would not traditionally be called stores at all, presents very interesting possibilities for retailers, both traditional retailers and "new to retail" businesses". They conclude that physical stores must be conceived such that one touchpoint supports another in a total web of physical and digital engagement with the shopper at the centre.

With the rapid growth in e-commerce options, the future often points to a combination of more convenient smaller physical stores with non-inspection stock delivered or collected. In this world, larger stores are repurposed to have less retail space but more "entertainment" space to compete with online vendors. To balance the smaller formats, at the other end of the scale, some analysts foresee larger destination retail/residential/leisure developments that will combine shopping with entertainment, dining and even accommodation with more residential units. Boutique gyms and fitness centres - once viewed as "pariah" tenants help transform shopping centres into "hubs of living, working and playing", attracting higher-end customers, and helping the shopping centres into themselves to become hubs for entertainment.

Changing Consumer Demands

Consumers are increasingly opting for convenience, which is supported by UK trends in H1 2017, where the fastest growing retail location type continues to be in retail parks where easy access for vehicles is supported.

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Retailers take note – PAYE Modernisation is going live

Significant payroll changes are on the way for retail and all employers in 2019.

A consultation process regarding the modernisation of the PAYE system was announced in Budget 2017. During this process Revenue sought the views of employers, employees, payroll providers, payroll software providers, tax practitioners and other stakeholders to obtain input from those who will be most impacted by the introduction of the PAYE Modernisation system. Subsequent to this, Revenue published the “Report on Public Consultation Process” which effectively provided a summary of the main issues identified by the various interested parties.

The process has been ongoing since with the new system due to be implemented in 2019.



What is PAYE Modernisation?

Revenue is introducing a new PAYE regime for employers from 1 January 2019. From this date, employers will be required to report payroll information to Revenue in “real time” i.e. each time they pay employees.

The aim of this regime is that the real time information will enable Revenue to ensure that employees are receiving the correct

tax credits and standard rate cut off points, which should in turn mean that the incidence of year end over/underpayments of income tax will be substantially reduced.

How will these changes impact retail employers?

PAYE Modernisation will involve an “Employer Submission” to Revenue each time an employee is paid. The employer submission will contain information similar to what currently features on an employer’s P35 return.

How will retail employers and employees benefit?

- Employers will make the correct tax deduction when each employee is paid
- Certainty for employees that they are not overpaying or underpaying tax
- Revenue will have the most up to date information possible to determine that each employee is subject to the tax deduction that is appropriate
- Abolition of P30s, P45s, P60s and end of year returns. Instead, employees will have access to their pay and tax record online which will be updated on an on-going basis. This will allow ease

Payroll Changes

- Retail employers will be required to report to Revenue details of the pay, tax and other deductions, as well as details of any employees leaving the employment at the same time as they run their payroll
- Details of employees start date will be reported before their first pay day
- The final payroll run in the year will generate a pre-populated statement setting out the total tax deductions for the year both at the level of the employee and employer
- It is envisaged that the company’s payroll software should automatically submit the periodic file to Revenue without the need to physically upload a file on the ROS website
- The correct treatment of illness benefit should be facilitated by the new system, eliminating the guesswork and complication involved in the current system
- Employers will need to regularise their business processes to ensure that payroll is processed in real time, either by using software or their accountants/tax agents on a timely basis

The aim of this regime is that the real time information will enable Revenue to ensure that employees are receiving the correct tax credits and standard rate cut off points

Retail employers – getting ready for PAYE Modernisation

In preparation for PAYE Modernisation, employers should complete the following steps:

- Register as an employer (for new employers).



- Take reasonable steps to verify the PPS number provided by employees and where the employee does not hold a PPS number, they should contact the Department of Social Protection (DSP) to apply for one
- Register all employees with Revenue
- Issue a P45 when an employee ceases employment and submit it to Revenue
- Ensure that a complete PAYE, USC and PRSI record for each employee at the end of the tax year is held

Revenue Interventions

It is expected, that with the introduction of real time reporting, the level of Revenue’s oversight will increase resulting in the likelihood of faster and more regular compliance interventions by Revenue.

In addition, it has been indicated that the number of interventions prior to the introduction of the new regime will increase, in particular communications have issued to certain employers to gather information regarding new joiners / leavers to ensure that employers are ready at “go live” date.

Conclusion – Action points for retailers

While there is still time before these changes are implemented all employers may need to conduct a full review of their reporting and tracking systems before 2019.

There may be a need to design new policies and procedures to capture information which was not captured before. Payroll software will have to be reviewed to ensure that it is capable of complying with the new obligations.



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Patrick McCormack, Managing Director, Sam McCauley Chemists Group

May 2016



Retail HR in 2018



TOMMY SMYTH

As we reflect on 2017 and look forward to next year we want to make all REI members aware of some topical matters that are likely to make HR news in 2018.

Sunday Pay

Because of Ireland's historical Christian ethos, Sunday has always been viewed as a special day. In truth, Sunday Retailing started in earnest in the 1980's and generally where it occurred Trade Union's negotiated significant premium payments for any employee asked to work on the traditional 'day of rest'. An additional payment for work on a Sunday is required in the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997. For Retailers, the JLC (Sectoral Agreement) for the Grocery sector set time plus one third as the required payment and this was viewed as law until the High Court ruled JLC's unconstitutional in 2011. The Labour Court and WRC have always insisted employers pay a 'decent' Sunday premium and to avoid 'composite' hourly rates or salary. They demand a clear Sunday premium, set out in Contracts of Employment that is paid separately and not included in an overall hourly rate or salary.

WRC inspectors have, in truth, been very inconsistent in how they view and enforce Sunday rates. In 2017, however, they have become far more insistent that time plus one third is the minimum Retailers should pay and that this includes salaried people who should also receive a separate payment if they work Sundays.

In late 2017, the High Court heard an appeal by the Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) against a Labour Court decision that imposed time plus one third on a member hotel, Trinity Leisure Holdings Ltd. The publication of this decision will be a critical pointer to how the Irish legal system views the significance of Sunday work.

Sexual Harassment

In the latter stages of 2017, there has been a significant increase in claims of inappropriate behaviour at work between colleagues. In truth, since the Harvey Weinstein allegations became public there has been at least a tenfold increase in allegations of inappropriate workplace behaviours through our books.

Employers should check their internal procedures to make sure they are fit for purpose and indeed that employees know they exist. Dignity at work and/or Bullying/Harassment policies should set out who a concerned employee can contact and the formal and informal options available.

More than this, employers should always actively promote dignity, inclusiveness and appropriate behaviours at work at all times.

Banded Hours

Proposed legislation on Banded hours has been in the news for most of 2017. Deputy CEO Lorraine Higgins attended a Government committee in February to provide REI's comments on behalf of their membership. In early December we saw proposed legislation published by Minister Regina Doherty. To very briefly summarise the intended legislation for the purposes of this article, it will mean that an employee who has worked a certain level of hours for 18 months can insist that their employer guarantees them these hours irrespective of what a contract of employment may state. It will narrow employer flexibility on providing hours to tighter bands. For example, if an employee's contract states they may get 'up to 40 hours in a week' but they have consistently

received 30 hours, the employer may be obliged to permanently award the employee 25-31 hours. The employer loses the 'rainy day' flexibility they may have tried to build into a contract.

This legislation also obliges employers to provide a new employee with basic information regarding their new role within one month or face a criminal prosecution.

The exact detail of this law will be in the fine print but expect this to be a new set of legal obligations for employers to meet in 2018.

Retirement Ages

With the recent announcement that Public Sector retirement ages are to creep up to 70 in the coming years, it will increase pressure in an already difficult area for private sector employers. 65 was always viewed as the 'off the shelf' retirement age because of a natural progression into the state pension for departing colleagues. As the qualification age for the state pension has increased to 66 and is moving further to 67 in 2021 and 68 in 2028, employees may wish to work longer. Many private sector employers still do not have a retirement age set out clearly in a Contract of Employment. Even if they do, they may not have enforced it fully over the years for a variety of reasons. Employee's may want to work longer for a variety of reasons and may become more resistant to being told their time is up! Each situation is unique but expect more legal cases and precedents to develop in 2018 and beyond.

On a similar note, it is also a matter of time before a mandatory employer pension contribution is imposed. If you are considering wage increases in early 2018, keep this in mind and think about proactively commencing a pension account for the team as part of any overall wage increase.

Of course, 2018 will bring about the regular array of queries and scenarios and at Tom Smyth & Associates we look forward to assisting and advising REI members throughout the year.



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FINANCIAL PLANNING: Five Key Steps for Retail Business Owners



Thinking more like a shareholder can help business owners turn profitability into personal financial success, writes Kevin Doherty.



Retail is a demanding and ever-changing business in which retail business owners have the unenviable challenge of navigating the constantly shifting landscape. They now compete with global players and must strive to keep pace with greater demands for consumer experience and value.

A key pillar of success and profitability in retail can lie in forward planning - the ability to foresee and meet consumer's future needs in a timely manner. To survive, if not thrive, requires taking the time to examine trends and plan for the future.

Personal financial planning

Driving the business in this competitive world is a demanding if not all-consuming challenge. In my experience even the most successful business owners can struggle to find the bandwidth to apply the same consideration and attention to their personal financial success, depriving themselves and their financial future of the effective management that serves their business so well.

However, some time thinking about a personal financial plan now may save a lot of trouble in the future. I think it's critical that retail owners occasionally take a step back and think, not just about their business but about their own financial future. The two are linked, of course, but they are not interchangeable.

Where to begin?

A holistic financial plan will incorporate aspects of investment, tax, structuring and protection, bringing these together in a way which suits the specific needs of the individual/family in question.

I find the following five key steps a very good way to approach the financial planning process.

1. Identify your financial goals

Exactly what you are trying to achieve requires careful consideration and is not always obvious. Consider the following questions:

- Business exit - Am I structured appropriately and tax efficiently? What should I consider five years out, one year out, at exit?
- Retirement planning - What pot will I need to fund my lifestyle in retirement? Am I on track? Am I funding this tax-efficiently?
- Accumulated assets - Are they working for me? Am I measuring progress and managing costs?
- Succession - How will my business or other assets be passed to the

next generation and what are the tax consequences?

- What would happen in the event of illness or death (mine / partners)? Should I purchase the retail premises (personally or otherwise) etc.?

2. Set an appropriate investment strategy

Once you have identified your goals, the next step is to devise an investment strategy which gives you the best chance of meeting them. Goal-based investing aims to align each goal with an appropriate strategy, reflecting your personal risk and return objectives. Some of the main considerations that will inform the ultimate strategies adopted include:

- the expected timeline;
- ability to withstand any capital losses;
- whether it makes more sense to pay down debt prior to investing;
- tax efficiency - is it best to invest via a pension, via your company or directly?

3. Be tax smart

Tax can be a crucial component of the financial planning process, particularly for business owners.

For those considering a sale of their business, a natural objective will be to maximise the personal wealth achieved from the sale. It is vital to ensure that any relevant reliefs available are availed of and any tax compliance obligations are met. Similar concerns apply to those wishing to pass on the business to the next generation: in both cases, advance planning and good advice are key.

4. Protection

The fourth step in the financial planning process involves planning for unforeseen events, such as serious illness or premature death, and addressing the financial impact on your family and business. There may be concerns around how children would meet an inheritance tax bill further down the line.

Financial protection is the 'safety net' of financial planning, in that it seeks to pre-empt, or plan financially for such scenarios.

5. Review regularly

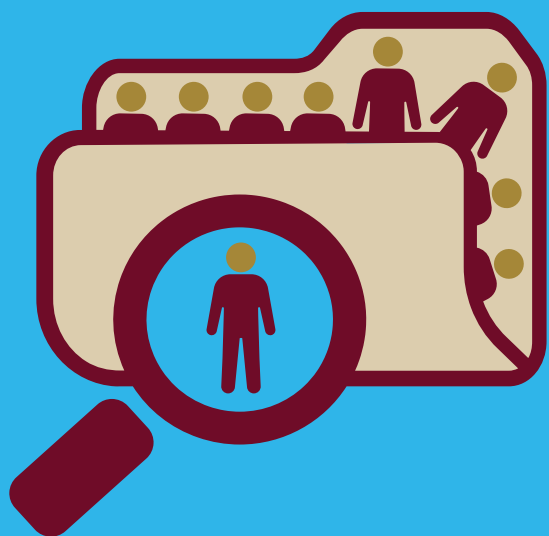
It is important to regularly review your plan - at least annually and in particular when there is a change to your personal circumstances or to the investment, tax or regulatory environment in which you operate.

Start today

Getting started is simple - it begins by having a conversation with a financial adviser to tease out how you are currently positioned, and what you ultimately need and want to achieve with your assets. A good adviser will take that information away and join the dots, setting out their recommendations in the form of a financial plan. My key message to retail business owners is to start that conversation today - the earlier the better!



Kevin Doherty is an Associate Director at Davy. J&E Davy, trading as Davy, is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.



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	Gift Voucher and Gift Card Solutions	Love2shop / Park Retail Limited	Robert O'Donnell 01 294 4090	robert.odonnell@love2shop.ie www.love2shop.ie	Argos, Debenhams, Heatons	45
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	Hotel, Conference Venue	Crowne Plaza Blanchardstown	Carol Byrne 01 897 7777	carol.byrne@crowneplazadublin.ie www.cpireland.crowneplaza.com	DID Electrical, Avtek	45
	HR Consultant	Tom Smyth & Associates	Tommy Smyth 021 4634154	tommy@tsaconsultants.ie www.tsaconsultants.ie	Skechers, BB's Coffee & Muffins, Petstop	45
	Human Resources Solution	Strandum Ltd	Brendan Carney 01 8991900	bcarney@strandum.com www.strandum.com	Topaz, O'Callaghan Hotels	45
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	Insurance Products	FBD Insurance	Patrick Carey 086 815 4193	patrick.carey@fbd.ie www.fbd.ie	Retail Excellence	45



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★	Licence Exempt Music Provider	Amazing Media	Grant Thompson +44 (0)191 603 0180	grant.thompson@amazing-media.com www.amazinginstore.com	Retail Excellence	46
	Loyalty Technology	Azpiral	Kevin Nolan 061 633 355 086 829 7453	kevin.nolan@azpiral.com www.azpiral.com	Total Health, Topaz	46
	Market Research	Behaviour & Attitudes	Luke Reaper 01 205 7500	luke@bandoa.ie www.bandoa.ie	RTE, Meteor	46
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	Messaging & Loyalty	ZinMobi 086 7775558	Brian Stephenson www.zinmobi.com	brian@zinmobi.com Shaws Department Stores	Musgraves,	46
	Money Counters, Forgery Detection	Dualtron Ltd	Ronan Byrne 01 823 7150	ronan@dualtron.ie www.dualtron.ie	Banba Toymaster, Vila Clothing	46
	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	46
	Packaging	JJ O'Toole Ltd	Vicki O'Toole 061 229 333	info@jotoole.ie www.jotoole.ie	Arboretum Home and Garden Centre, Newbridge Silverware	47
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	Pharmacy IT Solutions	McLernon Computers Ltd	Robin Hanna 01 450 1916	robin@mcclernons.ie www.mcclernons.ie	Sam McCauley Chemists, Mulligans Chemists	47
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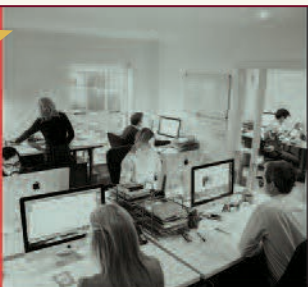
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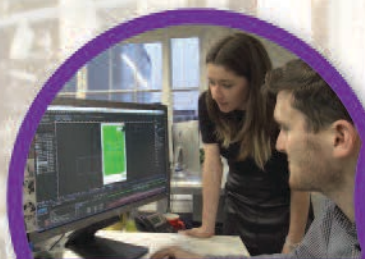
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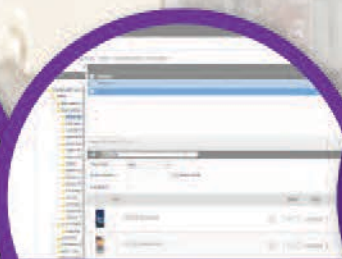
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