

Retail

TIMES

Q3 2019



Retail Revolution: Future Stores

The New McCauley
Pharmacy of the Future

Store Profile
The County Boutique

Retail Public Affairs
The Battle to Reform Insurance



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WELCOME



W elcome everyone to this edition of Retail Times. This is my first editorial as Chairman of Retail Excellence. It is a great privilege to be your Chairman and I look forward to working with the Retail Excellence Board and Executive Team to guide Ireland's largest retail industry representative body over the next two years.

Thank you to all members and partners who attended the Retail Retreat back in May. It was a great two days filled with positivity and some really uplifting sessions which assisted and prepared our members for the future of retail. Special praise to our many partners who invested so significantly in the event. In that regard, one of the first initiatives I plan to launch as your new Chairman is the establishment of a Partner Council. The Partner Council will allow some of our Board of Directors to meet regularly with our partners and shape the organisation to ensure everyone benefits, our partners, our retailer members and the retail industry as a whole. Our core DNA in Retail Excellence is retail operations. However, by working better with our supply partners, I truly believe will strengthen the overall organisation.

Many of you have by now entered the AIBMS Retail Excellence Awards 2019. I wish you well with your entry. We have made a number of changes to the competition this year including creating a new flagship award, the Retailer of the Year Award. This award will celebrate Ireland's best retailer, not just in store but also online. The award will recognise the retailer which practices best in class across all touch points, standards, innovation, people, digital and finance. The award is a welcome addition to our annual celebration of the very best in Ireland's largest industry, Retail.

We have an exciting time ahead especially in the digital space. Thus Retail Excellence plans to support our members on their eCommerce journeys. A very welcome development in that regard is the launch of the Enterprise Ireland online grant scheme. This provides a grant of

€25,000 per successful applicant to assist members internationalise online.

There are many unknowns ahead of us, with particular emphasis on Brexit. That said we all must focus on that which we can control and do our very best to stand out in a very competitive market. By being a member of Retail Excellence I am sure you will have a head start against the rest.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Barrett

*Chief Operations Officer, Applegreen PLC
Chairman, Retail Excellence*

THE NEWS



Des Travers, CEO, DPD Ireland and Minister Richard Bruton.

DPD IRELAND INVEST IN ELECTRIFYING FLEET

DPD Ireland recently announced it is to invest €3.2m electrifying its delivery fleet. The company, which is predicting annual growth of 20% this year, will create 150 new jobs over the next 12 months, bringing total employment to 1,300 within the company. DPD Ireland Chief Executive Des Travers said "DPD will be the first parcel delivery company to have an electric depot. Through ElectriCity, fifteen parcel delivery routes in Dublin will become all-electric routes. By the end of this year, as part of our bid to reduce our carbon output, DPD will have saved more than 20 tonnes of CO2 being emitted as a result of moving to an electric fleet." The €3.2 million investment will include purchasing the electric vehicles, hiring personnel, employee training, acquiring the depots, and their refurbishment.

EXPERT ELECTRICAL CELEBRATES ANOTHER YEAR OF GROWTH

Expert Electrical recently held its AGM and Member Conference in the Slieve Russell Hotel, Cavan. The conference was well attended by members across the group. Commenting at the event Expert Electrical CEO, Ciaran O'Reilly said: "We have made solid growth as a group over the past 12 months. The recent introduction of our omni-channel offering has helped to build this growth and this will continue over the coming year as we continue to offer our customers the best range of electrical goods and delivery options." At the company's Annual Gala Dinner presentations were made to the 2018 Sales Person of the Year Brendan Robinson, Joyce's Expert, Wexford and Alan Cassidy, Expert, Tullamore. The store of the year awards were presented to Ganly's Expert, Joyce's Expert and Irwin's Expert.

STUDIOFORTY9 WINS BIG

At this year's Shopware Community Day in Germany, StudioForty9 was awarded the Partner of the Year for the UK & Ireland. This marks a second big win for StudioForty9 in three months with their CTO, Alan Morkan, also winning the UK eCommerce Developer of the Year 2019. Ger Keohane of StudioForty9 said: "Shopware is one of Europe's leading open source eCommerce platforms, and holds the number one spot in its homeland of Germany. We partnered with Shopware in 2017, following a selection process where we determined Shopware was the best available solution for open source eCommerce for the Irish retail industry - which is our key focus. We're delighted that after only two years of partnership we've already won a prestigious "Partner of the Year" award against some stiff UK competition."

INVEST WATERFORD EVENT

On June 5th last over twenty CEO's of leading retail companies converged on Waterford City for an Invest Waterford event. The purpose of the event was to allow retailers who do not have a presence in the City to find out more about the trading opportunity in the City and in time open stores. The event was co-hosted by Retail Excellence and Waterford City and County Council. Speaking at the event David Fitzsimons, Retail Excellence said: "Waterford is one of Ireland's fastest growing cities and offers a great opportunity to many retailers who as yet have not traded in the City. The city boasts many advantages including the best public realm in the country." Michael Walsh, Chief Executive, Waterford City and County Council said: "Waterford is a growing City with over 600,000 people living within a 60-minute drive. Diverse and vibrant, it offers an excellent quality of life with a unique and easily accessible retail offering. Excellent infrastructure, a highly skilled workforce, favourable cost of living and tailored retail

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Tony Murphy, Commercial Director and Ciaran O'Reilly, CEO, Expert Electrical.



Just some of the progressive retailers who recently visited Waterford City.



A busy few months for JYSK Ireland.



Two impressive awards for the StudioForty9 team.

incentives for our historic City Centre ensure that Waterford City is ideally placed for new retail opportunity and growth."

JYSK NAAS STORE COMES IN 2ND OF 1,200 STORES

The recently opened JYSK store in Naas has recorded the 2nd highest sales of 1,200 stores across the JYSK network. Commenting on the store performance and the JYSK growth plan for Ireland, Roni Tuominen, Head of Retail said: "At JYSK we rarely celebrate second place but to have our Naas store rank

2nd in terms of sales within the 1,200 plus JYSK Nordic stores was just fantastic. The fact that this was within our opening month made it even more special. Whilst we expected a warm welcome from Irish customers the response has exceeded our expectations and I'm very much looking forward to the roll out of more stores over the summer as we continue our expansion throughout Ireland."

RADIUS ACQUIRES FORTUITY

Radius Technologies, one of Ireland's leading

providers of private cloud, VoIP telecoms solutions and IT managed services has acquired Cork-based IT company Fortuity. Fortuity provides tailored IT infrastructure, maintenance and communications services to SMEs in Cork and the South West region. Commenting on the transaction Jerry Buckley, MD of Radius Technologies said: "As part of our national expansion plan we had been seeking an acquisition in the south west region and with Fortuity we found a team with an excellent reputation in the market place who share Radius' passion for excellent customer service and information



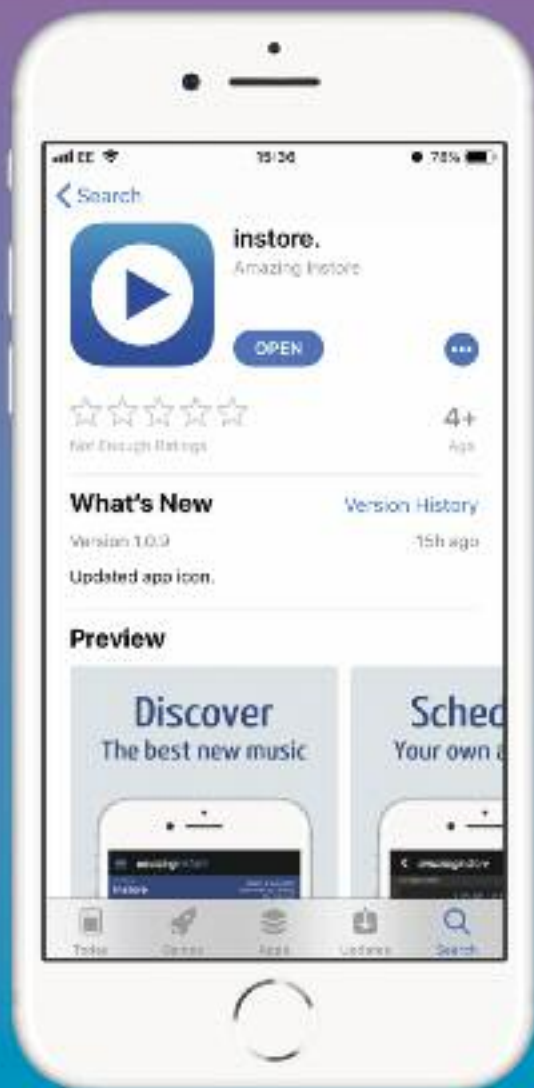
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security.” As part of a national strategic plan Radius are currently expanding both their Waterford HQ and Dublin teams across all levels and functions of the organisation.

RETAIL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2020 LAUNCHES

Retail Excellence recently announced the 2020 dates for the Retail Management Development Programme which will be held in the Crowne Plaza Hotel Blanchardstown. Commenting on the launch Helen O’Dowd, Head of Events at Retail Excellence said: “We are delighted to announce the Retail Management Development Programme dates for 2020. The programme will run with four “classroom days” – 11th March | 25th March | 6th April | 22nd April and includes entry to the Retail & eCommerce Summit on 19th & 20th May in Citywest Convention Centre. This programme has taken concepts from A-Z in retail management. The programme covers every area from customer experience, increasing ATV, time management, sharing information and essentially improving all areas of the business including sales, HR and profitability. The programme brochure will be available shortly but, in the meantime, contact me at Helen@retailexcellence.ie for further details.”

B&Q UNVEILS NEW HOME STORE

B&Q has recently launched a new smaller format store to offer customers a more convenient way to shop for home and DIY products. The GoodHome by B&Q in Wallington, UK marks a departure from its larger sheds. The 1,700 sq. ft. store carries six thousand products with many products presented in display settings rather than stocked on shelves. There are digital screens on hand to allow customers shop the full range and click and collect facilities, with product being ready for collection within five minutes of the order being made. Kingfisher Chief Trading Officer, John Colley said: The GoodHome concept is part of Kingfisher’s drive to start to cater for customers of the future.”



Managing Director of LEON Ireland, Stuart Fitzgerald.

INNOVATIVE SELF-SERVICE KIOSK LAUNCHES TO CASH IN ON COINS

Dublin based business Coindrum have just launched their latest generation “cash for coin” kiosk to fill a customer void in the high street. The kiosk has a futuristic design, best in class technology, and offers additional revenue streams such as advertising opportunities on a 42- inch digital signage screen. Coindrum CEO Lukas Decker said: “The truth is that coins in circulation across the Eurozone are at an all-time high, the exact statistics are published by the ECB every year. In this context banks moved away from coins, whilst the population did not. Coindrum bridges this disconnect by enabling retailers to become the solution and profit in the process.” Already operating in airports worldwide, including the world’s biggest in Dubai, the company’s expansion is fuelled by a multi-million Euro investment by well-known Irish investors such as the

founders of Ryanair, Hostelworld and CarTrawler.

LEON OPENS FIRST IRISH STORE

LEON, the healthy fast food operators, recently opened their first Irish store in Dublin’s Temple Bar. The Irish operation is backed by a number of investors led by Waterford based accountant Stuart Fitzgerald. Commenting on the launch Managing Director of LEON Ireland, Stuart Fitzgerald, said: “We are so excited to have opened the doors of the first LEON in Ireland, the wait is finally over for everyone to try LEON’s naturally fast food. We recently shot a promo video around Dublin city centre and the appetite from the public was fantastic. The Irish welcome is most definitely alive and well! The need for an offering like LEON is so evident, somewhere that will offer vegan, gluten free and vegetarian options at a reasonable price.”

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Retail Revolution: Future Sto

By Karl McKeever, Founder and Managing Director, Visual Thinking



res
and The Retail Exchange podcast.

Change is a constant in retail. Sometimes these are little more than a passing trend or phase. But every so often we see periods of great innovation that have a seismic effect and represent generational change.

These 'mega trends' can be a result of cultural or technological change or social, economic and political events that leads to new opportunities. Some can strike a chord with people seeking something new, and indirectly stimulate change. Such developments can unleash highly disruptive forces that act to form powerful influences on consumers, creating new demands and changing their shopping behaviour and along the way, raise expectations. Others have the potential to alter the course of retail history.

The rise of online retailing was one such 'mega trend' that remains the highest performing star for many retail brands. At the same time as enjoying enormous growth, the Internet has been criticised in parallel for inflicting deep wounds and, in some cases, even killer blows on the traditional high street as we used to know it.

But despite what the media headlines would have us believe, there have been many other threats to the established order in the past.

Each new generation – with its own experiences and shopper preferences – drives change. The 1960's ushered in a dynamic phase of self-expression resulting in the rise of Carnaby Street and rule breaking boutiques. Designers like Mary Quant ruled supreme and Biba brought this together in a new type of free-spirited department store. The 1970's were about the rise of the shopping centre and latterly retail malls. Within a vast indoor space, established chains like Littlewoods, BHS and Woolworths dominated the scene with their safe, respectable family friendly formats. The 1980's saw the birth of lifestyle retailing, with a new breed of retailer, such as Next, challenging the established players thanks to an elevated product, marketing and store design – rolling out store formats nationally, with consistent repetition. The 1990's trend for designer brands and celebrity culture created new 'wannabe consumers' with changing tastes, while retail parks and out of town shopping drew shoppers away from the high streets in their cars, sending new signals that old formulas must change.

For the last ten years, online shopping has

reigned supreme. For the most part, shoppers have been 'willing participants' in this great experiment, with the public unwittingly aware of their own small-scale revolutionary impact and the consequences this would have on the retail sector at large. Through their simple everyday actions of browsing online and 'adding to basket', instead of shopping in stores – as countless family generations had done before. Each tiny click of the mouse sent an electronic message to retailers that their high street businesses were less relevant and appealing. Shoppers now wanted something different, and for physical stores to start offering 'more'.

The efficiency and profitability that online retail operations initially promised made a strong case for brands to shift their focus, and quickly. Now that more of the true costs have become much clearer, the traditional retail model has started to look increasingly attractive for many brands to reconsider again. For many retailers, the task of initially setting up online operations is seen to have been done (in part, and at least for now...). With it has come a growing recognition by industry voices that for high street stores to 'survive and thrive' with their own distinct place in the brand mix, working alongside online; the time to reboot investment in physical stores is now.

Until only recently, the desire to create an omnichannel strategy was seen as the key for brands. Fast-forward to today and that thinking is being replaced by the pursuit of sophisticated multiple channel brand delivery goals. The reality is that the easy 'fulfilment' of goods, is not the same as creating customer satisfaction. In future, this is as much about selling ideas, as offering 'more stuff' to buy through whichever channel.

This change in approach recognises the need to create easy and inspiring shopping wherever the consumer shops, and also the need for specific characteristics to serve each channel better. But, the bigger change is the absolute need to create clarity and cohesion of messaging and affirm 'purpose' to underpin and cement brand positioning. This is what we see and can understand by the huge growth in the concept of 'storytelling', a



narrative that provides non-transaction content to add meaning to online shopping, and storytelling that presents a full sensory, interactive and engaging 'customer experience' instore.

All this is a demonstration that strong brand vision, great agility and execution ability are the most important attributes for retailers to keep navigating the 'latest' way forward and coping with the increasing speed of change. Managing a course today, while constantly updating the coordinates and scouring the horizon.

Far from online retailing being the critical 'mass extinction' event that many said would 'be the death of the high street', with the benefit of time and a longer view it is the runaway success of online retail that is proving to be the catalyst for the next wave of bigger changes instore creating the spark for an exciting renaissance of high street stores...and momentum is building.

So after a dangerous period of headline grabbing brand failures, store closures and gloomy news affecting much of the retail sector, it's really positive to see brands recognising that all channels present good opportunities to make money. It also confirms that many of the current woes afflicting much of the high street are self inflicted from over supply, too many 'ordinary' shops offering too much of the same, and failing to really listen to and recognise that the consumer that was simply 'crying out' for something more.

One of the most interesting aspects about the huge rise in online retail is how it has reduced the value of goods, and not just value as meant by price. In real terms, such easy

price comparison and transparency between different suppliers has hurt margins and profits; just ask John Lewis.

Similarly, the increased use of online promotional activity as a quick and easy stimulant to drive online sales has created a situation of ongoing and painful discounting. In response, shoppers have become comfortable with the idea of searching for offers, online discount codes and other ways to save more money. Shoppers have become

programmed to wait, knowing that the next sale will be along soon. This is a drug that many retailers have found increasingly hard to swallow, whilst ironically becoming reliant on its short-term sales spiking fixes.

But I also mean value as measured in less tangible terms. When goods are so accessible and easy to obtain, paradoxically they become less valuable. The Internet has commoditised acquisition and with it, created less meaning, removing the psychological and emotional boost of interaction, experience and memories once formed. Achieving a sense of good value is important to all shoppers, but it's key to know where that real value must be added back to make the purchase or experience worthwhile. This is where the new gap and opportunities in retail are really opening up.

Many brands are switching attention to reinventing their physical retail space as a result. Previously imbalanced investment decisions are being exposed all too clearly, to retailers and shoppers alike. Cost cutting in the wrong places has led to a general deterioration in standards, quality and performance of many high street stores, versus their new virtual outlets. Where physical stores do still exist, or where





L'Occitane,
Regent Street,
London, UK

there are new opportunities to open further retail outlets, these must have a clear and compelling proposition to vie effectively with online competitors, offer a strong complementary asset to internally served online presence, or create a point of difference to a retail brand competitor. In short, more distinctiveness and better stores are what's needed.

Revolutionary thinking? No, this is a return to what made traditional retail work before – but reimagined. A period of brand strategy delivery that must be both focused and super-charged.

Future stores will need to be 'value adding' to consumers' lives in ways that Internet shopping can't. It requires stores to have more experiential, stimulating and fully engaging retail environments, engaging marketing and superior service.

Stores with a higher level of thought that offer a different type and level of social and emotional rewards to the functional benefits of speed, convenience and efficiency of online shopping. Stores that to some extent help to fill the physical, emotional and social emptiness that exists today as a result of technology, regardless of how socially-enabled, fantastically created or conveniently packaged it is.

In time this phase will, I believe, be cited by the period of 'hyper storytelling' where the brands that provide fully immersive narratives and an absorptive, integrated connection with shoppers (personalisation, customisation and community etc.), will win out.

To those who say that high street retail is dead, I say this: it is only boring, dull or irrelevant stores that die. I think we are on the cusp of an exciting new dawn and 'next

phase' of retail transformation, when high street stores progressively and dramatically reinvent and renew, ultimately providing better places, and more reasons to shop again instore.

As a frequent traveller to major global cities in my work for clients each year, I see this 'new wave' of exciting retail happening for real, transforming the shopper experience in retail developments and store openings worldwide.



Kit Kat Chocolatory,
Melbourne, Australia



Stores that are all demonstrating the emerging characteristics and hallmarks of this new wave of transformational thinking that's emerging now. The locations blend retailing with hospitality, with entertainment and new services. Connected, distinctive and differentiated. Places to shop, hang out, experiment, test, do and learn. Places to be introduced to a brand or to deepen their relationship and enjoy new experiences. All confirm the amazing, multi-sector opportunities for vibrant new high street, physical retail experiences. You can transact online but instore offers a place for so much more.

This is evidenced by the steady flow of originally online only disruptor brands who are now opening their own stores, recognising the benefits of having shops with 'street visibility' and a human connection to enhance their brand purpose, message and performance. From mattresses to underwear, cosmetics to organic farm produce; there is a new wave of online disruptors who are increasingly investing in opening their own stores. But doing things quite differently. Without the weight of history to hold them back, these brands are free to be courageous, bold, experimental and even 'curiosities' – with a fresh point of view, raw energy and vitality they are trying, doing and playing by new rules. And consumers are increasingly noticing and responding enthusiastically. Even Amazon, the 'prime disruptor' online, sees the value in the traditional retail model, whether with its own retail brand acquisitions (The Whole Foods Market) or its fledging entry into US high streets with its Books, Go and pop up store formats. This

is not one-way Internet only traffic.

For me, this phase of retail transformation is being marked by the escalation in revolutionary and radical thinking about how retail brands can create compelling store based, retail propositions that attract new consumers, as well as maintaining full engagement with existing shoppers. Of course, the added challenge is to integrate their online retail operations smoothly and cohesively within an overarching brand narrative, experience and service instore. This offers a clear path for brands into the heart and minds of consumers because, as humans, we are hardwired for storytelling, meaning, and exploring our own sense of purpose.

In future, stores will not be seen as things hurting the business but as helping to create stronger propositions and sales performance overall – a 'retail therapy' antidote to tedium, frustration and the considerable sensory limitations of two-dimensional online shopping. Engaging, social and human in its experience.

Retail is emerging 'phoenix like', with renewed confidence. And having worked with major retailers in recent months on instore transformation projects I am clear that visible and positive change is possible. Not in some distant future time... but in the here and now.



IKEA
Blue City Mall,
Warsaw, Poland

For anyone who wants to experience what the future of retail looks like instore, I recommend you visit the following stores. These are exciting places to be.

David Jones:
Sydney, Australia

Daylesford Organic:
Gloucester, UK

Gro: Warringah Mall
Sydney, Australia

Gucci:
SOHO, New York City, USA

IKEA:
Blue City Mall Warsaw, Poland

Kit Kat Chocolatory:
Melbourne, Australia

Levi's:
Times Square, New York City, USA

L'Occitane:
London, UK

Lush:
Liverpool One, Liverpool, UK

Muji: Pacific Place
Hong Kong, China

Nike: House of Innovation 0001
5th Avenue, New York City, USA

The Observatory:
Hudson Yards, New York City, USA

Restoration Hardware:
Chicago, USA

Singtel:
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New York City, USA.



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PSD2

What is it and is your business prepared for September 14th?



BY ROBERT DOHERTY, DIRECTOR OF PRODUCTS AT AIB MERCHANT SERVICES

Area. PSD2 looks to enhance the legislation so it works in the digital world we now live in. The objectives of PSD2 are the following.

- Protect our consumers against fraud
- Increase security
- Facilitate innovation, making it easier and safer to pay online
- Enhance competition within the digital payments market

The key takeaway from the above points is increased security. This will be enforced through Strong Customer Authentication (SCA) that will be introduced into the legislation on the 14th September 2019.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

SCA asks that in order to accept a transaction online, a business must have Two Factor Authentication (2FA) enabled during their payment process. This means that in order to pay, your customers must provide two of the following and you must be able to facilitate these processes.

WHAT SOLUTION DOES AIB MERCHANT SERVICES RECOMMEND FOR SCA?

If you take payments online you will be aware of 3D Secure, it's currently the most common way to authenticate a card payment

online. It requires the cardholder to enter an additional password when making a payment online (for example, Verified by Visa or Mastercard's SecureCode).

What AIB Merchant Services recommend retailers in Ireland use is 3D Secure V2. A new version of the authentication software that will meet requirements set by the legislation coming into effect on the 14th September 2019.

3D Secure V2 has been developed with your customers in mind. This means that many shortcomings that 3D Secure faced such as requiring your customers to remember a specific password have been re-developed. 3D Secure V2 aims to boost security, speed up authentication and improve drop off rates in your payment journey through a frictionless, consistent, mobile friendly user experience.

You'll be happy to know that if you currently accept payment methods such as Apple Pay or Google Pay online, these already support SCA as biometric authentication is involved. These are a great way for your business to offer a consumer friendly checkout experience while still meeting the new requirements.

WHAT ABOUT IN-STORE PAYMENTS?

For taking payments in store or when a card is present, contactless payments will remain for purchases under €30 and chip and pin will continue to be the common practice in the EEA for purchases above €30.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

In order to get set up, AIBMS recommend retailers who trade online contact their Payment Service Provider (PSP) with the above information and they will be able to ensure that as of September 14th 2019, your business will continue to safely and securely trade online.

If you or your business are operating in the world of e-commerce than you might have heard the term 'PSD2'. If not, don't worry, we all have until September 14th 2019 before the new legislation is brought into effect but we recommend that you start getting ready now.

To explain what PSD2 is let's first go back to PSD1 which came into legislation in 2001. This was introduced to regulate payment services and payment service providers throughout the EU and European Economic

A password, a pin number, memorable information



A registered mobile phone, card reader, key fob

A biometric factor such as face recognition or fingerprint



The **New** McCauley

THE FUTURE OF PHARMACY

McCauley, previously Sam McCauleys, is a household name in parts of Ireland, synonymous with trustworthy and familiar community pharmacies where you will find experts in front of and behind the counter.

The name McCauley is soon to become much more well known, however, as the business embarks on a significant growth strategy that will see its network of pharmacies double in size within five years and have a presence in every corner of the country.

FOUNDATIONAL ROOTS

McCauley Health & Beauty Pharmacy was founded in 1953 by the late G.B. McCauley who acquired the Brooke Kelly Pharmacy at 21 Rafter Street, Enniscorthy, Wexford which operated as a Pharmacy since 1900's. Over the next 40 years Sam McCauley Chemists grew into a thriving enterprise. Sam McCauley and his wife Leslie, both Pharmacists, joined the family business in 1978 maintaining the well-established 'family Chemist' culture, long nurtured by Sam's parents and staff.

Today McCauley Health & Beauty Pharmacy operates 35 stores nationally, employs over 600 staff.

CHANGING TIMES

While the McCauley brand is steeped in heritage, there recently was a recognition on the part of the management that it needed to move forward; that it was time for a change.

With customers increasingly shifting their spending habits to online, a bricks and mortar store now needs to be more than just a transactional venue to continue to attract customers. A physical store should serve as a brand-building environment in which customers can have special, in-person experiences that can't be achieved on digital platforms.

Therefore, to support its ambitious growth strategy, McCauley Health and Beauty Pharmacy made the decision to invest significantly in an overhaul of its brand, including store refits and store upgrades taking place throughout 2019.

McCauley is repositioning the brand to get closer to a new generation of customers with changing needs across beauty, health and medical care, and to stand out within an increasingly competitive market.

NEW LOOK AND FEEL

The overhaul of the McCauley brand provides the chain with an entirely fresh look and feel, including a newly designed logo, as well as premium in-store and shop-front displays, all inspired by the company's dedication to health, beauty and wellbeing which is encapsulated in the tag line: 'A better you, today'

Since the beginning of 2019, all newly opened stores trade under the McCauley Health and Beauty Pharmacy brand and will be fitted out accordingly, while the new brand will also be rolled out across all the pharmacy network's stores nationwide during the year.

Its new experiential stores embrace a diverse range of products and services, including Digital Photo Centres, Premium Cosmetics and Perfumery, Beauty Salons, and expanded Healthcare Services, in addition to the core traditional services provided by experienced friendly pharmacists and staff.

A REDEDICATION TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The new McCauley brand promise, underpinned by the values of integrity, loyalty, commitment and inventiveness, means customers will encounter experienced pharmacists in store, as well as expertly trained beauty teams, an enhanced range of beauty and skincare ranges, money-saving deals and access to a nationwide network bigger and better than before.

McCauley has now evolved every aspect of the business – health, beauty and pharmacy – to meet the changing needs of its customers.

Advances in personal medical care, nutrition and wellness advice means that people are now leading longer, healthier lives.

Recognising such a market shift, McCauley is positioning itself as a leader in the self-healthcare space, empowering customers to make better lifestyle choices.

REVOLUTIONISING THE IN-STORE EXPERIENCE

The customer is at the heart of the McCauley rebrand and the new look and feel and store layout has been driven and designed with their purchase journey in mind.

McCauley stores are now personalised at every level, with tailored shop fronts on the main streets of local towns, high streets and shopping centres, but also in terms of the services being offered.

Each McCauley store provides a unique mix of trusted pharmacist expertise alongside consumer experiences that will drive customer loyalty, and premium and cult beauty brands to attract all generations.

An agile, customer-centric approach to store format redesign, combined with niche partnerships, exclusive launches, cult product social media marketing and selected national sponsorships has enabled McCauley to create a brand that delivers special, in-person experiences.

The new McCauley stores are pushing boundaries and delivering the best in expert health and wellness advice and products as well as catering to the beauty lovers in search of the latest products. There's an exciting journey ahead for McCauley Pharmacy as Ireland's experts in the field of pharmacy, health, beauty and skincare.



Public Affairs

UPDATE

INSURANCE

There was no disputing the single issue that captured the imagination – and the ire – of the entire country over recent months, that issue being spurious insurance claims. In the wake of the ‘swing gate’ controversy in the Dean Hotel, there was a sense of outrage that TDs were getting on the compo gravy train, without thought for the impact of spiralling premiums on business and society. We felt compelled to use social media to be critical of Deputy Bailey’s actions and judging from the volume of likes and responses, we tapped into the mood of our members and the public.

Insurance reform has long been at the top of our public affairs agenda. Key to our strategy is our membership of the strongest, most influential lobbying group on the issue, the Alliance for Insurance Reform. Joining together with other affected industries is the most effective way to challenge the opponents to reform, who are well resourced. The Alliance has been instrumental in leading the media narrative on insurance, effecting legislative change to date and maintaining pressure on Government to deliver on their promises.

In April, a member delegation led by chairman Joe Barrett met the Minister for State at the Department of Finance responsible for insurance reform, Michael D’Arcy TD. In a very constructive meeting, we took the opportunity to explain the impact of insurance premiums on retailers, and listened to the Minister’s advice on what he needed from Retail Excellence to help the case for reform.

As well as working within the Alliance, we have secured media coverage to draw attention to the chronic situation pertaining to many of our members with rocketing premiums. Every piece of coverage secured places incremental pressure on legislators, and we understand that the cause of retailers is definitely getting noticed in Leinster House. Expect to see more stories from the retail industry in press coverage over the summer months.

At time of writing, Retail Excellence is convening an urgent members event on the subject of insurance reform, to be held in our offices in Leopardstown, Dublin on 25 June. If the many emails and calls we have received

are anything to go by, unfortunately we expect to hear numerous accounts of how a failed, out-of-control insurance market is bringing viable, successful indigenous retail businesses to their knees. The public, our politicians and those vested interests who seek to defend the indefensible need to hear those stories from our industry.

Spiralling insurance costs are just one of the factors driving the rapidly increasing costs of maintaining a retail store as a going concern just now. The announcements of closures and job losses from Arcadia Group were widely reported in May, and in radio interviews at the time, Retail Excellence identified unsustainable retail rents as one of the major factors that led to Arcadia’s challenges.

PROPERTY COSTS

If the current rent regime is allowed to continue, then unfortunately we predict more closures and job losses, particularly from stores that opened in Ireland pre-2010, when the legislation was enacted to ban upward-only rent reviews. The Arcadia Group found itself in that position, paying rents that bore no relation to turnover or competition from online platforms, while tied into 45-year leases.

What’s required here is a complete re-calibration of the retail rental market to establish leases that are fair and sustainable, and to do this we need Government intervention, similar to what happened in 2010. Allowing market forces to determine rental costs will eventually work, but at a cost of many more store closures, lost Exchequer revenue and deserted high streets. Our proposals on this will form part of our pre-Budget submission.

POP-UP FOOD MARKETS

Over recent weeks, Retail Excellence has been working on your behalf to bring all these legitimate concerns to the attention of our politicians, to effect change that benefits our industry. The Oireachtas Cross-Party Working Group on Retail, convened by Retail Excellence, is a particularly effective



Pictured at the Cross Party Oireachtas Retail Committee are Jan O’Sullivan TD, Karen Lynn, Freshii Sandyford, Senator Maria Byrne and Bryan Rankin, Head of Public Affairs, Retail Excellence



Our meeting to address insurance reform included Michael D'Arcy TD, Minister of State at the Department of Finance, Louise Rowell, Legal Director, Mr. Price and Joe Barrett, Chief Operations Officer, Applegreen PLC

forum to represent your interests, and is chaired by Fianna Fail Deputy Leader Dara Calleary TD.

We also used our last Oireachtas meeting to detail an ongoing problem for food and beverage retailers, pop-up food markets. In one instance in South Dublin, planning permission was recently granted for pop-up markets for three days a week, right beside an established food outlet and Retail Excellence member retailer.

An Bord Pleanála supported the original decision, so our member has exhausted the appeals process. We will be writing to the Bord and to the planning authority in support of our member, and have also pressed to have historic legislation on casual trading reviewed and updated. After all, it's businesses like our members that fund our local authorities, and it's high time for this particular penny to drop.

SMEs

Even aside from the important representational work involved in the issues referred to above, there were plenty of other issues and developments in the public affairs space on which to report. One worthy item that slipped under the radar in May was the

launch of a Seanad Public Consultation Report on SMEs, led by committee chairman Senator Paul Coghlan and Rapporteur Senator Pádraig Ó Céidigh.

It's an impressive piece of work, with over 130 recommendations including a call for a new junior minister to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs), entrepreneurial education in primary school and supports for female entrepreneurs. The report includes a review of the strengths and challenges in the retail industry and a list of policy recommendations for retail, all of which we support. We're calling on government to accept the report as a blueprint for future planning for small businesses, of which retail represents is the biggest part.

BREXIT

It seems the dreaded B word – Brexit – is never too far away, and the latest date for the UK's departure from the European Union is 31 October, an inauspicious date by any measure. For many retailers the date could not be worse, bringing uncertainty ahead of the most important quarter of the year for trading, Cyber Week and Black Friday. We met Minister Heather Humphreys as part of the Retail Consultation Forum in May, and

heard her concerns that Irish business will react to preparing for Brexit a second time. Retail Excellence has published an Irish Retail Guide to Brexit which is available in the members section of the website, and it remains instructive in highlighting the simple steps every business should undertake to be prepared.

RETAIL EXCELLENCE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Finally, 28 May saw the first meeting of the Leadership Council of Retail Excellence, a new governance structure that brings together some of the leading lights in Irish retail. The objectives of the new group are to advise and challenge our new board, guide our strategy and be truly representative of every sector within the industry.

Our first meeting, which took place in the Guinness Storehouse in Dublin, was a very valuable session that planned the future of Retail Excellence in the context of a rapidly changing retail environment. Going forward, the Council will meet four times a year and will be an extremely important resource for our organisation and the wider industry. Our thanks to everyone that attended.



store focus.....
COUNTY BOUTIQUE
O'CONNELL STREET, ENNIS

Store Name: County Boutique

Store Location: O'Connell Street, Ennis

Store Size: 1,500 sq ft

Date of Opening: October 1966

Most Recent Fitout: Current store makeover completing in July

Employee Number: 10

Store Managers: Gwen Culligan & Maeve Flouch



How would you best describe the store position in the market?

County Boutique is a mid-market/ premium brand 2nd generation family business on O'Connell Street in Ennis, with merchandise segmented over 2 floors. We happily exist in a town full of first class independent retailers, which makes Ennis a great place to visit and shop. As the 1st boutique of its kind in Ennis, County Boutique sold Mary Quant style mini-dresses to teenagers and nighties to their grannies. The sophisticated customers of today, who once wore platforms on their feet, now engage with us on our digital platforms, browsing our Facebook styling videos, Instagram stories and our online store, before coming to shop with us for the touchy feely experience that underpins our business ethos.

What are the stores key design features?

The 1700's three bay stone faced building has a classic black granite shop front which has stood the test of time, both in terms of maintenance and a sense of solidity. Behind this ancient facade the store tripled in size when re-built in 1995. Black on the outside, in 2005 we turned pink on the inside and shades of pink have been our backdrop throughout the store ever since. We recently installed a bespoke welcome wall as you enter the store and, yes, it is pink! Customers love it and it is so instagrammable! Before the last store makeover, aware that a lot of customers did not know that we had a 1st floor, our designers came up with the idea to mirror the entire wall on the stairs. This is a key element to the success of the 1st floor departments.

What aspects of the store are you most proud of?

Of the physical store, we are really proud of

our window displays. Luckily, having a great big picture window on the side of the street without parking, we enjoy creating window displays each season, drawing inspiration from the collections we buy, browsing Pinterest and visiting top international stores while on buying trips and holidays. We often hear "I nearly crashed the car, do you have that dress on the window in my size?" In terms of the ether, it took us a long time to get over the online hurdle and, since last November, we are delighted to be selling online @ www.countyboutique.ie. In its infancy, we look forward to seeing it grow!

In overall terms, we would have to say that we are most proud of our colleagues, some of whose long term commitment to the business has been remarkable. With our latest team member having started in February, we have between us over 150 years of County Boutique experience. We are happy to say that we are still learning every day.

Describe the seasonal nature of the business?

December is the busiest month of the year for us, followed by March, October, September and April. Usually, our quietest month is February! However, it is beginning to catch up as customers jet off to sunnier climes in springtime.

Please define your typical customer who shops in your store?

Eventwear: This customer is someone looking for something a little different. Her style is classic with a twist. We source stand out quality pieces, sometimes just 3 or 4 of a style, so that she has a pretty exclusive item that she is unlikely to meet at her event. That we buy from over 40 brands means we have

variety and a point of difference to our competitors. Supporting Irish makers and Irish designers is also important to our customers. County Boutique supports approximately 10 Irish brands every season, including this season, Ekotree Cashmere, made in Doolin, Co. Clare!

Workwear: Our business customer often has a hectic schedule and is time poor. She may make an appointment and beforehand we will put together a capsule wardrobe for her to choose from. We often send a box of goodies to regular customers and will collect whatever is not required.

Daywear: Lifestyle brands steeped in a culture of colour and texture bring the ground floor to life and this customer is a more relaxed individual, who enjoys wearing colourful, high quality, comfortable clothes every day.

What are the future plans for the store and the wider company?

Content, for now, with two bricks and mortar stores (Nenagh store opened in 2014) and the online portal, completion of the facelift in Ennis, expansion and promotion of the online offer and further development of the personal shopping concept are the goals. We will collaborate with local events such as the Ennis Book Club Festival, having had the pleasure of hosting stylist, author and journalist, Anne Marie O'Connor last March. More than just a store, we are a venue!

We also understand the need to be agile in the constantly changing environment that is retail and the world we live in, so providing memorable experiences and embracing technology instore will also be at the core of future plans for County Boutique.

THE NEWS



The very impressive Lush flagship.

LUSH OPENS BIGGEST EVER STORE IN LIVERPOOL

Lush have recently opened their biggest ever flagship store, an incredible 15,000 sq. ft. format in Liverpool City Centre. The store spans three floors and includes a spa, an in-store florist, a hair lab, a perfume library and a make your own cosmetics lab. Commenting on the opening, Lush CEO, Mark Constantine said: "As a company we have always been highly creative and that has driven us in everything we do. It's very early days but the sales are very strong, so we will see what works and what doesn't and engage with landlords in our other stores to change what we can based on that." The company plans to open one hundred new stores in the US market over the next three years and also plans to significantly increase its presence in Japan.

SKECHERS OPENS NEXT GEN STORE IN GALWAY

Skechers celebrated the launch of their 20th Irish store with an in-store event at William Street, Galway. The Galway store event was hosted by the retailer's Irish brand ambassador Pippa O'Connor. "I'm thrilled to

be working with Skechers again this year to showcase some of my favourite styles", said Pippa. Since its first store opening in 2010 at Henry Street, Dublin, the franchise retailer has gone from strength to strength. "It's another exciting step forward for Skechers in the Irish market and a testament to the brand's growing appeal for the Irish consumer" said Corkman Paul Gallagher, Managing Director of the Irish Skechers franchise. Founded in 1992 and headquartered today in Manhattan Beach, California, the Skechers brand has revamped its footwear lines to include more youthful,



Tara O'Farrell, Louise Cooney and Pippa O'Connor were on hand to open the new store.

trend-forward styles, amplifying its already hugely successful comfort offering.

COUNTERFEIT GOODS REPORT POINTS TO SERIOUS LOSSES

A recent report by the European Union Intellectual Property Office has found that €909 million are lost in annual Irish retail revenue due to the availability of counterfeit goods. The report focuses on the impact the sale of counterfeit goods has on businesses across the EU, both in terms of lost sales and jobs. In 2018, €60 billion in retail sales were lost across Europe, while up to 468,000 jobs are directly lost. In Ireland counterfeit clothing and accessories accounts for a loss of €323 million in 2018 with counterfeit cosmetics and personal care items totalling €98m.

IZMOO GELATO WINS BIG

Congratulations to Izmo Gelato who recently won the IBYE Best Start-up in the Northeast. The awards programme is run by the Local Enterprise Office network. The innovative Gelato store based in Drogheda is causing quite a stir and big growth plans are afoot. Commenting on the win owner Orla Stafford said: "I am absolutely delighted with this win. It is down to a great team and so many other supporters. We are very excited for the future and are looking at other locations to open more stores."

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Celebrating Blaine Callard's ten years in Ireland were David Fitzsimons, Retail Excellence, Gina London, former CNN news anchor and Blaine Callard.

details on how to apply are available at www.enterprise-ireland.com/retail or interested parties can email retail@enterprise-ireland.com.

Caption: The launch at Golden Discs shore in St Stephens Green were Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation Heather Humphreys TD, DP Fitzgerald, Director, Golden Discs, Bryan Rankin, Head of Public Affairs at Retail Excellence and Stephen Hughes, Head of Consumer, Enterprise Ireland.

BLAINE CALLARD DEPARTS IRELAND

Harvey Norman Ireland Chief Executive, Blaine Callard is soon to depart of shores and return to his native Australia. Callard oversaw the turnaround of Harvey Norman in Ireland over the past ten years. Commenting on Mr. Callard's departure, David Fitzsimons, Group Chief Executive Retail Excellence said: "We will miss Blaine greatly when he leaves for Australia. What an amazing job he has done in turning around the fortunes of Harvey Norman Ireland. He has been a great ambassador for the Irish Retail Industry and has been a great support to me personally. So many of our members got to know Blaine well and he will be missed."

BOOHOO REVENUES SURGES BY 39%

United Kingdom based fast fashion retailer Boohoo recently reported that its revenues grew by 39% like for like in the three months to the end of May. Over that period revenues grew to a startling £254.3million. The group achieved strong revenue growth across all geographies with sales in the UK up 27% and international sales up 56%.

Its gross margin was 55%. Founded fourteen years ago in Manchester, Boohoo has expanded quickly, listing its shares in 2014 and buying the PrettyLittleThing and Nasty Gal brands in 2017. Boohoo shares are trading up 42% so far this year.

RETAILERS WELCOME CALL TWO OF EI ONLINE RETAIL SCHEME

Retail Excellence has welcomed the launch last month of the second call of the Enterprise Ireland-led pilot Online Retail Scheme. The €1.25m fund is targeted at online retailers to encourage acceleration of their online offerings. The funding can be used to invest in research, strategy development, implementation and training. Closing date for applications is Wednesday, 31st July 2019. Bryan Rankin, Head of Public Affairs with Retail Excellence, noted that the funding will give Irish retailers the resources to respond to external challenges in a difficult post-Brexit environment, flat

consumer confidence and increasing business costs. While many smaller retailers have fantastic products and services that will appeal to international customers, they need to invest in eCommerce platforms and get expert advice. Rankin stated: "Retail Excellence has been working with Enterprise Ireland and the Department for several years to make the case for dedicated funding to support Irish retailers to secure a greater slice of lucrative online trade, so the announcement of Call 2 was much-anticipated. We have been vocal in calling for retailers to receive the same sort of financial backing to exploit international markets as that made available to manufacturers." Further information on the scheme and



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the *numbers*



500

The number of The Works stores in the UK and Ireland following the opening of its 500th store in Winchester UK

The percentage of customers who want to see retailers reduce plastic packaging according to a recent survey

87

300

The amount in millions of pounds sterling which Debenhams pays annually for rent and rates

The number of years which grocery retailer Sainsbury's has traded

150

90

The percentage decline in like for like profits at retailer Asos

The millions of pounds sterling EBITDA recorded by JD Sports

488

70

The millions of euros a five-year contract is worth to JZ Flowers to supply Aldi Ireland stores



The DO'S & DON'TS OF eCOMMERCE



Nick Butler.

Whether you're new to selling online or you're a seasoned eCommerce pro, you've probably already heard hundreds of tips and titbits to help you sell more. While helpful information is always a good thing, it can be hard to sift through the clutter and find the most fundamental pieces of advice to boost your success online.

At Ireland Website Design, we've built over 100 online shops, we're Retail Excellence's online partners and we're also part of an international mastermind group aimed at helping companies perform better online, connect with their audience and ultimately increase their profits.

New online shops are popping up daily, making it increasingly difficult to set yourself apart from the competition and win the loyalty of online shoppers.

Online shoppers are impatient. They're shopping online because they are looking for a quick way to find and get what they want. So, what can you do to get people to buy from you? Make sure your eCommerce website is up to the task by reading (and implementing) our advice on the do's and don'ts of eCommerce web design below.

DO - KEEP IT SIMPLE

There's a reason why the K.I.S.S. principle is so popular. It works!

If you overload your site's visitors with too much information, they'll leave and go somewhere else. Ever step into a messy storeroom and just get instantly overwhelmed? It's the same feeling for online shoppers when they go to a website with 100 features on the home page.

When too many things are competing for your visitor's attention - too many blocks of text, too many images, too many calls to action, or too much of anything in general - they get distracted. If they can't find what they're looking for, they leave.

As an online retailer, you'll want to keep the

path to purchasing a seamless, enjoyable experience - without any hurdles or distractions along the way.

DON'T - EXPECT SUCCESS OVERNIGHT

If making a successful, profitable online shop was quick and easy, there would be an awful lot more of them online!

Between building your website, establishing a reputable brand, earning customer trust and getting repeat custom, it can take months and even years of steady marketing and quality customer service to reach your goals.

Don't get discouraged if orders don't pour in immediately after launching your store.

Getting noticed in the crowded online marketplace can take some time - achieving sales success can take even longer.

DO - CARE ABOUT SEO

SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) is the process of getting more traffic to your site from the 'organic' (i.e. not paid) search results. SEO, when done the right way, can help your site rank higher in search results for search phrases related to your business.

There are so many techniques that fall under the SEO umbrella, they could have their own article!

One of the most important things you can do today to help your search engine rank is to write unique product descriptions for your products. Many retailers just copy and paste from other sites (which is terrible for SEO). Your website is your 24/7 salesperson, get those product descriptions selling for you!

By making a conscious effort to learn more about SEO and implement best practice onto your website, you can get a serious leg up on your competition. Like most things online, SEO is not a magical switch you turn on and you get the number one spot on Google instantly! Good SEO takes time and continuous effort.

DON'T - HIDE SHIPPING FEES

This is one of the leading causes of online shoppers abandoning their shopping cart and not completing their purchase. Hiding fees (shipping, gift-wrapping, taxes, any additional cost) from a shopper until the moment they pay will really reduce the trust they have in you and can push them away from you shopping with you again.

Whether you charge for shipping or not is up to you – it's not the actual shipping that puts people off, it's the feeling of being 'strung along' and then surprised with an unexpected charge.

The best thing to do is show your delivery costs prominently on your product pages.

DO - MAKE SURE EVERYTHING WORKS

Test everything on your site. I can't stress this enough!

The whole point most people shop online is convenience and less stress. Nothing is more infuriating than when something doesn't work on a website.

Imagine searching the web for the product you want, finally finding a shop that has it in stock, at the right price, ready for delivery – only to find their 'add to cart' button doesn't work. Credibility and trust in that company gone.

Test your website works. This includes

contact forms, buttons, videos, links to other pages and of course your ordering process with different payment methods.

DON'T - IGNORE CUSTOMER SERVICE

You already know your customer service needs to be amazing. But you also need to maintain the same standards online. How? Quick email/query response times, having someone capable of handling customer disputes in a professional manner and offering instant chat support on your website.

If your customers can shop online, they're can leave reviews online too. Great customer service leads to good online reviews – an unhappy customer will leave bad reviews, everywhere.

DO - KEEP AT IT!

The key to running a successful online shop? Keep at it.

Update your website, run promotions, invest in SEO, invest in online marketing, talk to your customers and keep up to date with the latest trends and techniques in the eCommerce world.

If you'd like to see how your current website measures up, we're offering Retail Excellence members exclusive access to our 91 Point Website Checklist. We use this checklist when we audit websites to make sure they're hitting all the right notes to get people buying.

It's completely free – just email me at nick@irelandwebsitedesign.com to get your copy.

Ireland Website Design has been helping retailers unlock hidden revenue in their businesses since 2010. A full-service digital agency, they specialise in providing Irish

retailers with strategy, design, content, development and marketing services.

CASE STUDY

Redlane.ie

Established in 2005, Redlane is a global destination for customers seeking a quirky and diverse mix of boutique and high street branded clothing.

In 2019, they teamed up with Ireland Website Design to revitalise their website.

The newly launched website brings the boutique fashion store's first-class service and playful fashion options to online shoppers around the world. Combining innovative front-end design with problem-solving solutions in the backend, Redlane.ie is designed to delight customers and staff alike.

The site is now fully integrated with their in-store EPOS. Redlane staff have found the site much easier to use with admin tasks taking much less time out of the workday.

They have more control over the look and functionality of the site.

The site has been live for four months and sales have increased by 15% on the previous year.

Traffic to the site has increased and thanks to a successful email marketing campaign, visitors are now coming in from email campaigns.

Repeat customers levels have raised from 20% to 40% in the four months since the site launched.

Feedback from both staff and customers has been incredibly positive.

WANT TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS?

89% of SMEs with a website say it plays an important role in generating new business or sales.

Get a .ie website to make sure your customers can find you online.

It's easy and fast to get a .ie online address – you only need to provide one document proving a connection to Ireland. Returning customers do not need to re-submit any documents.





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Visitor Retail Issues

IF THE RECENT RETAIL RETREAT & EXPO HAD MANY NOTEWORTHY SESSIONS, ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT AND WELL-ATTENDED WAS A DISCUSSION FORUM ON THE CRISIS FACING MANY OF OUR VISITOR RETAIL MEMBERS. IN PLANNING FOR THE RETREAT, IT WAS OPPORTUNE TO INVITE MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN AN EVENT DEVOTED TO THOSE INVOLVED OR EXPOSED TO VISITOR RETAIL BUSINESS, TO DISCUSS THE VARIOUS ISSUES AND DECISIONS THAT, TAKEN TOGETHER, ARE HAVING A SEVERELY NEGATIVE IMPACT ON OUR MEMBERS.

The decision taken earlier this year by Dublin Port to all but cull our cruise ship industry was also discussed and recognised as an issue of national strategic importance. From Retail Excellence's recent meeting with Dublin Port representatives, it's clear that freight trumps cruise traffic in Dublin Port's plans, even though it's estimated that cruise visitors spend in excess of €50 million annually in every part of the country. If cruise ships no longer visit Dublin, other ports in Cork, Belfast and elsewhere will also be hard hit. Yet it seems that Dublin Port's unilateral decision is being accepted and its rationale accepted unquestioningly.

The discussion heard from Mary Keane, award winning Store Manager in the



The Dublin Port decision will cost the Irish economy at minimum €50million per annum

Kilkenny Store on the decrease in footfall and turnover in shops all along Nassau Street, as a result of the absence of regulated tourist coach drop-off and pick up. The major drop in tourist numbers means that the future viability of several iconic retailers are now in doubt, and these stores asked Retail Excellence to urgently bring the matter to Dublin City Council.

Attendees were clearly frustrated and believed that the sector is being neglected and their plight ignored by local and national government. Understandably, they wanted to know what Retail Excellence proposed to do to support them. Since the Retreat, Retail Excellence has been very active on behalf of visitor-facing retail. On Nassau Street coach regulation, we have had a constructive meeting with Dublin City Council and indications are that some regulation will be introduced this summer to bring increased tourist numbers back to the vicinity. We also secured several items of press coverage to bring attention to the issue and explain the

huge in suing impact on our members.

We also continued to convey the anger on the cruise ship front in the media, with several items of press coverage secured. Additionally, as members of the All-Ireland Alliance For Cruise Ships, in late May Retail Excellence gave evidence to the Oireachtas Transport & Tourism Committee and made the case for retailers. We anticipate that a meeting with Minister Shane Ross and with Dublin Port will follow shortly.

We'll continue to work towards solutions to these issues, but the fundamental problem is that our state agencies and Government ignore the central role of retail in the Irish tourism proposition. Our sector is simply overlooked, without a seat at the decisions table. To overcome this will require our time, influence and contacts, but Retail Excellence is clear that this must be our goal, to ensure our visitor retail members' interests are protected and validated.

HOW TO REDUCE YOUR INSURANCE COSTS



Dr. Paul Cummins,
Managing Director,
SeaChange Ltd.

Despite the rising costs of insurance for high-footfall commercial business, some organisations are bucking the trend and have experienced insurance premium reductions.

The Furey Smyth Group took a proactive approach and focused on the safety risks and hazards within their control in their retail business. They partnered with SeaChange in 2015 with the goal to improve their group's safety culture, reduce the likelihood of accidents and claims, and manage their rising insurance costs.

"I knew I had to be proactive in managing risk throughout our retail group. Safety is often treated as a box-ticking exercise and we weren't happy with that – we wanted to go further and bring safety to life in our business so that our people felt accountable for their own safety and the safety of our customers. We engaged with SeaChange, the experts in behaviour-based safety solutions, and the rest is history" **Chris Furey, Owner Director, Furey Smyth Group**

The Furey Smyth Group comprises 7 Eurospar sites that serve loyal customers nationwide. The Furey Smyth Group pride themselves on customer service, operational best practice and providing a best-in-class retail experience serving communities across Ireland. In 2015 Chris knew he had to do something about insurance costs which had spiralled out of control and which were on an unsustainable upward trend. He realised that he had to separate his business from the herd

in terms of how the group managed risk from an operational and safety perspective.

SeaChange, an Irish-based company, specialise in providing behaviour-based risk management systems in partnership with clients that span multiple sectors including retail.

"We know that 80-95% of accidents are behaviour-based and to manage risk effectively and sustainably it is critical to impact behaviour. Ticking the compliance box is never enough when it comes to something as fundamental as safety, and certainly in today's business environment where Ireland has the highest claim culture in Europe, it is critical that organisations protect themselves by investing in their people and processes, and by creating safe habits" **Dr. Paul Cummins, Managing Director, SeaChange Ltd.**

SeaChange provide visual, interactive and practical systems that bring safety best practice to life. A key aspect of the SeaChange approach is their client portal which enables client sites to track their progress, log proactive safety KPIs, trend near misses and update their safety compliance. SeaChange don't just provide a system and walk away; they support clients towards improved performance and audit them annually to measure safety culture progress. They also provide key reports and recommendations to help clients manage their rising insurance costs.

Many of the top insurance companies recognise the best-practice approach that SeaChange takes because it gets tangible results: average before and after client results following full implementation of the SeaChange system include a 50% reduction in accidents, 42% reduction in claim frequency and a 40% reduction in claim costs. Insurers also value how SeaChange respond to market requirements with

innovative solutions in order to improve client risk profile.

Since 2015 Chris and his management team have implemented two SeaChange Solutions across their group: the Risk Management System and the CAYGO® Digital Slip, Trip and Fall Management System. The effort invested by the Furey Smyth Group gained a significant return. The group has reduced their accident and claim rates by over 75% since partnering with SeaChange, and as a result while most retailers are experiencing increases in their insurance premiums the Furey Smyth Group has made considerable savings on their premium in each of the last 2 years. The group has also successfully defended liability claims as a result of their proactive use of the visual SeaChange system which provides proof of key safety training and local knowledge transfer on a routine basis.

"We are delighted that we were able to effectively improve our safety culture through SeaChange and as a result defend ourselves where appropriate and reduce our insurance costs so that we can continue to re-invest in other areas of our business" **Chris Furey, Owner Director, Furey Smyth Group**

The Furey Smyth Group have set themselves apart from the herd by investing in safety culture systems that target the main risk factors in high-footfall sectors through a partnership with SeaChange. The group are always focused on continuous improvement from an operations perspective and adopt innovative solutions that lead to real change. Safety culture is a continuous journey that requires attention to remain sustainable, but the Furey Smyth Group are leading the way in the retail space and are reaping the rewards as a result in terms of increased staff awareness, increased defensibility, reduced accidents and significantly reduced insurance premium rates.

EUROSPAR

“I knew I had to be proactive in managing risk throughout our retail group.”

Chris Furey, Owner Director,
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Store Design of the *FUTURE* with cash in mind....

Retail Excellence chat to David O'Meara, Sales Director with Glory about their tips on improving the customer experience while also minimizing loss.

There are several reasons why you should think about cash technology in your store, especially in an economic environment which means the retailer needs to be fully efficient to thrive.

Store design is also not just about aesthetically pleasing shops but it's also making your store design work to give faster transactions which will help reduce queues in busy stores.

Store Design is also about minimizing the amount of time that your employees spend handling cash can help bring better

efficiencies in the workforce. Avoid your staff spending unnecessary time on checking the day's till or struggling with counting change where manual counting can be prone to errors and discrepancies.

Manual cash handling always brings a certain worry for employees, which can impact their work performance. By removing the responsibility for cash, the employee avoids levels of concern in their job and can focus on other things, such as providing good service to your customers.

Removing the manual handling of cash by



the staff can also prevent hygiene issues. Stores such as pharmacies, butchers and convenience stores will all switch from handling cash and coin directly to automated change.

In automating your front-office cash handling, your business can eliminate counterfeit notes, minimise in-store cash exposure, significantly reduce your teams man hours dedicated to cash, and benefit from a full audit trail on all transactions.

The store design of the future will optimise for the experience by automation of note and change giving by our front office cash recycling systems. It will allow team members in store to spend more time interacting with the customer and giving them that final WOW moment before leaving. It will team members to focus on other value adding activities such as loyalty club sign up, gift wrapping and final product cross selling.

Store Design with the right technology can help turn your business from transaction takers to day makers, with a little help from Glory!

In retail, downtime is money walking out the door.

How long will your customers wait in line if the till crashes and the card machine is down?

Consumers are going cashless, so a network outage means missed sales, disgruntled customers, idle employees and lost revenue.



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UNDERSTANDING THAT YOUR EMPLOYEES HAVE PSYCHOLOGICAL

CONTRACTS

● ● ● ● ● WITH YOUR BUSINESS CAN
CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR BOTTOM LINE

Following the enactment of the Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2018 in March of this year, there has been a lot of focus on contracts of employment and ensuring that the 5 core employment terms are issued within 5 days.



Tracy O'Brien,
Chairperson Retail
Excellence HR Committee.

However, during this time of almost full employment and a new war for talent, employers must be mindful of the other type of employment contract which exists with every employee in every organisation – the Psychological Contract.

The Psychological Contract is an unwritten

work agreement between an employee and the Company covering the expectations of both parties. These expectations can arise from overt promises such as bonus systems or training programmes discussed in the selection process, an employee witnessing other employees' experiences, an employee's interpretation of patterns during their own dealings with the Company and other factors such as perceived fairness.

Whilst Psychological Contracts are unwritten and implied, they do govern your employees behaviour regarding commitment, intention to stay, discretionary effort, policy adherence and lived values. So, nurturing positive Psychological Contracts can foster these behaviours. Neglecting to do so will have a negative effect on the bottom line through attrition, poor customer service and negative attitudes. These are all behaviours which can potentially lead to disciplinary sanctions requiring management time and a negative impact on culture and Company ethos.

Breaches of Psychological Contracts are common and occur when the employee perceives that something expected was not received, which in turn reduces his or her contribution to the organisation. Their Colleagues will also be aware of the perceived breach and are therefore open to

being influenced to display the negative attitude associated with breaches.

Breaches most frequently occur in relation to training and development, compensation and promotion and the most likely reasons for the breach are unmet expectations, lack of trust, perceived lack of fairness, role ambiguity and poor relationships.

Preventing a perceived breach is easier than repairing the damage later on. So, what can you do to protect your bottom line and ensure that you do not unwittingly breach your employees' psychological contract with your business;

1. Understand and manage their expectations from the recruitment and selection process not just from day 1 Induction
2. Understand and manage expectations on an ongoing basis via team meetings, one to one meetings and general communications
3. Communicate with your team effectively, consistently and in a timely manner.
4. Listen to what your team has to say and let them know they've been heard
5. Build resilience in your team so that they can better manage change and challenges
6. Ensure common standards are applied across your business so that there is no perception that people are treated differently in different areas of the business or that different standards apply.
7. Have a clear Employee Value Proposition/ Employer Brand.
8. Have fair access to Training and Development opportunities

REASONS

TO CONSIDER

INVESTING YOUR PENSION IN **PROPERTY**

Through good times and bad, Ireland's appetite for bricks and mortar has never wavered. Buying or investing in direct property offers a range of benefits including a reassuring solidity – whatever your stage in life. For many people, investing in property through a pension fund is a viable and attractive option. There are a number of reasons for this.

One of the main motivations for people to invest in property is the possibility of generating a steady income over a long period of time. Now that property values are once again accelerating upwards, particularly in Dublin, investors can reasonably expect an attractive yield and a potential uplift in value.

THE BENEFITS OF BRICKS AND MORTAR

As with property values, rent levels continue to rise, again with sky-high demand in the capital pushing Dublin rents 6.8% higher than a year ago (Daft.ie Q1 2019). This trend does not look like reversing.

Here, a key benefit of investing your pension pot in a rental property is that you will pay no income tax on any rent received within the pension fund. All rental income is ring-fenced within the pension fund.

If you subsequently decide to sell the investment property, the pension fund will not have to pay capital gains tax (CGT) on the transaction. As CGT currently stands at 33%, this is potentially a significant saving.

A sometimes-overlooked benefit of investing in property through a pension fund is that you are using funds that have not been subject to income tax – this gives you greater bang for your buck when deciding what type of property, you wish to invest in.

POTENTIAL PITFALLS: WHY YOU MUST CONSIDER CAREFULLY

As with any investment, there are potential drawbacks too. A pension fund cannot be accessed until you reach retirement (typically age 60). You can access a lump sum and then have the option to purchase an annuity or transfer the remaining balance to an Approved Retirement Fund (ARF). Annuity income is subject to income tax and universal social charge (USC) and any withdrawals from an ARF may be subject to income tax, USC and PRSI. ARFs are subject to mandatory annual taxable withdrawals depending on your age and the size of the ARF.

The minimum entry level for investing in direct property is high and this could impact

on your liquidity, for example if you need to use all or nearly all your pension fund to invest. There are also high ongoing costs associated with property, both expected (insurance, maintenance, etc.) and unexpected (nasty surprises!).

Before committing, you will also need to consider your overall investment strategy. After investing in the property, will your portfolio be adequately diversified? Is there a risk your pension fund will be over-concentrated in property? Will your investment leave you with sufficient liquidity to maintain your lifestyle? These are vitally important considerations to be talked through with a qualified adviser.

HOW TO INVEST IN PROPERTY THROUGH YOUR PENSION

If you decide that the pros of property investment through a pension fund outweigh the cons, the first step is to ensure you have a self-administered pension arrangement that gives you control over your options (as opposed to having a fund manager making



decisions for you). This can be either a self-administered scheme, a PRSA (personal retirement savings account), a PRB (personal retirement bond) or, if you have already retired, an ARF (approved retirement fund).

As you would expect, there are strict Revenue rules around investing in property through a pension fund. In the first instance, your pension fund cannot invest in a property that you own yourself or one that is owned by anyone 'connected' to you (e.g. an employer or relative). Similarly, your pension fund cannot then sell the property to a connected person (including yourself).

Property development for the purposes of a quick sale is prohibited, while the property must be commercial or residential (your financial adviser will run through these options with you).

CAN YOUR PENSION FUND BORROW?

As long as you don't have an ARF then yes, you can borrow – subject to certain restrictions and some proposed changes (please refer to IORP II below). Only assets purchased by the loan can be used to provide security to the lender, for example you cannot assign rental income to the bank as a means of repayment.

The loan should be repaid in full prior to the normal retirement age. And, while banks have loosened up considerably in this area in recent years, you cannot take out an interest-only loan or borrow for a period of more than 15 years.

IORP II

A new EU directive on the activities and supervision of institutions for occupational retirement provision (IORP II) will be transposed into Irish law shortly. IORPs are

funded occupational Defined Benefit and Defined Contribution pension schemes including small self-administered schemes.

Under this directive, scheme's assets must be predominantly invested in regulated markets, therefore direct property investments will be restricted. In addition, borrowing will only be allowable for liquidity purposes and only on a temporary basis which will affect a scheme's ability to borrow for direct property.

It is important to note that other pension structures like PRSAs, Personal Pensions and Buy out Bonds are not subject to the IORP II directive.

NEXT STEPS

On balance, there are solid reasons to consider investing in property through a pension fund.

Although not back at the levels of the pre-crisis peak, Ireland's property market is surging ahead once again, both in terms of value and rental yields. For pension fund investors, these key indicators provide reasonable expectations of a steady stream of income being received by your pension fund over a long period of time.

There are also potential downsides but, on balance, the benefits of owning property as part of your pension fund make it a worthwhile consideration. As with all major financial decisions, it is vital to seek professional advice that is tailored towards your own goals and circumstances. Scheduling a meeting with a financial adviser can help to get you on the right path.

Warning: There are risks associated with pensions. The value of investments may go down as well as up.

Warning: This information is based on Davy's understanding of current tax legislation in Ireland and is subject to change without notice. It is intended as a guide only and not as a substitute for professional advice. You should consult your tax adviser for the rules that apply in your individual circumstances.



Peter Feighan,
Director, Private Clients

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	Retail Design and Branding	Tap Creations	Criona Turley + 353 (0) 86 853 6408	criona@tapcreations.ie www.tapcreations.ie	Jump Juice Bars, Musgrave Group
	Retail Execution Solutions	Reflexis Systems	Anton Medford +44 (0) 7979 706285	Anton.Medford@reflexisinc.com www.reflexisinc.com	Retail Excellence
	Retail Lighting Specialists	Pro-Light Design & Technology	Paul Hanlon +353 (0)1 2962607	Paul.Hanlon@pro-light.ie www.pro-light.ie	Donnybrook Fair, Ladbroke's
	Risk Management Solutions	Seachange	Paul Cummins +353 (0) 87 052 24 95	paul.cummins@seachange-intl.com www.seachange.ie	Applegreen McCabes Pharmacy Group
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★	Shopfitting and Retail Design	Johnston Shopfitters	ShaneBrennan +353 (0) 86 244 0714 Andrew Johnston +353 (0) 1 419 0419	sbrennan@johnston-shopfitters.com ajohnston@johnston-shopfitters.com www.johnston-shopfitters.com	Carolls Irish Gifts, Easons Meaghers Pharmacy Group
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	Shopfitting and Retail Design	Store Design	Paul Ryan +353 (0) 1 413 1350	pryan@storedesign.ie info@storedesign.ie d.mckeever@storedesign.ie www.storedesign.ie	Fallers Jewellers Patrick Bourke Menswear
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	Specialist Entrance Matting Provider	Footfall	Ger Halloran +353 (0) 86 235 3515	ger@footfall.ie www.footfall.ie	Dunnes Stores, Musgrave Group
	Stocktaking Service	Stocktaking.ie	Patrick McDermott +353 (0) 87 138 9813 Sharon Kelly +353 (0) 86 389 9542	info@stocktaking.ie sharonk@stocktaking.ie www.stocktaking.ie	Carraig Donn, Elverys, Tiger Stores
	Stocktaking Service	TakeStock	Bernard Brown +353 (0) 1 77 55 242	bernard.brown@wecount.ie www.wecount.ie	Joyce's Supermarket, Musgrave group
	Stocktaking Service	Retail & Asset Solutions	Colm Roche +353 (0) 87 781 3678	colm.roche@retailassetsolutions.com	B&O, DAA, Lloyds
	Stocktaking, Merchandising & Retail Services	RGIS Inventory Specialists	Marcin Dettlaff +353 (0) 87 1272698	MDettlaff@RGIS.com www.rgis.ie	Lifestyle Sports, Tesco Ireland
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