

THE SHAPE OF FOOD RETAILING
IN THE NEW NORMAL 7:

THE WORLD'S FAVOURITE STORES

“There are many excellent food retail reports. We believe this to be a first, where 101 retail leaders from around the world have shared their favourite stores. In producing the report, a sense of fun was our number one priority—but also continued learning and relevance, because food retail in all its shapes and sizes should have these components to thrive.”

— The authors

FRESH, GRAND CANAL SQUARE, DUBLIN

My favourite store is Fresh Grand Canal Square, owned by well-known Irish retail entrepreneur Noel Smith. Fresh is marketed under the strapline ‘The Good Food Market,’ which perfectly captures the essence of the store. With welcoming exterior seating and a long glass shop front, one immediately notices the attention to detail and extraordinary finish in materials, colours and layout—drawing you into an oasis of choice and convenience shopping.

The ergonomics and flow of the store are easily navigated and set the highest of standards for product quality and freshness. Customers will delight in the Fresh offering, with its range of local Irish meats and cheeses, remarkable creativity in the choice of prepared meals, a fabulous salad bar with both local and more exotic ingredients, and an off-license with an extensive wine cellar for all sizes of wallets. The deli and coffee facilities are first class, and there is a real expectation of surprise when you shop the store. Fresh encapsulates the best-in-class across all categories and delivers a personal touch that is unrivaled in a city-based location.

Brian Donaldson
Chief Executive Officer - The Maxol Group, Ireland



RANGE



EXPERIENCE & SERVICE



FOODSERVICE



ENVIRONMENT



VALUES & COMMUNITY



STANDARDS



INNOVATION



This report is meant as a fun read and a study of the attributes that make our favourite stores our favourites! It's relevant for all convenience, food, foodservice, and roadside retailers. Enjoy!



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Today's customers choose their favourite store based on how visiting that store makes them feel!



It has been a pleasure to take part in learning about the world's favourite stores and what these retailers do to stand out in a crowded food landscape.

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FOREWORD

When I was a kid working at my dad’s gas stations in the early 1960s—coincidentally, right around the time that NACS was formed—the formula for success in retail was simple: Find a great location, sell what people want and provide great customer service. And, of course, listen to the customer, which led us to convert our garages to convenience stores!

While that same retail formula largely exists today, how it is executed has dramatically shifted over the past few decades. “Channels” have been obliterated in the eyes of a customer; you can buy most of the items that our industry sells in other retail stores. You also can buy almost anything online. And restaurants are far from alone in selling quality meals. As renowned chef Anthony Bourdain once noted, “Proximity to petroleum products is rarely an impediment to a great meal.”

The very definition of customer service also has dramatically shifted. Who would have imagined that the self-serve concept that our industry pioneered at the gas pump in the 1960s and later at the coffee bar, fountain station and food-ordering kiosk would reshape not just how customers get items, but how they order and pay?

Convenience is the most prized commodity in retail today. That’s great news for convenience retailers—but it’s also a challenge because everyone else in retail is also selling convenience. And everyone—retailers and customers alike—is redefining the very definition of convenience.

So, with the ever-increasing speed of retail reinvention, what will the future look like? As futurist William Gibson famously said, “The future is already here—It’s just unevenly distributed.” A few years ago, I travelled to China to see first-hand “new retail,” the seamless integration of in-store and online shopping experiences. Some elements of this radical reinvention of convenience are common today with delivery, self-checkout and ghost kitchens. I’ve also seen the future playing out in Norway (EV charging), Argentina (the coffee experience), South Africa (amazing fresh produce) and in so many countries and categories around the world.

The stores highlighted in the following pages all are reinventing retail on some level, whether in defining widespread retail change or in testing and perfecting new ideas that are still very localized. But the goal ultimately isn’t only to change for change’s sake. It’s to change because what the customer wants—and expects—is constantly changing. The formula for success in retail six decades ago remains: continue to better understand what customers want and provide great service in getting it to them. The only thing that has dramatically changed are the tactics behind how you make your store your customers’ favorite store.



DR HENRY O ARMOUR | President and CEO, NACS

So, what’s my favorite store? As part of a member-based organization with thousands of exceptional members, I’m certainly biased and could fill multiple volumes with my favorites. But as a student of retail who have flown more than 5 million miles and driven hundreds of thousands more miles exploring retailing excellence, I’d like to say that I haven’t been to my favorite store yet—because someone, somewhere has just reinvented retailing and took it in an entirely new direction. And someone, somewhere, just reinvented convenience. The continuous change in retail is what drives me to hit the road to explore new ideas and share them so we can continue to reinvent convenience retailing together.

INTRODUCTION

In paper six, the report looked at sustainability as a major topic that every retailer and CPG company we’d spoken to believed to be important to their business, their customers, and the environment in which we live and work. This new ‘World’s Favourite Stores’ report examines why specific retailers are local favourites and what the characteristics are that make them so. At a ‘Meet the Leader’ dinner in March, our guest leader, ACS CEO James Lowman, was asked about his favourite store from over 20 years in the industry. That was the spark for this report.

I attended the excellent NACS Europe conference in Berlin in June 2022 where a number of presenters, including Brian Donaldson from Maxol Group, Sebastian Becker from Migrolino, and NACS CEO Dr Henry Armour, observed that local actions can be hugely effective—and the more relevant to their customers, the greater the effectiveness.

The tone of this report focuses on learnings from individual stores and how they trade in their local areas. It is deliberately a lighter read than the previous reports—we’ve had a tough two years!—while continuing to value the views from respected industry leaders across the globe. The authors’ goal is for everyone to learn something useful from the experts nominated in this report: grocers, convenience retailers, foodservice operators, and specialists. We hope readers can apply the relevant knowledge in their own businesses. Our secondary ambition is to have some fun in reading the individual contributions in the report. Anyone seeking out this report surely enjoys visiting exceptional, outlier retailers, and where else can you find a list of favourites from leaders worldwide?



Runaway Luna, Bee Cave TX, USA



Zepto, 10 minute grocery delivery, India

The five authors have each contributed multiple favourite stores, and the report’s producer has contributed her favourite. When added to the 75 individual contributions, the report has a total of 101 retail stories. The widely read ‘Roadside Retail’ report also had 75 contributions, and we are thrilled to have maintained the commitment. The many reasons why the stores were selected are analyzed below, and there is also a section on retail attributes such as payment technologies that the authors believe will be increasingly important. The report’s retailers cover the alphabet, from Amazon’s colossal choice and logistics to Zepto’s quick-commerce delivery platform. There are welcome surprises, such as the Tebay Services Farm Shop and Kitchen M6—which, unlike the majority of UK motorway services, is independently owned and operated and serves a fantastic selection of fresh food. Also included are established chain retailers like Whole Foods and many well-known independent and smaller chain stores.



John and Barbara Dunning opened Tebay Services in 1972 after the M6 motorway was built through their farm.

They invited the world to this once-remote stretch of Westmorland to eat a good meal, enjoy a heartfelt welcome and relish the upland landscape.

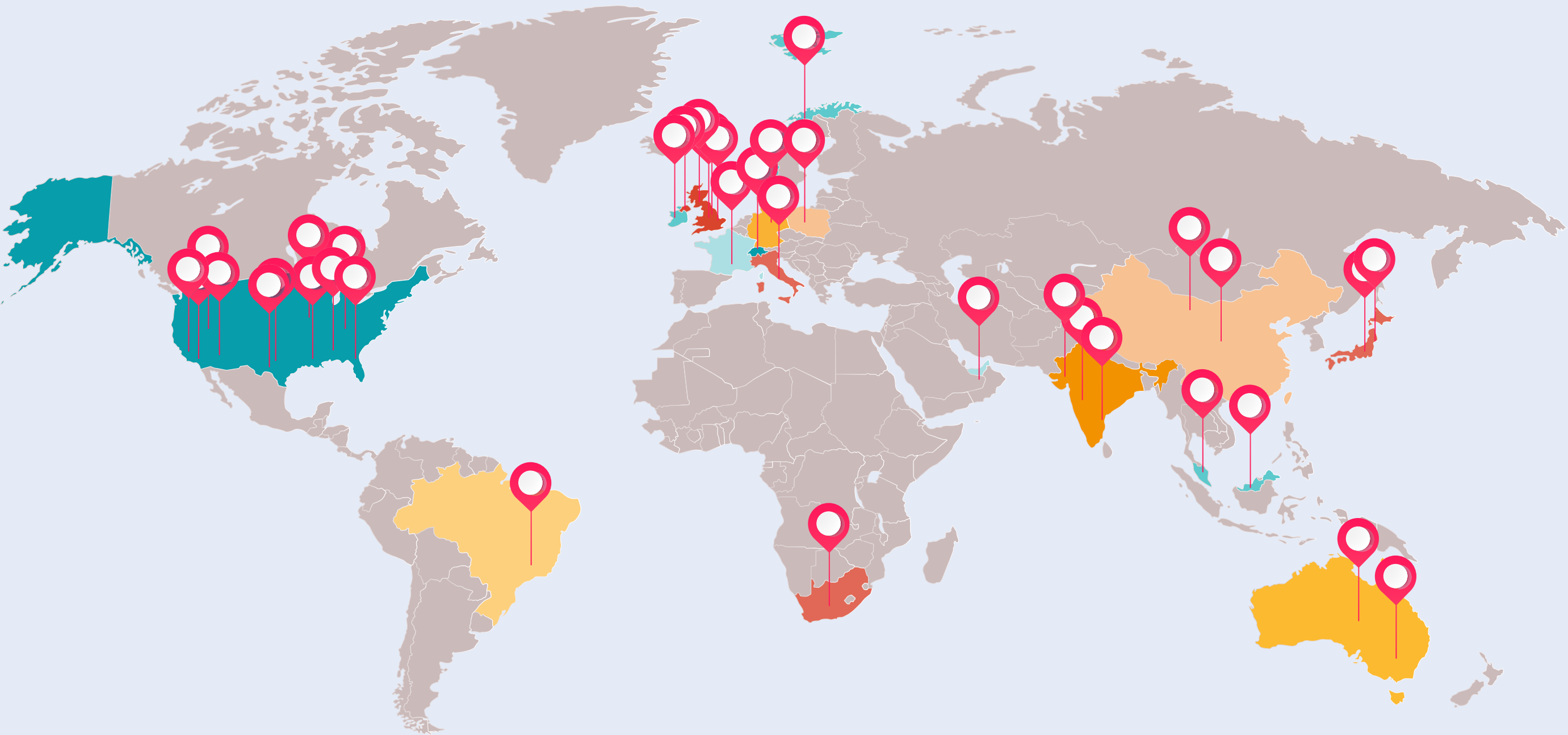
Tebay Services Farm Shop and Kitchen M6, UK

Many retailers featured in this report consistently demonstrate truly consumer-centric offers that are differentiated from their competitors. Others deliver a personal service which keeps their customers returning year after year. The evolution of retail shows us that without consumer-centricity, good service, and the all-important enticing merchandising, even once-great small and big retailers do fail. An example is Macy’s—whose Manhattan store was the first retailer I ever visited in the USA in 1980. It is now sadly unrecognizable from its heyday as the world’s greatest department store.

As Dr. Henry Armour states in the foreword, ‘convenience’ is the most prized commodity in retail today. Everyone in retail is now selling convenience, and retailers and customers alike are redefining the very definition of convenience. Customer service and customer-defined convenience are two of the strongest themes in this overview of 101 exceptional retailers.

The authors invite you to enjoy the report, dig deeper into the retailers using the Google map reference, and to challenge your own thinking about what makes your business a favourite with customers.

THE WORLD'S FAVOURITE STORES



COUNTRIES

<div></div> <div>Australia - 2</div>	<div></div> <div>Holland - 1</div>	<div></div> <div>Malaysia - 1</div>	<div></div> <div>Singapore - 2</div>	<div></div> <div>USA - 26</div>
<div></div> <div>Brazil - 1</div>	<div></div> <div>India - 4</div>	<div></div> <div>Northern Ireland - 5</div>	<div></div> <div>South Africa - 1</div>	
<div></div> <div>China - 2</div>	<div></div> <div>Ireland - 8</div>	<div></div> <div>Norway - 1</div>	<div></div> <div>Switzerland - 4</div>	
<div></div> <div>France - 1</div>	<div></div> <div>Italy - 2</div>	<div></div> <div>Poland - 2</div>	<div></div> <div>UAE - 1</div>	
<div></div> <div>Germany - 6</div>	<div></div> <div>Japan - 2</div>	<div></div> <div>Scotland - 2</div>	<div></div> <div>UK - 19</div>	



Scott Annan | Principal - Blue Ananta Ltd.

AUTHOR

The introduction to my store choices:

My motivation when shopping is influenced by many factors. There are 25 stores that I could have selected as my favourites; these are my five.

It is a privilege that my travel as a retail consultant has drawn me to many countries and a variety of retail stores, from lifestyle formers to national and local chains, and the new and fashionable to to robust 'mom and pop' stores. Added to this, I have an Indian wife, and my exposure to different cultural preferences has also coloured my experiences.

When it comes to my personal shopping preferences, I have to balance my needs with those of my family. The need to balance value, convenience, and availability with my wife's need for variety, quality, and the exotic is always enjoyable. Many factors come into play when I am asked what my favourite store is. Often it is the mood and the look and the feel that entices me. How do I feel after visiting a store? Am I inspired? Has my mood lifted? Have I bought something new, something fun? Have I had a valuable new experience, or was the shop simply a mechanical endeavour to get a task done?

I have tried to balance all the above aspects when choosing my favourite stores, and hopefully my write-up will inspire current and future retailers and shoppers alike with insights. We can all benefit from understanding what drives a shopper to shop—and how to make the experience memorable.



MILESTONE RATHFRILAND
NEWRY, NORTHERN IRELAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/1fzJugRriUrmPm2K8>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?
Breads, deli, proprietary meals, and wines

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, fresh local food, meal occasions

What have I learnt from this store?
The retailers, Tom and Ann McAvoy, and GM Noel Hadden, never rest on their success. At every visit there is a new initiative, new meal choices, or a new customer convenience. They know their customers, and the customers return for the huge variety of fresh proprietary foods and the excellent service.

“ Milestone's focus is proprietary fresh food for today, all produced in-house. It attracts customers from far beyond Rathfriland, competing with other independents and national grocers. Loft 56 is their full service restaurant, and the fuels are from the Ireland market leader, Maxol.



DAIMARU FOODHALL
TOKYO STATION
TOKYO, JAPAN

<https://goo.gl/maps/DusheKPKNdtnefDQ7>

Type of retailer
Convenience, department, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals and a fresh snack and drink for my train

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Japanese beer and sake

What have I learnt from this store?
Daimaru operates to strict standards—this is Japan after all—which the food vendors uphold while maintaining their own personalities.

“ I first visited the Daimaru Tokyo Station in 2011 and was blown away by the massive choice of independent fresh food stations throughout the football pitch-sized depachika, or food hall.



BREAD AND BUTTER AT
5 AVENUE & 31 STREET
NEW YORK CITY, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/MBtGDjs67iiKnpxw8>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Breakfast, lunch, dinner, beverages and top-up grocery

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, fresh local meals, meal occasions, merchandising, proprietary meals, service

What have I learnt from this store?
There is always a demand for casual dining, proprietary meals, and freshly prepared dishes with indulgent and healthy options in ultra-urban locations.

“ The abundant assortment of fresh American, Italian, and Asian dishes that are available 24/7/365, have an appeal across construction sites, residents, tourists and local offices. One can eat in, take out, and order out through one of the local third-party delivery services, such as Uber Eats, Grubhub, and DoorDash.



RINDERMARKTHALLE

HAMBURG, GERMANY

<https://goo.gl/maps/vZcuEZjyGgGmDYT9>

“ The central cattle yard of the 19th century livestock market was the forerunner of today's market hall. The 15,000 M² hall offers 25 individual shops and restaurants, including the largest EDEKA store in Hamburg, ALDI, a Budnikowsky drugstore, and BIOCOMPANY. Other retailers include 'Brot und Stulle' breads, Paulsen confectionery, butcher 'Metzgers', the zero-waste shop Teilgut, and many independent coffee and food stalls.

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Prepared food, delicatessen, fresh fish and produce, breads, coffee, and beverages

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, entertainment, fresh local meals, meal occasions, merchandising, proprietary, service

What have I learnt from this store?
How to repurpose a historic building into an outstanding food, cultural, and event marketplace



RAN

AUGSBURG, GERMANY

<https://goo.gl/maps/geo1Z7Z8G5Xi5FXw5>

“ Outstanding selection of freshly made local and international food, and excellent coffee on the roadside.

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?
Foodservice—breakfast, lunch and dinner—and coffee

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, fresh local meals, meal occasions, proprietary

What have I learnt from this store?
RAN is a family business from Burgau in southern Germany. Their value proposition is 'more than refuelling!' They have made a wide selection of local and international fresh foods their customer visit destination, versus tobacco and fuels, which is the norm within the big fuel retailers in Germany.



PREZZEMOLO & VITALE

PALERMO CENTRO, SICILY, ITALY

<https://goo.gl/maps/z6PSvyqWtXV2JS5g7>

“ This store is typical of the high-quality fresh foods and small supermarkets found across Italy. P&V's home is Palermo in Sicily, and they also have stores in Chelsea, Notting Hill, Borough Market, and Wimbledon in the UK. The Palermo and UK stores have seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables weekly from Sicily.

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Produce, prepared food, grocery, and wine

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, fresh local meals, meal occasions, proprietary, service

What have I learnt from this store?
Their customer value proposition is quality, authenticity, and seasonality without compromise. My experience over five days of shopping in this store was one of excellent service and employees always happy to help. (with my dreadful Italian pronunciation)



CRAWFORD MARKET

MUMBAI, INDIA

<https://goo.gl/maps/aZ5fk2EnCH7oQ7y49>

“ Crawford Market (officially Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Mandai) is one of South Mumbai's most famous markets. The building was completed in 1869, and it is now is the main wholesale market for South Mumbai.

Type of retailer
Retail and sub-wholesale market for produce, grains, nuts, spices, meats, fish, household, textiles, and even pets!

What would I purchase from this store?
Produce, grains, and spices

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, entertainment, fresh local meals, merchandising, service

What have I learnt from this store?
When the main wholesale market relocated to Navi Mumbai in 1996, Crawford Market reinvented itself as a retail marketplace for South Mumbai's estimated population catchment of five million. The organized 'chaos' of the market's delivery trucks, hand carts, shoppers, horns, vendors shouting, and porters carrying goods in head baskets makes this one of the world's great shopping experiences. And the produce is very fresh!

MY FAVOURITE STORES



Frank Beard | Marketing & CX - Standard AI

AUTHOR

The introduction to my store choices:

Building a list of one's favorite stores seems simple on the surface. However, it's not so straightforward once you sit down to do it.

Do you define "favorite" as sheer excitement, energy, and the breadth of the product selection? Had I done that, I might present readers with a list of my top five favorite Buc-ee's locations.

Perhaps it's about foodservice? Unfortunately, some of the most exceptional meals I've purchased have also come from retailers where corners were cut in other areas. For example, I can think of one store in Mississippi that offered world-class barbecue while the door to the toilet was left hanging on a single hinge.

In the end, I think my "favorites" can be identified by one simple question: what do I want in my community? Not all of the stores listed below are the biggest, the fanciest, or even the most unique, but they all have that special something that takes them from good to exceptional. They're exactly what I want in my backyard.

I suppose that's what really makes convenience retail unique. Few retail channels are as closely connected to their communities as convenience stores, and the industry is full of hyperlocal operators that outperform the major chains on product offer and experience. They breathe life into their neighborhoods in a way that companies chasing quarterly earnings rarely ever do.

That's what you'll find on my list. Visit any one of my favorite stores, and I think you'll agree with me that they're special.



HIGH COUNTRY MARKET BISTRO & GASTROPUB

ROUND ROCK, TX, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/DhXcy9oeBWRZZPKi7>

Type of retailer
Foodservice, roadside (fuel)
What would I purchase from this store?
Alcoholic beverages, prepared food
Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
HCM's pizza is some of the best I've ever had, and the quality of the wine selection is tough to beat. You can't go wrong here.
What have I learnt from this store?
I always think back to the owner's amazing hospitality. No matter who you are, you'll feel like your business is genuinely appreciated.

This store is truly one of a kind. The owner, Zahir Walji, is a Level 2 sommelier who transformed this convenience store into a destination for fine wine and high-end gastropub fare. During one of my visits, I spoke to various customers and learned that it's basically a local hangout. Many said they stop for dinner and drinks two or three evenings each week. Even though I live 900 miles to the North, I suppose I kind of feel the same way about HCM. I always look forward to visiting, and when I'm there, I feel like it's one of my "third places." I've lost track of how many times I've recommended HCM to friends, family, and even news reporters.



SLOVACEK'S WEST

WEST, TX, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/hpqYKAD4UTy7KWNA>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, roadside (fuel)
What would I purchase from this store?
Bread and cakes
Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Definitely a cream cheese kolache
What have I learnt from this store?
Being unique takes more than building a big store. You also have to deliver a quality experience and offer compelling, differentiated products at every step of the journey. Slovacek's does all of that and much more.

My other responses focus on stores that I wish were in my neighborhood, but it's important to also recognize a store that I wish was on one of the routes that I take for road trips and long drives. While I've been to many fantastic retail locations at the major interstate exits, there's one that always stands apart from the rest: Slovacek's West. If you've driven on I-35 between Dallas and Austin, then you're probably familiar with this store. At more than 22,000 square feet and featuring a gigantic bakery, deli, meat counter, dog park, and home goods section, it's hard to ignore. If you have friends in Dallas or Austin, be sure to ask them about this store.

We love to provide organic and locally sourced products for our community. We spend a lot of time working with our vendors to properly promote them, share knowledge, build brand awareness, and connect together.

36 LYN
MINNEAPOLIS, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/3V1xn2wMJ36XscL19>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?
Locally-produced snacks and beverages

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Curation

What have I learnt from this store?
A lot of retailers speak of "community" and "localization" but struggle to deliver on either in a genuine or meaningful way. With 36 Lyn, that's not the case. I remember the owner saying something along the lines of, "if you want to be a community store, you actually have to be a part of the community." The actions they've taken as a company are why the community actually showed up to guard the store when protests and riots threatened it in 2020.

“ I keep coming back to 36 Lyn in Minneapolis as my single favorite store. It's not the biggest nor the fanciest, and it doesn't have a hot foodservice program, but it's precisely the kind of business you want in your backyard. They paid a living wage before it was trendy, they support their community, and they stock the store full of unique products from local companies rather than just relying on generic solutions from the major CPGs. Indeed, the product mix constantly evolves to the point that there's always a discovery element to your visit. 36 Lyn is an easy choice for this list.

LOU PERRINE'S
KENOSHA, WI, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/TAAa2ktYqFY1q9z6>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?
Artisan products

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Definitely a slice of Mama P's Ho-Ho Cake.

What have I learnt from this store?
It's hard to pin down one thing, but I think it's the value of "being real." I think we could all use a bit more of that in our lives. I have a tremendous amount of respect for the way the Perrines remain authentic and work hard to do right by their customers, employees, and community.

“ Back in 1954, "Grandpa Lou" started a full-service Clark station in downtown Kenosha, Wisconsin, with the goal of offering the best service and quality products at a great value. Their commitment to the community continues today with the current owner, Anthony Perrine, who just opened their second store earlier this year. The new location is honestly one of the nicest convenience stores I've ever been to. However, it's more than a fancy building. I drove up to the grand opening, and I'm not kidding when I say hundreds of people turned out to support them. Lou Perrine's is the very definition of a community store operated by good people who care deeply about each and every customer. If you're ever in Kenosha, be sure to stop by and visit—and try their signature product, Mama P's Ho-Ho Cake. It's incredible.

EL CARAJO
MIAMI, FL, U.S.A

<https://g.page/heelcarajo?share>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice

What would I purchase from this store?
Alcoholic beverages, prepared meals

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Meal occasions

What have I learnt from this store?
I'm always impressed with how stores like El Carajo build their business by being part of the community rather than spending heavily on marketing.

“ Although it looks like a run-of-the-mill Mobil station from the outside, El Carajo is one of the finest restaurants located inside any convenience store around the world. You'll probably have to make dinner reservations if you want to stop by some evening. Nestled in the back of the store is a high-end tapas restaurant with a major focus on fine wine. (Think Penfolds Grange and similar) As someone I know who lives Miami and writes for travel publications likes to say, it's one of the best places to take any out-of-towners when they come to the city. It's also unbeatable for a night out if you happen to be there for a work trip with colleagues. I frequently look back fondly at the great times I've had at this store. (For a good laugh, type "El Carajo" into Google Translate)





Sabine Benoit | Professor of Marketing - University of Surrey

AUTHOR

The introduction to my store choices:

As an academic specialising in convenience retailing, I look at stores through three different lenses. The first lens is my research: I have just finished a large study on unstaffed stores and work a lot on retail technology, so I'm fascinated by technology that works—and by companies innovating and being at the forefront of development. Hence, two of my favourite stores are unstaffed stores that I came across while scanning concepts from around the world.

Second, in the last 14 years I worked with a continental European wholesaler supplying forecourt stores (Lekkerland), or as the authors of this report called them in one of our earlier reports, 'roadside retailers.' During this time, I have seen the transition of many of those forecourt stores (focusing on value propositions for the car, such as fuel) into roadside retailers (focusing on value propositions for people and communities). I am impressed by how well some of them have reinvented themselves by preparing for a business with less and less fuel. With the above company and their suppliers, I've created the Competence Center of On-the-go Consumption and have done a number of studies on food-to-go and food-for-later. To me, this is the aspect that can make a store really unique and provide a great experience. Hence, two of the stores are forecourt stores with a great food offer.

Third, as of 2021, I'm Director of the Convenience Leadership Programme created by the University of Surrey and the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS). This programme aims to develop people on the level of store and district managers to leadership positions in convenience retailing. Store visits are part of the programme, and I always listen very carefully to what my participants find noteworthy. Being at a university, I know how unique a store in a university setting is. Timing is crucial, since half of the year the campus is almost empty and half of the year it is buzzing. And since our students are very international, these stores cannot be operated the same way a store a mile away in a neighbourhood is. Hence, the last of my favourite five is a campus store.

Of course, over and above these three points, I'm a consumer and shopper myself. I travel a lot and usually try to put more things in the day than there are hours available. That's why I particularly like stores that make my life easier without me having to compromise on health, freshness, or quality. At the same time, I'm also a retail enthusiast and a bit of a foodie particularly when it comes to bread. I usually walk right past the aisles of the popular triangle sandwiches—that's not for me, and white bread in most shapes and forms is not for me either. In some stores, it gets really tough to buy a lunch, but not in my favourite five!

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AMAZON FRESH IN LONDON SOUTHWARK

LONDON, U.K.

<https://goo.gl/maps/rgnr9hoX9eS1RjBAA>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?
Ready meals

What have I learnt from this store?
Two things in particular: First, that you can really do everything (if you have the funds). Awesome looking store, lots of tech that works and makes life easier, lots of choice of great fresh products and reasonable prices.

Second, even Amazon needs to learn, and they do it quickly. I'm impressed by the evolution they made in the year since opening their first store in London. For instance, the initial store assortment had almost no manufacturer brands, and they thought the brand name as a store front would be enough to draw in customers. Now the assortment has changed, and they make their fresh products more visible from the outside.

SIMPLY FRESH

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SURREY, U.K.

<https://goo.gl/maps/a7HbL8z kpSvk2kda8>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?
Everything, but I particularly like the Asian assortment and their hot food to go

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Ready meals

What have I learnt from this store?
Adaptation is key!

Running a store at a university is very different business. Some of the challenges are the extremely international student cohorts—which might or might not change year on year—and also half the year the campus is buzzing while half the year it is empty. This store does a great job in adapting their product assortments and supply to these particular circumstances. For instance, there is an entire aisle with Asian pot noodles that I have never before seen in my life. The store management regularly meets with students and asks them what they want, and this is what they get.

"I am excited about retail technology even more when it works seamlessly from start to finish. And Amazon Fresh 'just works'. I have shopped in their stores multiple times, and you can't fool the technology, and the technology doesn't fool you. You also do not have to download an additional app since they integrate Amazon Fresh into the existing Amazon app.

But not everyone is a tech nerd like me. Even without the tech, this is an awesome store that's very tidy and neat, has lots of choice for fresh products and retail brands, offers lots of new ideas, and is reasonably priced.



REWE TO GO
COLOGNE, GERMANY

<https://goo.gl/maps/gBgIF4c88fP6DqMy9>

Type of retailer	Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Convenience, foodservice, grocery	Deli
What would I purchase from this store?	What have I learnt from this store?
Everything, but what sticks out is their food to go offer. They have some really nice products.	Be brave and break the ice

“ The store is located in a tough environment since it is in a dark, unpleasant basement in a large train station. At the same time, the environment is highly competitive since it is surrounded by other providers—mainly bakeries and restaurants. The bright green and red from Rewe To Go is cheerful and inviting, and the storefront is very open. Given the environment, the assortment is appealing not only to those customers who otherwise would have gone to a bakery or coffeeshop, but also to those that would have gone to a restaurant for a meal or to a supermarket to do their shopping. They play this well on so many levels.

Another reason I like this store is that Rewe is very forward-thinking and brave. Whereas in other European countries self checkout has been normality for a long time—not only in the UK, but also in neighbouring countries such as Switzerland—no German retailer dared to start this. Rewe to Go did, and they did it in this store. Gradually, German consumers got used to it, and I'm pretty sure others will follow now that the ice has been broken.



GUILD FOODS MARKET
GUILDFORD, U.K.

<https://g.page/guildfoodsmarket?share>

Type of retailer	What have I learnt from this store?
Convenience, grocery, roadside (fuel)	Don't judge a book by its cover!
What would I purchase from this store?	Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Everything, but I loved the beer selection and the frozen ready meals.	Ready meals

“ This is a roadside retailer, and from the outside, the store looks pretty standard. Once you come inside, it feels like an oasis. The ambiance and the assortment are just amazing with a lot of natural material, tidy shelves, and great products. I have taken multiple groups of retailers and industry representatives there from overseas—as well as the participants of my Convenience Leadership Programm—and they were all very impressed. If you are around Guildford, this a must-see.

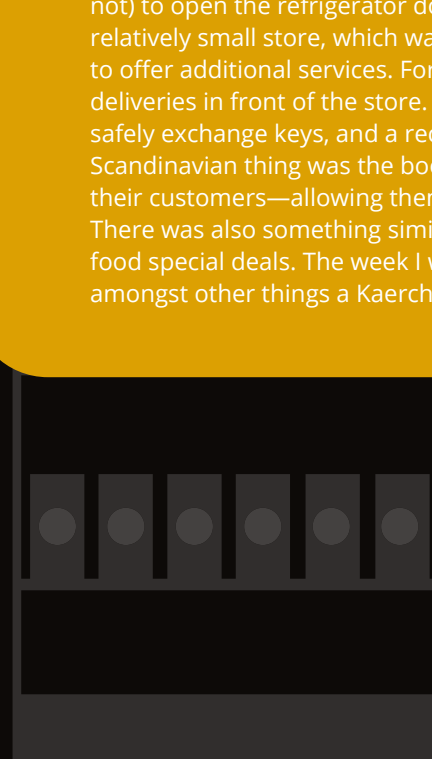
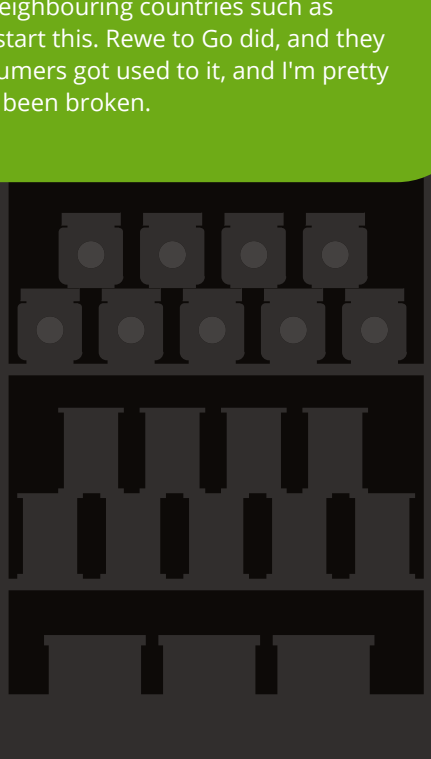


COOP PRIX
OSLO, NORWAY

<https://goo.gl/maps/f6MMgSUn9dvvdR5V7>

Type of retailer	What have I learnt from this store?
Convenience, grocery	Even small stores can offer multi-occasion shopping.
What would I purchase from this store?	
Grocery	
Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?	
Grocery	

“ Despite the fact that this store is more or less a container-based store, it feels very spacious and has a great ambiance. I found the bright yellow very unique and inviting. Since this is an unmanned store for parts of the time, the entrance is equipped with all sorts of technology. What I loved was the large roof they provided in front of the entrance. That disguised the container look, but it also allows people to not stand in the rain while trying to figure out the technology. They can also light up the entrance area when it is dark. The assortment was great and structured according to meal occasions. The products looked great, and everything was very tidy. I was also very impressed by the technology they had implemented for age verification for buying alcohol since it was linked to either being allowed (or not) to open the refrigerator doors. Another thing I loved was that this relatively small store, which was a bit outside Oslo in a residential area, tried to offer additional services. For example, they had a large locker for deliveries in front of the store. There was also a share box allowing people to safely exchange keys, and a recycling station. In my view, the very Scandinavian thing was the book-sharing box Coop Norway provided for their customers—allowing them to exchange children's books and more. There was also something similar to the discounter middle aisle with non-food special deals. The week I was there, they had a DIY week and offered amongst other things a Kaercher pressure washer and a ladder.





The introduction to my store choices:

I grew up in my parents' convenience store, so the emergence of the c-store sector as a beacon of innovation is something I view with a real sense of pride. In my lifetime, the best convenience stores have consistently redefined what it means to be “convenient,” a task that will become increasingly challenging as new disruptive routes to the consumer establish themselves.

Historically we have used size and location to segregate convenience from other grocery formats, but the lines of demarcation have become somewhat blurred. In recent years, coffee shops, foodservice, and even department stores have all attempted to implement their own version of a “convenience” offer. Therefore, when asked to choose my favourite global c-stores, I have focused less on format and have used my choices to highlight the areas where I believe modern c-stores are demonstrating real excellence—specifically, food-for-now, experience, technology, and community relevance. These are the four areas where continued investment and focus will enable the sector to be resilient in the face of digital disruption.

I have thoroughly enjoyed reading about each contributor's favourite stores. It is a timely reminder of how fortunate we are to be involved in such a dynamic sector—and the importance of dedicating time to visiting stores.



KIRANA – SARDARAN DI HATTI

NEW DELHI, INDIA

<https://goo.gl/maps/kvTCA3gNGz7UDZGbA>

Type of retailer
Convenience, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Retail packaged goods, dry goods, grocery, impulse

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Grocery

What have I learnt from this store?
Even the most traditional outlets can adapt and thrive when customer relevance is at the heart of their proposition.



ZABKA NANO

WARSAW, POLAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/pTKcvP8CLjiR7tuEA>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?
Impulse products

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Impulse and packaged food-for-now

What have I learnt from this store?
Frictionless technology is fit to deploy, commercially viable, and it's ready to be embraced by consumers.



FRESH. THE GOOD FOOD MARKET.

DUBLIN, REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/5FZQVpNcnQhMoYMr6>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Food for now, food for later

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Artisan products

What have I learnt from this store?
I've learned that the quality and customer experience of a great restaurant can be delivered from a convenience store.

India's 12 million small, independently-owned kiosks are the mainstay of its \$1 trillion economy. As India's urban centres develop at pace and a younger middle-class population emerges, you would logically expect Indian customers to shift to hypermarket-style operations. Larger stores are becoming more common in India. However, Kirana stores have largely turned logic on its head and cemented their dominance by embracing eCommerce partners such as Amazon and Reliance. Kirana stores will continue to be the go-to outlet because of their commitment to staying relevant to their customers.

Frictionless store technology has seen giant leaps over the last three years. Implementation costs have reduced whilst the technology itself has become more robust. Although Amazon have taken all the headlines, I reserve my praise for Polish operator Zabka, who have shown real leadership in this area. Their technology partnership with AiFi has moved beyond trial, and at time of publication, has been deployed in 50 sites. Zabka MD, Adam Manikowski, is driven by the belief that “time is becoming the new currency.”

Globally recognized for their food-centred offer and overall customer experience, FTGFM have been able to expand across nine locations in Dublin. Whenever I have visited their outlets with friends or industry colleagues, the prevailing sentiment is, “I wish my local store was like this.” I am impressed by the constant evolution of the offer, particularly where a strong trend like vegan preferences is emerging. It is also clear that the FTGFM team do not define the standards of their food offer against other convenience stores—the FTGFM offer stands on its own against the best high street foodservice offers.



FARMERS CITY MARKET

HAMPTON HILL, U.K.



<https://goo.gl/maps/kvTCA3gNGz7UDZGbA>

Type of retailer
Foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Fresh produce, artisan products and exceptional food for now

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Artisan products

“ Although this store closed more than 10 years ago, it still merits inclusion on my top store list. The customer proposition was trully visionary and similar formats have been replicated around the world.

What have I learnt from this store?

This store was developed in 2007 by three entrepreneurs with the vision of harnessing the growing demand for fine foods and interactive retail being fulfilled at the time through the 550 farmers markets across the UK. The aim was to create a permanent retail format offering customers a consistent and repeatable experience centred on amazing products sold with flair and excitement.

The store brought together the best local producers, artisan suppliers, and fine foods within a 6,000 square-foot store environment. It was operated as a loose co-operative, with certain providers, such as the butchers and deli, operating as permanent concessions. There was product innovation across all categories—I was a particular fan of the alcohol and ambient grocery sections. The centrepiece of the store was a restaurant with dedicated seating, providing fresh seasonal offerings using the finest products available in-store for breakfast lunch and dinner.

The Farmers City Market customer proposition was years ahead of its time. It was not uncommon to be sitting in the restaurant and find yourself surrounded by a “who’s who” of the UK grocery industry, all keen to understand how some of the premiumisation and retail magic could be applied to their own stores.

I also chose to highlight this store's cautionary tale on the need to deliver the basics. Farmers City Market ceased trading within 18 months of opening. The founders had fundamentally failed on two fronts. First, with the complications of their supply chain, the underlying business model was unsustainable and incapable of covering costs such as rent and business rates. Second, there was a real failure to focus on critical basics, such as merchandising, and how the overall proposition could be geared towards increasing basket spend and customer visit frequency.

It was great while it lasted, and I'm sure its legacy can be found in the ideas and inspiration that the wider industry took from it.



WAWA

PHILADELPHIA, U.S.A.



<https://g.page/Wawa-Store86?share>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Food on the go

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Deli

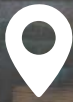
What have I learnt from this store?
Great food and drink is achievable across 1,000 sites when you have an engaged team working to a defined process.

“ Wawa has been able to deliver consistently great food and drink “on the go” in over 970 locations. The brand attracts a huge amount of customer loyalty in its home territories, with items such as their famous Hoagie becoming the stuff of legend in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Wawa has excelled in food by engineering every aspect of their proposition, drawing upon the methodology of quick-service-restaurant (QSR) operators. It’s this commitment to standards, processes, and creating repeatable customer experiences that truly stands apart from other c-stores.



TEBAY SERVICE STATION

PENRITH, U.K.



<https://goo.gl/maps/kASoGno29w2GhiJ4A>

Type of retailer
Service station farm shop

What would I purchase from this store?
Specialist products, fresh products, and food for later

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Artisan products

What have I learnt from this store?
High-quality, local food delivered by a passionate team can create an unforgettable retail experience.

“ This service station situated on the M6 in rural Cumbria has become a food destination for locals and tourists alike. Drawing upon the regional Cumbrian supply chain, including a growing number of local artisan producers, the farm shop is an exemplar of quality and uniqueness. It’s almost impossible to visit without spending your hard-earned cash on a premium, artisan product. Such is the attraction of the product assortment and the merchandising principles used by the shop. The unique and local product is supported by an equally unique and local team of specialist butchers, bakers, and store operatives. The passion for product that exudes from this store leaves an impression on all who visit it.



MY FAVOURITE STORES



Christian Warning | Owner, The Retail Marketeers

AUTHOR

The introduction to my store choices:

Being at 1,000 roadside retail sites in many countries each year, it is a tough choice to name the one favourite. Instead, I could mention hundreds of great stores—or at least great ideas at different stores.

It is often just the one idea that makes the difference. Today, many pictures and videos of the latest shop formats are presented to all interested market companions in the social media channels, but this can never replace a live visit on site. I notice again and again that many retailers quickly copy others before they realize what they have seen. A certain layout may have been chosen due to water, sewage, or electricity supply or official requirements. A certain assortment may be very correct in one location due to specific hyperlocal demand, but make no sense at all in another. In convenience retail formats of food retailers, the basic idea may be that the buyer does not necessarily have to be the user. In the contemporary “roadside retail new mobility retail foodvenience format,” we know that the opposite is true and that a large proportion of hot and cold drinks and food are consumed immediately on site—or within the next 30 minutes in the car, or at home in the nearby neighbourhood. "One size fits all" no longer works today. The modules of a new mobility retail menu vary, and therefore the ideas and influences of different customer experiences from different markets are more important than ever to stand out as a retailer from the sea of sameness in each and every market.



MARIE EIFFEL MARKET

SHELTER ISLAND, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/ZYir9CDQJQ6wMCBX8>

Type of retailer
Convenience, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?
Food for now, food for later

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Deli

“ Hyperlocal customer value proposition.



7-ELEVEN

DALLAS, TEXAS, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/iuSTq1iFVRZNRyMR7>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?
Any

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, fresh local products, service, technology

“ Global, scalable foodvenience format.



RUDY'S "COUNTRY STORE" AND BAR-B-Q

DALLAS, TEXAS, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/bAqly33Z2fbVjZZAA>

Type of retailer
Foodservice, Roadside (Fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?
BBQ Food for NOW

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, entertainment, fresh local products, meal occasions

“ Authentic BBQ.



FUEL CITY DALLAS

DALLAS, TEXAS, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/NL7G8Y9dhZDitTwY6>

Type of retailer
Convenience, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?
Cold drinks

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Alcoholic beverages

What have I learnt from this store?
Fuel City understood that they had to be brave and unique to stand out in a sea of sameness.

“ Uniqueness in product and experience.



MAXOL M3 MULHUDDART SERVICES
OPERATED BY THE FITZPATRICK FAMILY

DUBLIN, REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/XDN4H92c2nLvcYoF7>

Type of retailer
Foodvenience, QSR, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?
I always buy a salad from Chopped and a ROSA coffee to go when I am there.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
As the daypart offer is a key success factor, it depends on the time of the day when I am there. In the morning, it is a freshly made-to-order sandwich at the Maxol Deli counter, and for lunch a Chopped salad.

Anytime during the day, I enjoy a ROSA coffee to go. I also get a cool drink from the grab-and-go chiller on the main power aisle on my way to the cashier.

What have I learnt from this store?
The power of cooperation. It was the first site I experienced some years ago from many of the multi-award-winning Maxol partnership sites.

This is a great example of how powerful it is when a world-leading operator runs a roadside retail site. They display operational excellence at its best, and with the different formats Maxol offers the on-the-move consumers 24/7, 365 days of the year, there is always a reason to visit this site.

“ Matching the on the move customer needs 24/7 every day the whole year long with world class operational excellence.



BUC-EES

TEXAS, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/dBhXcEBYBzCVT9wK7>

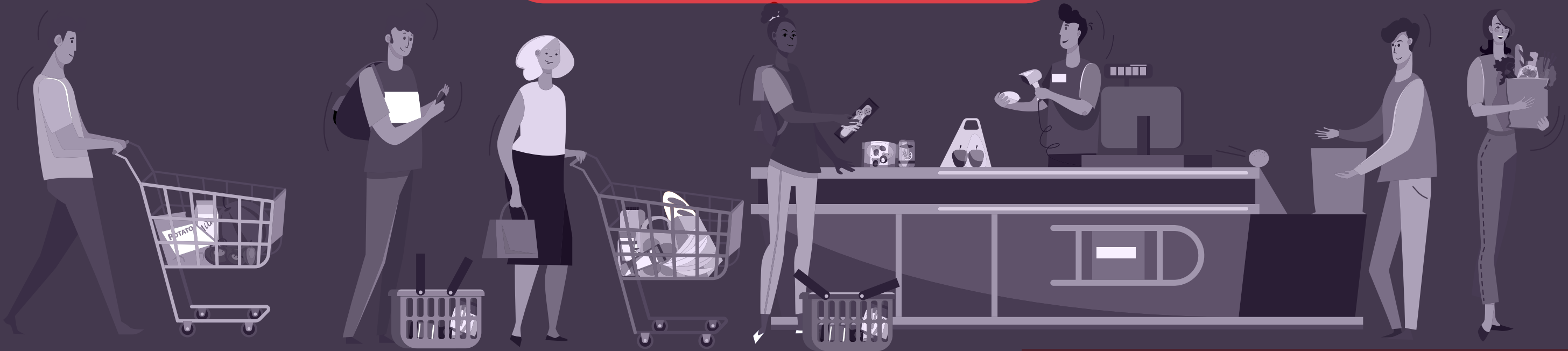
Type of retailer
Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?
Buc-ee's branded merchandise

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Artisan products

What have I learnt from this store?
Have a bullseye CVP.

“ Cleanest toilettes worldwide.





Ragini Annan
Founder and Director - Blue Ananta, U.K.



FUDCO
LONDON, U.K.

<https://goo.gl/maps/Qzdma4E1QRiWtSQ3A>

Type of retailer
Grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Their entire line of products

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, service, whole live foods

It is in my cultural heritage to have a well-stocked larder that acts as a 'living' food supply. What I mean by this is that almost 60% of the products in my larder still have their life-force intact. I can sense your curiosity as you read this. Yes, I select my favourite stores based on this one principle and one principle only—how alive and life-force-giving the products are. To me, food acts as medicine and is also a celebration of life's abundant bounty.

For this reason, I have selected Fudco as my favourite store in London. Working with the four seasons of the year, I shop there four times a year to pick up my seasonal whole grains and whole foods. I know if I soak my grains, they will sprout. This is my sign that they are life-giving and alive. I also like to learn how to convert a grain to protein-rich or carbohydrate-rich elements and balance my family's meals accordingly.

Generally speaking, when grains and pulses are sprouted, they turn to a protein-rich food source and act much like eggs or meat might whilst cooking. Once sprouted, they can be dried and milled to create flours for mouth-watering, protein-rich recipes. Or, you can mill the grains or pulses to flour to have a carbohydrate-rich source for breads and baking needs. Milling as needed stops the flour from oxidizing, too.

The quarterly shop keeps my larder well-stocked, and all I require is some time to knock up delightful, health-giving, nutritious meals. Remarkably, this lifestyle is very emergency-ready. For example, lockdowns and empty shelves at supermarkets are less of a problem.

Equally, at Fudco, I trust the brand to supply me with my other 'food-as-medicine' needs, such as spices and herbs that enhance my family's health through an age-old tradition. I am very fortunate to be able to keep this tradition alive and thank Fudco for their tireless work to import this bounty for all of the U.K. to enjoy. Finally, the staff are always ready to help shoppers to the car with a smile, which is an added bonus for me.



David Bagnall
Director - BWG Group



SPAR
COUNTY LAOISE, IRELAND

<https://g.page/j14mayfield?share>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, grocery, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?
As stated, this is a 'foodservice superstore.' The main reason I visit this site is for its time-of-day food offering and excellent customer experience and services. Fuel is only the secondary reason.

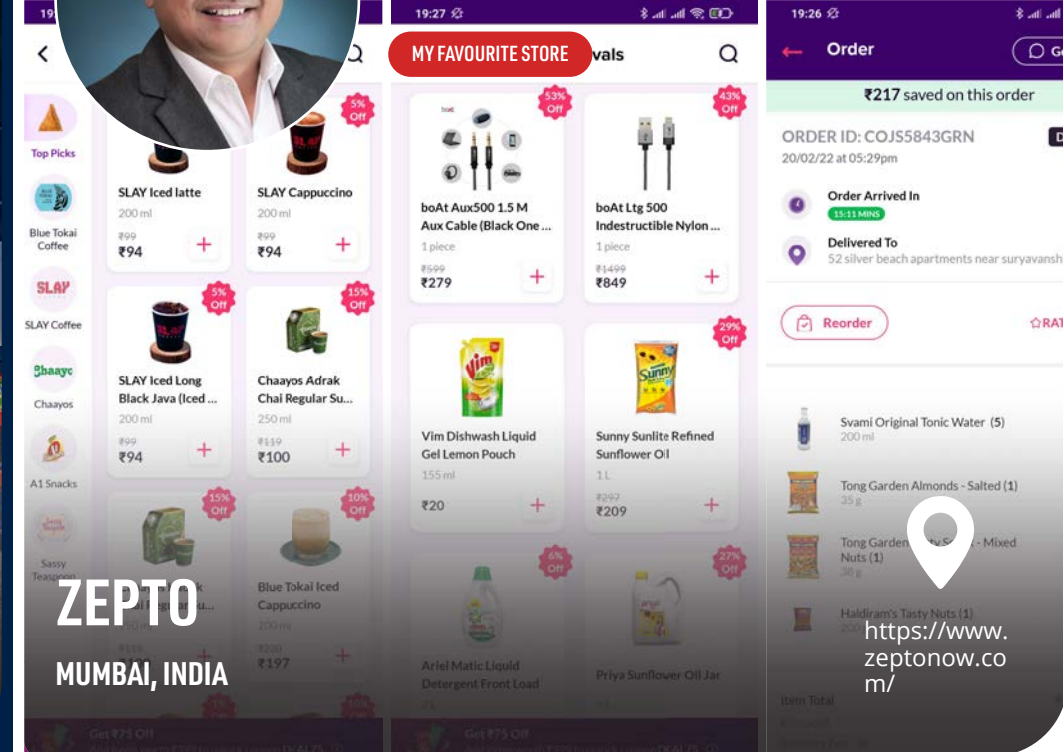
Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, fresh local products, meal occasions, service

What have I learnt from this store?
To me, this store is the best example of the future of forecourt or mobility retailing. The site has a fantastic convenience SPAR store, a fantastic foodservice offer, and very comfortable services. Overall, it delivers an excellent customer experience. I design my travel arrangements to ensure i visit this location while I'm on the road.

"This store is a fantastic, multi-award-winning, newly-redeveloped forecourt site. It's a foodservice superstore with an excellent SPAR convenience store. To me, it's the future of Forecourt or mobility retailing."



Dipayan Baishya
Co-founder - Think9



ZEPTO
MUMBAI, INDIA

Type of retailer
Quick-commerce

What would I purchase from this store?
Ready meals, breads and cakes, produce

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Curation, proprietary, service, technology

Zepto is a quick-commerce delivery platform promising over 3,500 SKUs delivered within a timeframe of 10-30 minutes. It's my favourite for the following reasons:

- It takes the notion of 'customers demand convenience' to the very extreme
- It makes the traditional eCommerce model look dated
- It brings back the joy of quickly paying and unboxing
- It constantly innovates and experiments with new categories, from quick meals to mobile accessories, that customers may want to be delivered instantaneously
- I'm impressed by the two 19-year olds who founded the company, challenged the might of the big boys in the grocery game, and upped the game to 300,000 deliveries per day.

Graham Biggart
Chief Transformation Officer - Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd.

MY FAVOURITE STORE

PETE'S FRESH

CHICAGO, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/Aqb5Nf2EjVDmzAebA>

Type of retailer
Grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Grocery

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Assortment, fresh local

I was impressed by a regional supermarket chain, Pete's Market, in Chicago. It has a cohesive look and feel, promotes abundance, and has tailored world food and premium ranges for local catchments; but it also operates at a volume and with an operating model that's efficient and keeps pricing affordable. They know what they're good at and have not become distracted from great fresh food, great service, and great prices.

Jurgen Bloemers
Personal - (Ex VP Convenience Europe BP Global Retail)

MY FAVOURITE STORE

JAAK VAN WIJCK

BREDA, HOLLAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/79yyx4c8kXzXzTb48>

Type of retailer
Ironmongers

What would I purchase from this store?
Everything I need around the house to repair stuff, such as bolts, nuts, and specific tailor-made parts. Also all kind of other things I don't need such as garden tools and lights.

What have I learnt from this store?
Having a personal, local touch, and exceeding customer needs is a killing combination! I would even go there for things I can purchase somewhere else at a lower price.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Proprietary, service

Mark Brill
Vice President Sales & Marketing, UK & Ireland - TOMRA Collection Solutions

MY FAVOURITE STORE

We are open!

visit us at 14 Reading Rd S, Fleet GU5

SCOOP

FLEET, HAMPSHIRE, UK

<https://g.page/Fleetscoop?share>

Type of retailer
Convenience, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
We have used the refill for flavoured oil and household cleaning, and it also has a few treats like homecooked brownies.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Household cleaning

What have I learnt from this store?
It makes you think about convenience, especially the convenience of having a refill store on your doorstep, where you can bring your own containers, versus the traditional pre-packaged convenience we have all grown to enjoy and rely on. Is it a blast from the past or a shot into the future? I think the later. This is the direction of travel for sustainable convenience.

It's a refill store with a mix of the basics and the treats, both for food and non-food.

Will Broome
Founder & CEO - Ubamarket

MY FAVOURITE STORE

NASH & GARDNER'S BUDGENS

ISLINGTON - LONDON, UK

<https://goo.gl/maps/NEFJuTgQVCSdrgF7>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Almost anything that I'd purchase in a larger, big-box store. This store is well-stocked with a great range whilst simultaneously offering fantastic high-end and quality food-to-go selections. You can equally do a large weekly shop here as well as a top-up or simply 'food (and wine) for tonight'. Exceptionally well-curated and beautifully designed.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, fresh local, merchandising, technology

What have I learnt from this store?
That you can successfully mix a wide range of British, seasonal produce with staple items for a varied basket and a 'shop for all eventualities', all presented in a beautifully aesthetic environment. What's more, this store masterfully combines state of the art technology (their shopping list, app-only offers, and 'scan, pay, and go' app means a totally frictionless and optimal experience along with easy to find stuff, no queues, exclusive discounts, and one-tap payment) with traditional in-store sensibilities, resulting in a best of both worlds, frictionless experience.

This excellent store caters to all food shopping needs including foodservice, top-up, and the full weekly shop.



Darryl Burchell
Personal - (Ex Head Convenience Retail BP Global Retail)

MY FAVOURITE STORE

HONEYGROW

PHILADELPHIA, U.S.A

<https://g.page/honeygrow-16th-street?share>

Type of retailer
Foodservice

What have I learnt from this store?
How to do fresh and healthy without compromising on flavour, and how to use technology to make the interaction fun.

What would I purchase from this store?
Tasty (and healthy) food in a great atmosphere. Eat in, take out, or have it delivered.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Entertainment, Fresh local, Merchandising

"The future of lunchtime food is healthy, colourful, and locally-produced using engaging front-of-house digital customer interaction and efficient back-of-house production."



Thierry Cacaly
CEO - Delice de France Ltd.

MY FAVOURITE STORE

PICARD

FRANCE

<https://goo.gl/maps/duPjueXkQWJSgkrg9>

Type of retailer
Grocery

What have I learnt from this store?
Innovation is key, and the assortment changes with the seasons.

What would I purchase from this store?
The range is 95% of frozen food from starters, main courses, and desserts.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, meal occasion, proprietary

"It is usually positioned in the same way as retail convenience stores. It's never far away from a bakery shop, so it feels part of the local community."



Shane Cantillon
CEO - Cantillon Group

MY FAVOURITE STORE

JUNCTION 14 MAYFIELD

KILDARE, IRELAND

<https://g.page/j14mayfield?share>

Type of retailer
Convenience, department, foodservice, grocery, roadside (fuel)

What have I learnt from this store?
How to execute perfection at all times of the day, and how to create superb food displays.

What would I purchase from this store?
Variety of lunch options.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Deli

"I have seen this store grow from Ireland's proper first motorway service station to the world-class store that it is today."



Pradeep Chechani
Director - Ram Roots India Pvt Ltd

MY FAVOURITE STORE

DMART, LINK ROAD, MALAD WEST

MUMBAI, INDIA

<https://goo.gl/maps/SPod7bFdxEugAgbg8>

Type of retailer
Supermarket / hypermarket

What would I purchase from this store?
Grocery

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Merchandising

What have I learnt from this store?
When the range and pricing are right, customers do not care for the shopping experience.

"Huge footfall. All retail best practices go for a toss here, and yet the volumes are huge"





Dr Pete Cheema OBE
CEO - SGF

MY FAVOURITE STORE



WHOLE FOODS

SEATTLE, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/8uAgV3t95vLsxHi69>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What have I learnt from this store?
It is exactly how a store should be.

What would I purchase from this store?
Everything!

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, fresh local, meal occasion, merchandising

“Superbly laid out. It has everything you would want from a store, including exquisite variety, tremendous quality, highly-trained staff, and a very clean experience.”



Tracey Clements
SVP CEO EUROPE - Mobility & Convenience,
BP Global Retail

MY FAVOURITE STORE



ISHERWOOD & CO

ANNAN, SCOTLAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/qF3SHPh7Bo5koQq6>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, grocery

What have I learnt from this store?
I learned a huge amount about customer service working there.

What would I purchase from this store?
Grocery

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, meal occasion, service, technology

"This is a third-generation, independent grocer and delicatessen well known for their great meats, cheese, and filled rolls. They constantly adapt to changing customer needs and reinvent their business.

Owned by John and Margaret Armstrong, both are still involved in the store well into their seventies. Day-to-day operations are now managed by their son, Grant.

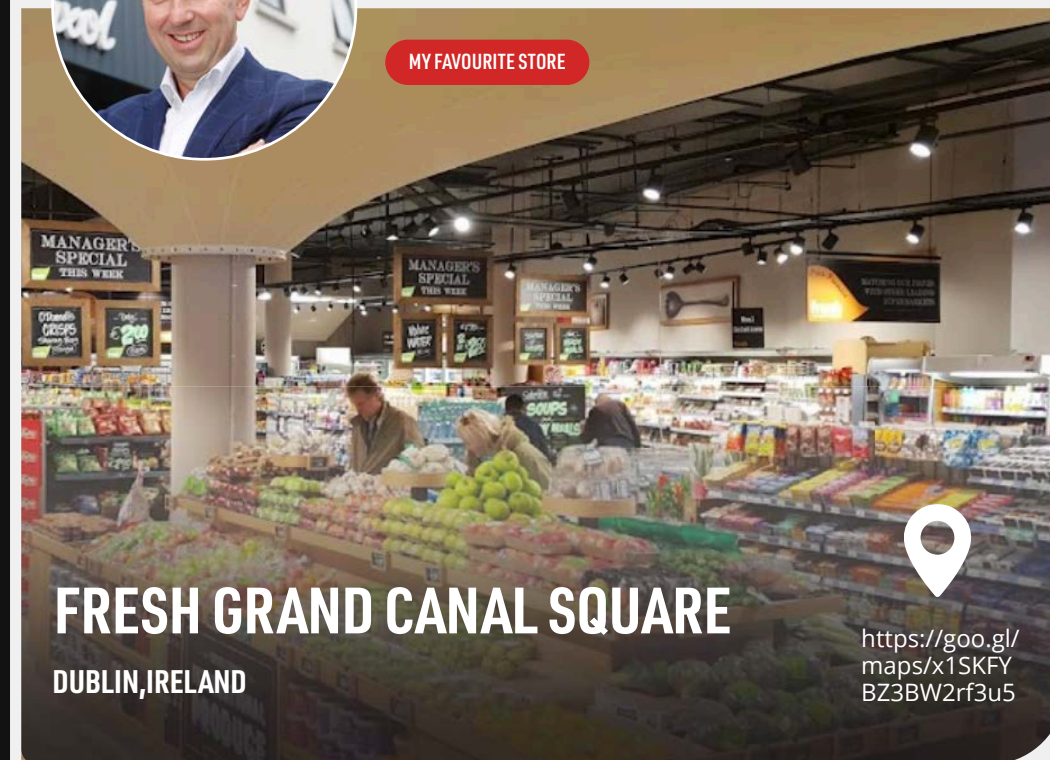
I worked at this store from the ages of 14 to 18 after school, and I also worked weekends and holidays whilst at university. My father also worked there between the ages of 13 to 16 delivering “messages” on an antique Raleigh bike!

The store has faced the loss of the local market, the addition of a Tesco to the town, and even an Aldi across the road. And yet, it's more than 100 years old and still going strong!"



Brian Donaldson
CEO - The Maxol Group

MY FAVOURITE STORE



FRESH GRAND CANAL SQUARE

DUBLIN, IRELAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/x1SKFYBZ3BW2rf3u5>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice

What would I purchase from this store?
When based in Dublin, I tend to leave the office quite late and usually stay close to Fresh at Grand Canal Square. In search of a fresh and healthy meal, I head straight to the salad bar, select the amazing potato salad, coleslaw, and rocket salad and from the butchers counter, and I pick a medium-cut ribeye. Depending on the type of day I've had at the office, it's either freshly-squeezed juice from the chilled counter or their own signature red wine from Portugal. It's a most rewarding end to a busy day.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, fresh local

What have I learnt from this store?
Fresh simply offers the best quality products—a large percentage of which are locally-sourced and produced—and displays and merchandises them in the most appealing way using the latest refrigeration, shelving, and natural displays showcasing new ranges. They also use very clear and enticing messaging throughout the store.

The people talent in Fresh is one of its key differentiators. You only have to visit the store to see their passion and enthusiasm, which are always accompanied by a friendly welcome for customers. This gives responsibility and ownership, it brings individuality to the choice of products, and it has a kind of uniqueness or quirkiness that is so evident in each area.

"My favourite store is Fresh Grand Canal Square, which is owned by the well-known retail entrepreneur, Noel Smith. Fresh is marketed under the strapline, "The Good Food Market," which perfectly captures the essence of the store. With welcoming exterior seating and a long glass shopfront, one immediately notices the attention to detail and extraordinary finish in materials, colours, and layout—drawing you into an oasis of choice and convenience shopping.

The ergonomics and flow of the store are easily navigated and set the highest of standards for product quality and freshness. Customers will delight in the Fresh offering, from its range of local Irish meats and cheeses, a remarkable creativity in the choice of prepared meals, a fabulous salad bar with both local and more exotic ingredients, and an off license with an extensive wine cellar for all sizes of wallets. The deli and coffee facilities are first-class, and there is a real expectation of surprise when you shop the store. Fresh encapsulates the best across all categories and delivers a personal touch that is unrivaled in a city-based location."



Alexis Dua
Key Account Manager - RATIONAL

MY FAVOURITE STORE



RAMLY HALAL KIOSK
JOHOR, MALAYSIA

<https://goo.gl/maps/RFdDiBrqVEDwUpFE7>

Type of retailer
Foodservice

What would I purchase from this store?
Of course the Original Ramly Burger!

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Meal occasion

What have I learnt from this store?
It is amazing to see how this street-hawking brand has evolved into a kiosk that looks exactly like a fast food restaurant—and is positioned next to the international brands like KFC and Pizza Hut. To be honest, it does not look like a kiosk, but more of a full-fledged fast food restaurant. They also took the opportunity to sell the Ramly frozen products at the corner of the restaurant, where customers can just grab and go!

“This Ramly store is conveniently located at the R&R of the North-South Highway. It makes for a great pitstop for the last bit of Malaysian flavour before heading back home to Singapore!”



Nigel Lee
Business Development Manager (Malaysia) - RATIONAL AG

MY FAVOURITE STORE



DON DON DONKI
SINGAPORE

<https://goo.gl/maps/dcVBQzdKmaqhinfy5>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Ready-to-eat meals, live cooking station, foodstuff, and knick-knacks

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, entertainment, meal occasion, merchandising, proprietary, service

What have I learnt from this store?
It is important to focus or specialize. Don Don Donki sells all things Japanese, and I think this is what really makes them successful. They also have a catchy tune played in-store and customers—especially the kids—will always sing-along with it. I feel that this makes the shopping experience more lively as the spirits are lifted. Their layout is like a maze at times, and you tend to shop every inch of their store till you reach the cashier. Well, the retailer has certainly achieved their objective!

“Don Don Donki has got all the Japanese products under one roof, and they provide more value compared to the other Japanese supermarkets here. In addition, they also operate a retail section which includes home and beauty. During the COVID lockdown when all the shops were shut, Don Don Donki has been my go-to store for a bit of normalcy and retail therapy!”



Edwina Dunn
Founder - Humby and Dunn

MY FAVOURITE STORE



AL DIMASHQI
KENSINGTON, LONDON, U.K.

<https://goo.gl/maps/L1mdvRpRtYtuwY4k7>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Produce, meats and bakery

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, fresh local, proprietary, service

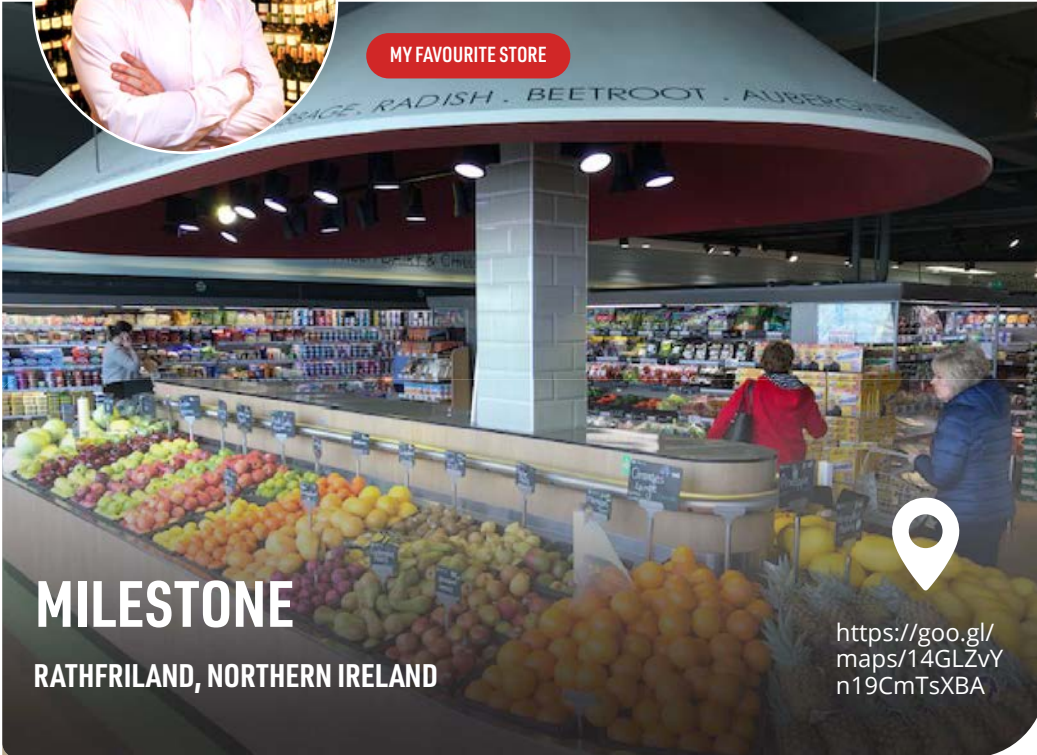
What have I learnt from this store?
Shopping is a delightful experience in this excellent independent grocer, which specializes in local and Middle-Eastern products.

“It’s a wonderful mix of everything you need from a neighbourhood store, but the stand-out is the amazing quality of fruit and vegetables and specialty departments—like butcher and bakery items—which make it a delight to shop and experience.”



Thomas Ennis
Founder - Ennis Group

MY FAVOURITE STORE



MILESTONE
RATHFRILAND, NORTHERN IRELAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/14GLZvYn19CmTsXBA>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, grocery, roadside (fuel)

What have I learnt from this store?
Being independent with your own brand gives total freedom to profitably service the needs of all customers.

What would I purchase from this store?
Proprietary in-store fresh meals, breads, and fruits and vegetables

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, fresh local, meal occasion, proprietary, service

"This is a tough one, but Tom McAvoy is always world-class for me."



Theo Foukkare
Chief Executive Officer - Australian Association of Convenience Stores (AACS)

MY FAVOURITE STORE



THE FOX'S PANTRY
TUGUN, GOLD COAST, AUSTRALIA

<https://goo.gl/maps/8cQKW351dqy6Mw7W9>

Type of retailer
Convenience, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?
Ready meals

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, fresh local, meal occasions, service

What have I learnt from this store?
Supporting the local community by listening and curating a range is the key to winning customers hearts, minds, and repeat purchase behaviour. For a small footprint retail store, understanding your local consumer and delivering a USP that is differentiated from your competition is always difficult for competitors to replicate. Retailers must stay true to their strategy in delivering fresh, healthy, and tasty meal options—and their baseline will grow.

"The Fox's Pantry has exceptional customer service, a curated range of fresh food made on-site daily for all of the different day parts, and it delivers the perfect cup of coffee. Additionally, its focus on healthy options across all product categories means that the entire family can enjoy a healthy treat—and my wife can complete a healthy top-up grocery shop or find dinner meal solutions any day of the week. The team has curated their entire range to meet the needs of their local community whilst maintaining the DNA of a traditional c-store."



George Fournier
President of EG America - EG Group

MY FAVOURITE STORE



TRADER JOE'S
MULTIPLE LOCATIONS (FRAMINGHAM, MA) U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/A6VWbH7QAFbRkxHr8>

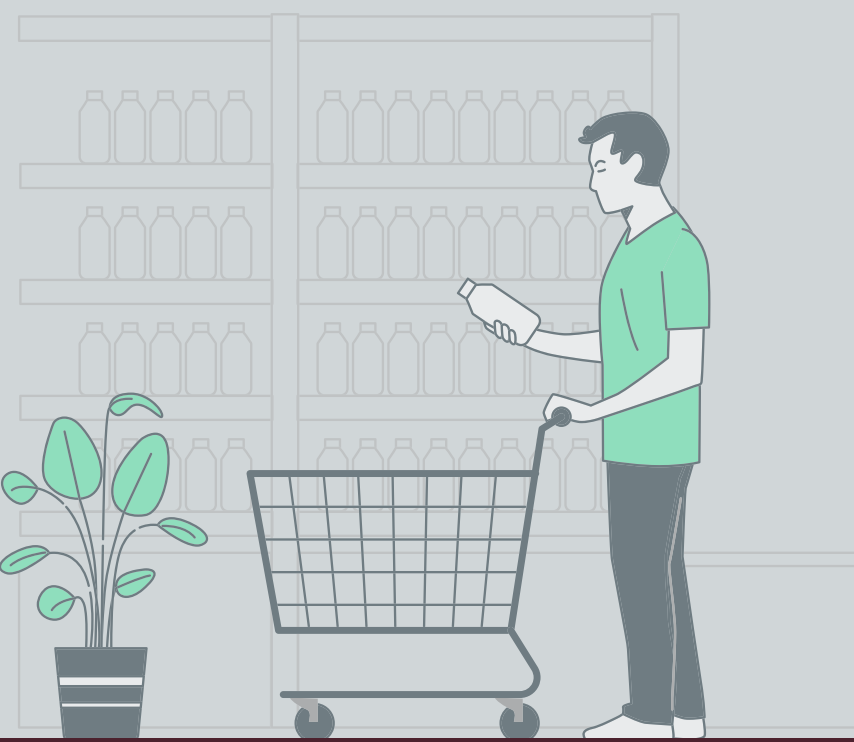
Type of retailer
Grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Everything. That's what I love about Trader Joe's. I never know what I'm going to buy, and my shopping experience feels like an adventure.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, proprietary

What have I learnt from this store?
Don't be afraid to offer products that are unconventional. Also, offering frozen products provides an opportunity. (less supply chain challenges)

"Trader Joe's has an extensive and unique private-label offering."





Marco Fuhrer
Managing Partner - Fuhrer & Hotz

MY FAVOURITE STORE

GOODS

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/uSiiAgXkj2ngXV3cA>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?
Ready meals

What have I learnt from this store?
I can achieve healthy lifestyle.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, fresh local, meal occasion, technology

“Connectivity, neo-ecology, new work, fast-moving, health, mobility”



Chris Gheysens
CEO - Wawa

MY FAVOURITE STORE

amazon

AMAZON.COM

ONLINE

<https://www.amazon.com>

Type of retailer
Online retailer

What would I purchase from this store?
Literally everything. I'm embarrassed to say how much I have spent on Amazon. In 2021, I had 632 orders delivered from Amazon including basic necessities, the "too hard to find," and everything in-between.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, service, technology

What have I learnt from this store?

- App performance really matters. Latency, simplicity, ease of use, and access are all very important to making the experience simple and easy.
- Balancing security and ease is difficult, but possible.
- For some customers, convenience and ease is more important than value.
- Supply chain infrastructure and their online marketplace have allowed Amazon to invite other suppliers into their ecosystem to create even more value for this customers—and ultimately, themselves.

“This answer is boring and almost cliché, but my favorite “store” is Amazon.com. Amazon's share of my wallet is significant, and continues to grow. Their online/app experience is quick, simple, provides excellent shopping information and their product range is amazing. The convenience of ordering paper plates, toothpaste, glue, and a garden hose on one order and delivered in 2 days is super convenient.”



Ashley Gockstetter
Director Strategy, Loyalty & Analytics - Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores

MY FAVOURITE STORE

SHAWARMA & CO

OKLAHOMA CITY, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/3B9YTITyk1AvS17YA>

Type of retailer
Foodservice

What would I purchase from this store?
Build your own bowl

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Fresh local, proprietary, service

What have I learnt from this store?
Friendly staff makes great food even better!

“The food is unique and high-quality, and the staff always make for a great experience whether ordering curbside or dining in.”





Ashley Green
Director - Edge Strategic Marketing Ltd

MY FAVOURITE STORE

M&S SIMPLY FOOD

BP CONNECT HAMMERSMITH

LONDON, U.K

<https://goo.gl/maps/Lod5yAH4n52B1TLg8>

Type of retailer

Convenience, foodservice, grocery, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?

Coffee, ready meals, bread, and cakes

What have I learnt from this store?

Less is more in terms of signage.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Assortment

“Good layout, excellent selection, clear signage.”



Ari Haseotes
President & CEO - Transcendent Brands LLC

MY FAVOURITE STORE

TRADER JOE'S

TRADER JOE'S

FRAMINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/58eUieUrKP7emq2a7>

Type of retailer

Grocery

What would I purchase from this store?

A host of fresh or frozen food items. The list is long, but some of my favorites include their vegetable fried rice and smoked corn salsa.

What have I learnt from this store?

For most retailers, private-label remains a lower priced, knock-off of a national brand. Not so for Trader Joe's products—which are entirely unique and exciting to discover.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Proprietary

“Still unquestionably the best purveyor of unique, private-label products.”



Thomas Herz
Head of Marketing Retail - Valora

MY FAVOURITE STORE

MARSHALL STREET

HAMBURG, GERMANY

<https://www.marshall-street.de/>

Type of retailer

Breakfast café

What would I purchase from this store?

Chia bowl with fresh fruits and homemade granola

What have I learnt from this store?

Focus beats selection.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Fresh local, service

“Best breakfast in town. Fresh handmade dishes. Special quality of ingredients. It's also a relaxed atmosphere where one feels welcome from the first moment.”



Jonathan James
Business Owner - James Convenience Retail Ltd.

MY FAVOURITE STORE

PLEASE
QUEUE
HERE
thank-you

MILESTONE

RATHFRILAND, NORTHERN IRELAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/M4LUFeD0egJ66Sn8A>

Type of retailer

Convenience, foodservice, grocery, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?

I would purchase my entire weekly shop from this store. It caters to all of my needs and has a fantastic range of fresh and chilled products.

What have I learnt from this store?

I have learned from this store that it is possible to provide wonderful products made on-site in large quantities.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Assortment, curation, fresh local, meal occasion, merchandising, proprietary, service

“It is totally geared towards the needs of the local consumer, and the store standards and presentation are absolute world-class.”



Stephen Jempson
MD - Jempson's Supermarkets Ltd.

MY FAVOURITE STORE



DUNNES SUPERMARKET

CORNELSCOURT SHOPPING CENTRE, DUBLIN 18, IRELAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/VmejRp65ZT892Q3u5>

Type of retailer
Grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
All my fresh food

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment

What have I learnt from this store?
Don't be afraid to use sub-brands to enhance your local offer. You can then really specialize in that category—as opposed to one umbrella brand trying to be all things to all people.

"I love the fresh food displays and the way Dunnes management have incorporated local supplier brands to enhance their own offer. Very clever. This, coupled with great standards and cleanliness, makes for an interesting and stimulating shopping experience."



Leszek Jurczak
Regional Relationship Partner Central & Eastern Europe - NACS

MY FAVOURITE STORE



ZABKA

WARSAW, POLAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/rFNfWxMtuipxUo2G6>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?
Hot dogs

What have I learnt from this store?
Unmanned technology applies not only to on-shelf merchandise, but also to foodservice.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Entertainment, proprietary, technology

"This is a new, unmanned concept of the most popular convenience store chain in Poland. It was the first in Europe to introduce a robot that prepares hot snacks (hot dogs) in front of customers."



Roger Knill
Vice President Distributed Brands - Trivarga AG

MY FAVOURITE STORE



COOP TO GO

ZÜRICH, SWITZERLAND

<https://g.page/Coop2Go?share>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?
Fresh ready meals, hot snacks, salads, and cold drinks

What have I learnt from this store?
The whole store is built on saving time. Everything is self-service. A wide range of fresh and cold products work at the right location, with a lot of frequency.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment

"Speed, fast and fresh products, in high quality combined with appealing store design. The assortment shares also correspond to a modern convenience store. A lot of cooling space for beverages and fresh products. There are deductions for the coffee offer and a high number of self-checkout terminals."



Mark Landini
Creative Director - Landini Associates

MY FAVOURITE STORE



BI-RITE

SAN FRANCISCO, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/idm6rmaLkLPVvbGb9>

Type of retailer
Convenience, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Anything they told me to. When I last visited with friends from Seattle, there was a bottle of tomato sauce they proclaimed was, in their opinion, the best in the world. They only had a few cases because someone made it from their allotment, which is why stocks were low and prices were high. I had to have it until I remembered that Australian Border Patrol would have confiscated it. But there's the point: hold an opinion, tell a story, and challenge me to buy now or regret it latter. Genius!

"It's an Aladdin's cave of treasured food with a genie at every turn to grant all of your foodie wishes. It's curated, local, merchandised densely, sustainable, supports the community, and holds opinions—and supports the community. I'm also told its sales per square meter would make an Apple store blush. What more could a boy ask for!"

What have I learnt from this store?
If someone holds a passionate opinion about food, then I will listen to it. Too many retailers just "stock". These guys curate in the real sense of the word. They take the time to do the work for you.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Curation, fresh local, merchandising



Global Roadside Retailer

MY FAVOURITE STORE

EPI-BOULANGERIE & PATISSERIE

COLOGNE, GERMANY

<https://goo.gl/maps/x8EJdt7v4aqbYiR78>

Type of retailer
Foodservice

What have I learnt from this store?
There is always a demand for authentic fresh, unique, high-quality products sold with great service.

What would I purchase from this store?
Bread, pastries, cakes, and coffee

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?**Assortment,**
Fresh local, proprietary, service

“The best of French Boulangerie in the Rhineland. Customers want special and premium products, and you can get both at épi. The flour comes from a mill near Paris and bears the "label rouge", the highest French seal of quality for food. It's three times the cost of the local flour. Their bread and baguettes are 'fait main'—created by hand and fresh every day.”



James Lowman Chief Executive

MY FAVOURITE STORE

SIMPLY FRESH

BETHNAL GREEN, LONDON, U.K

<https://g.page/SimplyFreshE2?s=hare>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What have I learnt from this store?
Mehmet has always said—contrary to the received wisdom—that produce is the easiest category to manage. I think he's being a bit modest about the skills he has in this field, but his point is that if you focus and commit to produce, many of the problems in operating it are overcome and even become opportunities.

What would I purchase from this store?
Produce, bakery, local products, refillables

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Sustainability: refillables across a range of categories

“When I first visited the store, it was clear that most of the shops and services around it were not well-invested. It struck me as the type of location where a retailer could have kept investment, wastage, and costs low, and traded on a very traditional model of pure impulse and a bit of ambient grocery. But Mehmet, who runs the store, was going far beyond this with a fantastic produce range, refillables, design flourishes, local partners, and front-foot marketing. When I see beautiful shops in established affluent areas, I'm impressed but I'm not blown away—it's what you would expect. But this sort of offer in a small space, and with a hyperlocal and mixed demographic customer base, was inspirational.”



Steven Lye Managing Director - 7-Eleven Singapore

MY FAVOURITE STORE

DON DON DONKI

SINGAPORE

<https://goo.gl/maps/iW2dgaS2krbmV9Jh7>

Type of retailer
Grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Ready-to-eat Bento sets, sushi, exclusive Japanese snacks, and sweet potato

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, meal occasion, merchandising

What have I learnt from this store?
Customer shopping experience is key. Getting the right store concept, right product range, and maintaining store standards are important while pricing is secondary as customers are willing to pay slightly more for the unique shopping experience. Consistency throughout all stores island-wide is also critical to set the perception and ensure top-of-mind awareness of the brand.

“The concept as well as the look and feel of the store is inviting, with the use of attractive posters and point-of-sale materials that makes the store look lively, fun, and exciting. In addition, the store layout with row after row of well-stocked shelves of quality Japanese products gives the perception of a mega discount store. It is also a one-stop-shop for everything ranging from fresh produce, household items, ready-to-eat, and pantry essentials. Fresh produce is well-displayed, and the quality is always maintained. To top everything off, the Donki jingle played on repeat in the stores completes the shopping experience of being in a Donki store in Japan.”





Robert Mahoney
General Manger, Retail - Freedom Fuels

MY FAVOURITE STORE

ROCHE BROS

BOSTON, U.S.A



<https://goo.gl/maps/vbiyRMR9aYakqRLN6>

Type of retailer

Convenience, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?

Pretty much everything

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Assortment, curation, fresh local, meal occasion, merchandising

What have I learnt from this store?

Make the product range the 'hero', not old school "retail theater." (i.e. clutter)

"Uncluttered, superior range, great lighting, ambiance, and tons beautifully displayed ready-to-eat and impulse options."



Jane Milton
Food Industry Expert - Jane Milton Ltd

MY FAVOURITE STORE

JELMOLI

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND



<https://goo.gl/maps/WoAkCGRLmPfQSiEo6>

Type of retailer

Department

What would I purchase from this store?

I would purchase across a wide range of their assortment. The store is city centre, so it would be for many a stop on their way to work for lunch or on their way home for dinner. They have a cheese room called "the humidor" which is superb and has an incredible range with well-informed staff. Their prepared meals always look hand-prepped rather than mass-produced. Their fruit and vegetables are often unpackaged, so you can shop for exactly what you need, and they also have a great assortment of baked goods, deli sandwiches, and wines.

What have I learnt from this store?

I have learned that the assortment and manner in which it's displayed are a key part of their success. You can easily put whole meals together and get everything you need in one store. It's laid out well, staff are knowledgeable, service is superb, and they have a number of places to eat and drink within the department—meaning you stay and shop longer.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Assortment, curation, meal occasion, merchandising, service

"I've always found their assortment and merchandising inspiring. Across the whole food department, the quality, range, and display is done to a very high standard and that's also convenient for the customer. For example, all the potatoes are loose so you can buy exactly the amount you need, but I loved that they also have some wrapped in gold foil ready to bake on a barbeque or oven. Besides, the fact they have them pre-wrapped and in gold just makes it all seem more luxurious."



Terry Mulkens
MD - Mulkerns Eurospar Ltd

MY FAVOURITE STORE

MILESTONE (McAVOY's)

RATHFRILAND , NORTHERN IRELAND



<https://goo.gl/maps/De688shx9ZQzkDah6>

Type of retailer

Convenience, foodservice, grocery, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?

Food to go

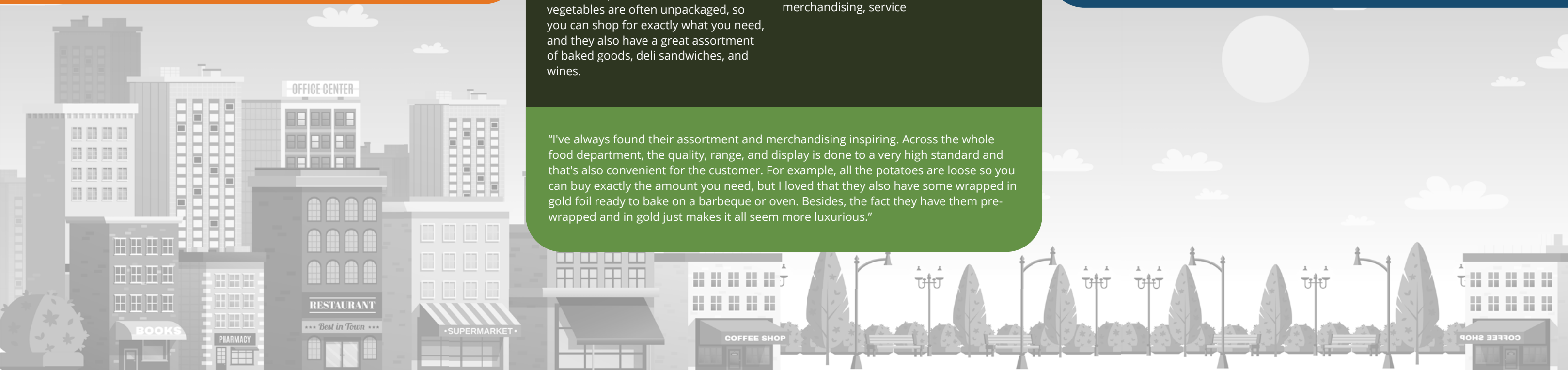
What have I learnt from this store?

The whole store is built on saving time. Everything is self-service. A wide range of fresh products, both hot and cold, works at the right location with the right frequency.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Fresh local

"Milestone has been very innovative in the food-to-go sector for many years. The shop is bright and airy, welcoming from outside, and has good parking."





Dan Munford
Managing Director - Insight Research

MY FAVOURITE STORE



APPLEGREEN RATHCOOLE

DUBLIN, IRELAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/s3qqZv6YgTXG5mb37>

Type of retailer

Convenience, foodservice, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?

Convenience items, fuel, and food to go (including the propriety deli brand 'Bakewell,' propriety quality coffee 'Braeburn,' Bueno desert concept, Chopstix Noodle Bar, and Burger King)

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Assortment, curation, meal occasion, merchandising, service

What have I learnt from this store?

The effective redevelopment of a site can create a true roadside destination by optimizing the overall site footprint (adequate parking and traffic flow of the site) and optimising the store footprint, incorporating a combination of commercially successful food offers (global brands, national brands, and proprietary brands) together with a strong convenience retail offer.

"This store leverages exceptional use of space and layout to create a roadside destination that incorporates a range of offers for different need states. The food-to-go offer is a compelling proposition, providing options for breakfast, lunch, evening, and variety across different days of the week—including options for adults and children, and meal versus treat occasions. The overall site branding is very strong, and the interior store design and atmosphere is very welcoming with an easy-to-navigate layout allowing for grab-and-go or eat-in with a great seating area and plenty of natural light. Above all, the operational execution of this store is exceptional, particularly when you consider the high footfall."

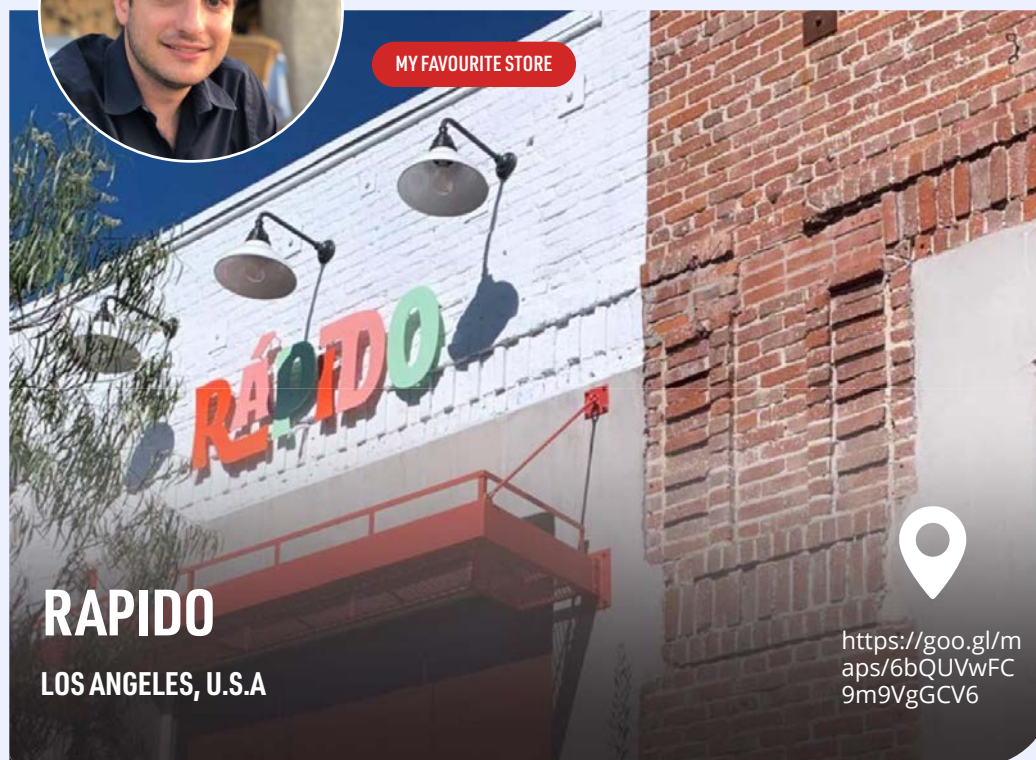


Adam OConnor
Director - Retail and Food & Beverage - OMNE | WX



Matt Newberg
Founder - HNGRY

MY FAVOURITE STORE



RAPIDO

LOS ANGELES, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/6bQUVwFC9m9VgGCV6>

Type of retailer

Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?

Bagels and cream cheese

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Curation

"Rapido boasts a great curation of wines (including private label half bottles), spreads, tinned fish, and bread at this modern bodega. There's also a handful of prepared salads and sandwiches that come from Jayan Isaac Bread, which they also sell individually. It's super high-end but has a lot of great imported pantry staples that can level up any dish."

MY FAVOURITE STORE



EBINA EXPASA

KANAGAWA, JAPAN

<https://goo.gl/maps/FEHZxZF X3Et6ERMA8>



Benjamin Nothafft
Business Development Manager - Hilti AG

MY FAVOURITE STORE



BRIDGE

ZÜRICH, SWITZERLAND

<https://goo.gl/maps/b9D2GVmNQvhHxQpo6>

Type of retailer

Foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?

Lunch, dinner (foodservice), groceries, alcoholic beverages, bread, meats.

What have I learnt from this store?

The future role of foodservice in this highly impressive and differentiated format. And what to consider upfront when implementing foodservice, but also how to react and adjust over time.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?**Assortment, Entertainment, meal occasion, service**

"Bridge in Zurich is a very special store concept—one that stretches boundaries in what a food business can offer and the missions it can meet. Bridge combines lifestyle, food, customer experience, sustainability, dive, and feel."

Type of retailer

Roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?

Food, gifts and fuel

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Curation

What have I learnt from this store?

The concept of refueling will soon be dominated by recharging and thus longer dwell times that will inevitably lead to an increase in facilities that encourage a pleasant way to spend 20-30 minutes. In Ebina, there are 100 different examples of this all under one roof. The little nuggets of learning come from each visit as they continue to evolve and develop the facilities without losing sight of it's heritage and special place in travelers' hearts.

"The blend of practical facilities with experiences and F&B create a unique level of destination for roadside refreshments that has become a destination in its own right. The standard of retailing and F&B is excellent, especially in consideration of the huge volumes"



Leif Olson
Head of Retail Leasing Australia - CBRE Australia

MY FAVOURITE STORE



AESOP, PITT STREET MALL
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

<https://goo.gl/maps/rcgNj8uyTx2ykTZ27>

Type of retailer
Department

What would I purchase from this store?
Premium products that include skin care, hand care, and body care

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Curation, entertainment, merchandising, proprietary, service

What have I learnt from this store?
"This store sits on Sydney's prime retail strip of Pitt Street Mall, which has some of the highest pedestrian traffic in the city. The fit-out is minimalistic and industrial at first glance, but when you step off the busy mall, you feel like you have stepped into a sanctuary. Aesop has cleverly used the changing appearance of the shop with colourful props to create change."

"Each Aesop store is unique to its location in both its design and aesthetics, but one common theme is the experience where you are encouraged to use the products in store—to try before you buy."



Robert Onion
Director - Circle Brands

MY FAVOURITE STORE



FRESHPLUS BY EMARAT
DUBAI, U.A.E

<https://goo.gl/maps/8m7WGErkZqESbo1a6>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?
Baked products, fresh juices, and barista coffee

What have I learnt from this store?
Matching quality products at a great price to your diverse customers' tastes is key—as is not forgetting that a great store environment attracts and relaxes the family.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Fresh local, service

"Freshly baked products throughout the day and like Dubai catering for a variety of palates. From croissants to Mannish and Paratha products for all nationalities. A great consistent offer, taste, and excellent bakery service. Open 24/7, well-priced, with a large offer in a great environment, with clean toilets, and great customer service."



Claudio Pastor
Managing Director - RATIONAL Brasil

MY FAVOURITE STORE



EMPORIO SANTA LUZIA
SAO PAULO, BRASIL

<https://g.page/casa-santa-luzia-sp?share>

Type of retailer
Grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Food, wine, and more

What have I learnt from this store?
Quality is key

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, meal occasions

"Fantastic product mix and gastronomic experiences."



Virag Patel
COO | Cofounder - ePac Flexible Packaging

MY FAVOURITE STORE



TRADER JOE'S
NATIONWIDE, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/8BwfzqVWFzkqLLJq6>

Type of retailer
Grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Typical fresh and frozen foods, vegetables, and beverages

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Fresh local

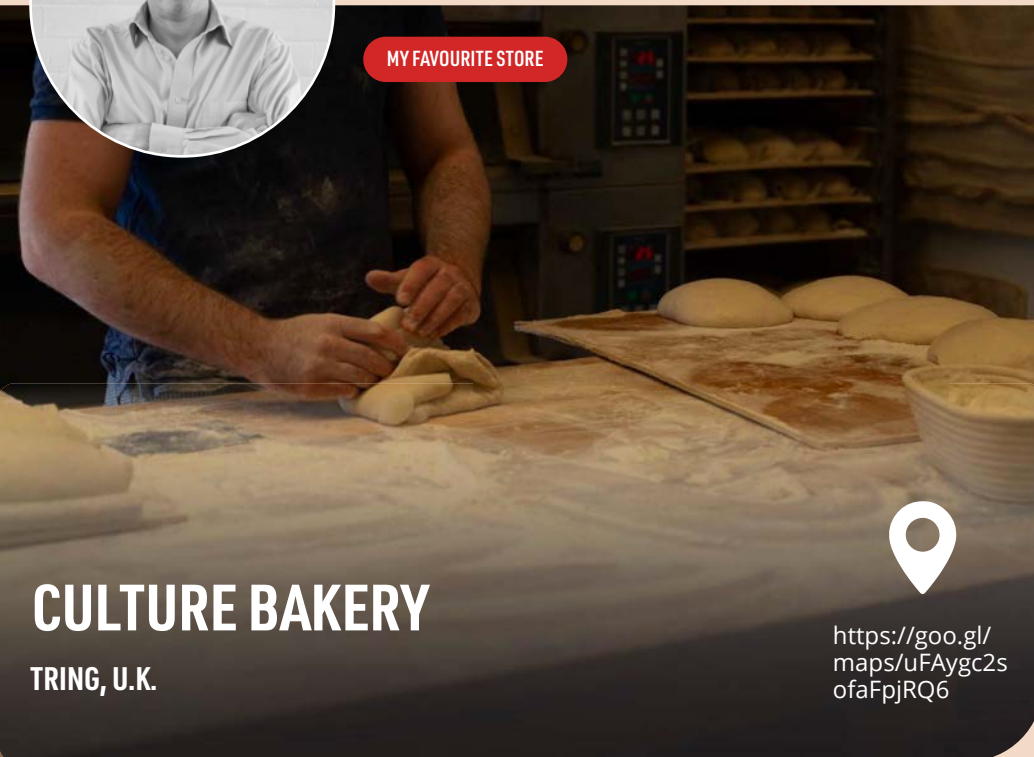
What have I learnt from this store?
It sounds simple, but if you can deliver a consistent customer experience, you win. I look at stores like Lidl, which I enjoy going to as well, but they have a different but consistent customer experience. It doesn't necessarily all have to match Trader Joe's, but when businesses are having a hard time finding and training employees, having supply chain shortages, and struggling with inflationary price pressures, I think TJ's has figured out how to stay as consistent as possible. Yes, they have stock outs, but the employees are very open about it and the store actually tells me when to expect the next truck of that product. I just come back, or they fill up the shelf with another unique item. They have price pressures, but it's less severe than I've seen at other grocery stores. I also feel like their recruiting efforts ensure that the right cultural fits continues to be hired in the business.

"Trader Joe's consistently gets it right. At the volume of traffic that each store continues to drive, you see few signs of stock outs, empty shelves, long waits, or employees that are stressed and exhausted by the sheer number of customers. Their products are straight-forward, well thought-out, and consistent—with enough of a surprise that makes you want to continue to browse the aisles. I found that especially during these last few years of changes in the retail value proposition, their model still holds: deliver a quality product, in a friendly and inviting setting, at a price point that the masses can afford."



Craig Phillipson
Managing Director - Shopworks

MY FAVOURITE STORE



CULTURE BAKERY

TRING, U.K.

<https://goo.gl/maps/uFAygc2sofaFpjRQ6>

Type of retailer
Foodservice

What would I purchase from this store?
Coffee, bread and pastries

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, fresh local, merchandising, service

What have I learnt from this store?
Despite high street domination by the branded coffee chains, what consumers want are the small, independent food shops whose reputations are built on the quality of their produce and their service.

They offer a unique concept and character, tend to be super agile and can respond directly to customer needs (in both good and bad times) because they have invested the time and effort in really getting to know what their customers want.

"Quiet, leafy, and generally lovely, Tring is not a stressful place to live, but if ever I need a pick-me-up, this artisan café-bakery specializing in sourdough and viennoiserie on the corner of the high street is my number one place to go. The creamy, rich coffee is consistently 10 out of 10, the slow-rise sour dough bread is fresh from the oven, and there is always a delicious array of buttery pastries. With a friendly, relaxed atmosphere and a focus on customer service, another key ingredient in their success, the Culture Bakery, is up there with the boutique London coffee shops.

The tempting array of baked goods aside, the Culture Bakery is a brilliantly understated but well-considered bakery concept launched during COVID-19. They supply many local businesses (including restaurants and shops) with baked goods and responded to the impact of the pandemic by opening an outlet, which allowed them to reach residents and engage with the local community."



Andrew Phipps
Global Head of Sustainability Thought Leadership -
Cushman & Wakefield

MY FAVOURITE STORE



DAYLESFORD ORGANIC

DAYLESFORD, NEAR KINGHAM, U.K

<https://goo.gl/maps/c3Na5UvVu18b2wxu9>

Type of retailer
Farmshop

What would I purchase from this store?
Food to go, food for later, clothing, books, homewares

What have I learnt from this store?
Retail doesn't need to be purely functional. It is an experience.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Curation

"It's more than a store, it's a vision of a lifestyle. In parts an organic food store, restaurant, cooking school, holiday location, and garden centre—on the whole it creates an aspirational conflation of beauty. Everything from the uniforms worn by the staff to the soap in the bathrooms to the china used to serve the organic carrot cake, it all seems to have been done with precision and intention. There's no sign of something just being done because it needs to be done; rather, there is a mindful intentionality behind each decision. It's welcoming without being overwhelming and comforting without ever feeling anything less than an experience"



Deborah Robinson
CEO - Central England Coop

MY FAVOURITE STORE



HOME BARGAINS

SWINDON, U.K

<https://goo.gl/maps/d9tbcJnt4zx2HEH5A>

Type of retailer
Bargain

What would I purchase from this store?
Everything

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Health and beauty products

What have I learnt from this store?
There's so much to learn from Home Bargains. They don't follow the competition, they follow the trends and give customers what they want. When crafting and knitting were big, they had great products to inspire beginners. They have a bamboo range of products from reusable face wipes to sweeping brushes and dustpans—fitting with the more natural style and sustainability trends. They always offer something new, they always offer great value, and they are always relevant.

"My overall favourite store is Home Bargains in the UK. It has incredibly high operational standards, with wide aisles making it easy for everyone to get around, and they are always sparkling clean. The store has great access and parking. They work to ensure the shelves are always stocked full. They are absolutely on it with seasonality and events. They are also always the first to display products for Mother's Day, Easter, and other holidays with a great selection, including fragrance, candles, slippers, crafts, and the usual cards, confectionery and alcohol."



Gavin Rothwell
Director - Food Futures Insights

MY FAVOURITE STORE



DOM'S KITCHEN & MARKET

CHICAGO, U.S.A



<https://goo.gl/maps/H5HzzoSgSSoC29DA8>

Type of retailer
Foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
I'd be highly likely to stay for a coffee, a smoothie, a beer, a glass of wine, or possibly even all four.

What have I learnt from this store?
There's a lot of opportunity to better integrate foodservice into food retail across almost all markets. This is a reference benchmark from the perspective of what can be achieved.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Curation, entertainment, merchandising, proprietary, service

"At the cross section of retail and foodservice, Chicago offers some fantastic examples. Foxtrot does a great job from a smaller footprint, but Don's Kitchen & Market—with a larger footprint and more foodservice on-site—just beats it. Taking some great global cuisine influences, it aims to redefine the local food shopping experience to a neighbourhood destination. And that it does in spades. Food hall-style concepts combine with a hugely impressive food store, offering the best of all worlds and meeting a full range of food and drink missions."



Lesley Saitta
Chair & Co-Owner - Impact 21

MY FAVOURITE STORE



FRESH MARKET

LEXINGTON, U.S.A



<https://goo.gl/maps/kC9u2FRN937dk5AW8>

Type of retailer
Grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Organic produce (vegetables/fruit), fresh fish, pre-made meals, pre-made salads and side dishes, bakery type breads and deserts, Irish butter, almond/oat milk, vegan (plant based) products, paper products such as designer plates and napkins, fresh flowers and plants.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Curation, fresh local, meal occasion, proprietary

What have I learnt from this store?
The store provides appealing pre-made foods that cater to many different audiences. While mainly organic, they also provide vegan options in the same areas—rather than creating a separate plant-based section—so your shopping journey doesn't need to change. They also recently started doing single-serve bakery items for trial, which provides the ability to try cakes and deserts before purchasing a whole one and provides smaller sizes for smaller households. They also provide a lot of combinations of foods, sauces, and textures in their pre-made meals that I generally wouldn't have thought of. Additionally, they provide extensive recipes and different products to go along with their fresh fish, meats, and chicken as well as fresh produce.

"I like this store primarily for its selection of organic and vegan products and pre-made meals. Additionally, it also carries a wide variety of fresh fish. While small, I can usually purchase the majority of the food I eat each week, with a diet that is vastly different than the rest of my family. It also carries several products that you can only buy at the store—either because they are private label or they're the only place in town to carry certain brands, especially those that are considered vintage."



David Sands
Chairman - David's Kitchen Ltd

MY FAVOURITE STORE



HOUSE OF BRUAR

HIGHLAND PERTHSHIRE, SCOTLAND



<https://goo.gl/maps/J7HNQ9rqD1t3d2Uh8>

Type of retailer
Department

What would I purchase from this store?
Many Scottish products, including beef, salmon, cheeses

What have I learnt from this store?
Make your store a destination and focus on quality.
Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Curation

"High-end quality Scottish products."





Andreas Schäfer

Member of Management board - AKE Ausseer Kälte- und Edelstahltechnik GmbH

MY FAVOURITE STORE



BOBBY&FRITZ

RHEINLAND-PFALZ, GERMANY

<https://goo.gl/maps/cwFnLVnThjTTTZY3A>

Type of retailer

Convenience, foodservice, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?

Ready meals

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Assortment, curation, fresh local, meal occasion, service

What have I learnt from this store?

Focus on the essentials: speed for guests and good-quality food and beverages that are freshly-prepared. This store also has a small seating area inside and a larger terrace! Usually I buy more than I wanted—especially coffee, sweets, or an additional drink—because the staff actively oversell through questions. For me, the staff at the POS are so important. We need to value and promote them more!

"Everything here is brought to the point because of the small space. They have a clearly recognizable allocation of the brands, and the concentrated food and beverage offer are designed to meet the needs of travelers. The store has all-day suitability and is 100% guest-oriented. I always eat a currywurst with fries and then take a cafe to-go and a soft drink."



Patrick Sewell

Managing Director - Sewell Retail Ltd



Kay Segal

Business Accelerator Team

MY FAVOURITE STORE



TRADER JOE'S

NATIONWIDE, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/kVnMtxDogshCbvrn6>

Type of retailer

Grocery

What would I purchase from this store?

I purchase an array of products, from produce and snacks to deli items and ready meals.

What have I learnt from this store?

Private brands done well can create a huge point of difference and loyalty.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Assortment, curation, proprietary

"Innovative products! There is always something new to uncover at Trader Joe's. They have and continue to create products for today's diverse consuming public."



Dr Paul Sewell

Chairman - Sewell Group Ltd.

MY FAVOURITE STORE



JUNCTION 14 MAYFIELD

MONASTEREVIN COUNTY KILDARE, IRELAND

<https://g.page/j14mayfield?share>

Type of retailer

Foodservice, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?

Breakfast, lunch, or dinner

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Meal occasion, merchandising, proprietary, service

What have I learnt from this store?

Offer high-quality prepared food choices alongside take-home groceries, and both local and transit customers will make the site a destination stop.

"Excellent and wide variety of food to choose from. Friendly and helpful staff. It's much more like a shopping mall or city food court than a motorway service station."



STARBUCKS RESERVE MILAN

MILAN, ITALY

<https://goo.gl/maps/nANXNf6yYiY8NAi99>

Type of retailer

Foodservice

What would I purchase from this store?

Breakfast on the go, lunch, and a catch-up or cocktail at the bar later in the day!

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Curation

What have I learnt from this store?

This is a real destination and an experience in its own right. Each store is unique but has similar principles and is tailored to the city chosen. I think retailers can take this notion and make their store(s) different and 'wow' customers—pushing the boundaries of what is considered the norm.

"Whilst Starbucks are on every street corner, their Reserve offer is outstandingly different. Clearly known for coffee, this store and five others globally are an entirely different proposition. From the icon buildings, interior design, diversified offer and experience, ability to cater to different day part transactions, and the the outrageous theatre of colours and installations, it feels like a coffee bean version of the Wonka Chocolate Factory."



Joseph Sheetz
Executive Vice Chairman - Sheetz, Inc.

MY FAVOURITE STORE



WEGMANS
STATE COLLEGE, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/JfDgYBKuXvihweq86>

Type of retailer
Grocery

What have I learnt from this store?
Food retailing must engage all of our senses.

What would I purchase from this store?
Artisan products

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Curation

“Visiting Wegmans is an “experience” rather than a shopping trip. The visuals, the aromas, the service—they all contribute to the overall experience.”



Steven Snitkin
Director of Client Development - RATIONAL

MY FAVOURITE STORE



WEGMANS
FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/t3evKLwwT2y5fPUd8>

Type of retailer
Grocery

What have I learnt from this store?
I learned that a grocer can offer restaurant quality food prepared for their clients while also offering standard grocery items. Having this home meal replacement solution enhances the customer experience and keeps us returning time and time again!!

What would I purchase from this store?
My primary purchases are meat, seafood, and produce.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, fresh local, meal occasion, merchandising, service

“I am a chef and love the overall experience. From the cleanliness of the store to the variety and quality of their products, this one location can satisfy so many needs!”



Roy Strasburger
CEO - StrasGlobal

MY FAVOURITE STORE



KINGSGATE WINE AND PROVISIONS
WINCHESTER, U.K

<https://goo.gl/maps/uUBdoUb3G2tNEn7HA>

Type of retailer
Convenience, grocery

What have I learnt from this store?
It's not about the number of SKU's—it is about the SKUs themselves. Products must be the draw to entice customers away from the supermarkets.

What would I purchase from this store?
Top-ups of grocery staples; frequent items such as milk, eggs, and bread; and local artisan treats such as cheese. A good bottle of wine does not go amiss.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Curation

“Well-curated local products, and they're attractively displayed.”



Eva Strasburger
CEO - StrasGlobal

MY FAVOURITE STORE



RUNWAY LUNA LIFESTYLE
AUSTIN, TEXAS, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/r81kaRYnYjd5Pdy47>

Type of retailer
Lifestyle

What would I purchase from this store?
Coffee, cheese plates, wine, homemade bread, olive pastes, cocktail syrup

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, entertainment, fresh local, meal occasion, proprietary, service, technology

“If I were to own a retail store, it would be one like Runaway Luna in Austin, Texas—a unique family-owned, community-focused, stylish café, wine bar, boutique, and event space. The brainchild of Cathy Galbraith and her daughter Hanna, Runaway Luna (the name and logo itself has a romantic and dramatic story behind it) was founded because two well-traveled ladies suddenly found themselves in lockdown in 2020 and decided to use their creative talents and retail experience to open their dream destination retail store. There are so many reasons to love Luna's. For example, Cathy is larger-than-life. She typically wears a hat and is always bustling around the store, greeting every customer with a “hey Hun”—as in “honey”—in her strong, Canadian accent. She also immediately points out to the customers the menu for the day, any new specials, and various upcoming events that might be of interest. She remembers what you have purchased on previous visits, suggests what to try next, and is quick to pull you over to see new work from artisans across the country. Cathy simply anchors the store and raises the bar on every visit.”

What have I learnt from this store?
Luna's brand, Runaway Luna Lifestyle, is very well developed and consistent, and they do a great job of selling it and making it believable. You know when you go to the store that you will have a moment to indulge and relax however busy your day.



Martin Swadling
Customer Director - Booker

MY FAVOURITE STORE



V&A FOOD MARKET

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA



<https://goo.gl/maps/cSKXZcoeSqEWtvkPA>

Type of retailer
Foodservice

What have I learnt from this store?

The power of great ingredients combined with theatre, amazing staff, and a stunning location.

What would I purchase from this store?

Great food and drink using fabulous local ingredients.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Fresh local

"I could spend a lot of time eating and drinking in Cape Town, and this would be a much-visited location."



David Taylor
Chairman - Lean Pie Ltd.

MY FAVOURITE STORE



TWO MAGPIES BAKERY

DARSHAM, U.K.



<https://goo.gl/maps/2ZsFV16F6ZNspJyi9>

Type of retailer
Foodservice

What have I learnt from this store?

I can access a whole range of baked products that constitute a total meal.

What would I purchase from this store?

Baked products

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment

"Fantastic range, colour, presentation, service, and appeal."



Stephen Thompson
CEO - Eddy's Food Station

MY FAVOURITE STORE



MILESTONE

RATHFRILAND, NORTH IRELAND



<https://goo.gl/maps/rZzY9qNiK4VfbbkN8>

Type of retailer
Grocery

What have I learnt from this store?

The opportunity in fresh homemade food

What would I purchase from this store?

A number of ready homemade meals, food-to-go offerings, and more

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Fresh local

"The fresh offering is the best I have seen from any independent retailer."



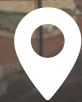
Kevin Tindall
Managing Director - UK
Convenience Store Formats at
Tesco - Tesco Plc

MY FAVOURITE STORE



WHOLEFOODS MARKET AT COLUMBUS CIRCLE.

NYC, U.S.A



<https://goo.gl/maps/wDz5QntnWB23KUNG8>

Type of retailer

Convenience, department, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?

My first visit was a family holiday. On a beautiful summer's day, we were able to buy an amazing array of freshly-prepared salads, deli, fruit, and wonderful bread—and then walk across the road to picnic in Central Park.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Assortment, curation, meal occasion, merchandising, proprietary, service, technology

What have I learnt from this store?

I visit this store every time I travel to New York, and it's always in great shape, the service is fantastic, and the fresh counters are amazing. Investing in service, volume, and presentation clearly makes a difference.

"I first stumbled across this store a number of years ago, and I was blown away by the range, propositions, and service that they had to offer."



Hidenori Tsunematsu
Manager - Japan FamilyMart

MY FAVOURITE STORE

SPAR

MERRION ROW, DUBLIN

<https://goo.gl/maps/4t6RZTbkCFAPv3iB7>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?
Deli

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Fresh local, meal occasion

"A variety of fresh foods and a deli."



Neil Turton
Principal - Neil Turton Ltd

MY FAVOURITE STORE

BARNSELEY MARKET

BARNSELEY, U.K

<https://goo.gl/maps/Ca5TJ1Ha353PwD2g8>

Type of retailer
Department, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
My weekly shop for sweets, foodservice, beverages, and even shoes!

What have I learnt from this store?
It's the people who make the market. I've been buying pick and mix from Sailor Sid's sweets for over 50 years, and my favourite Loake shoes from Devine's—another trader who has been there for decades.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, entertainment, fresh local, meal occasion, merchandising, proprietary

"There has been a market in Barnsley continuously since 1249. It's been the beating heart of the town. After the miner's strike in the 1980's, Barnsley suffered a long period of economic decline. The town was on its feet. Barnsley is now thriving, and the market is at the centre of that renaissance as the centrepiece of the new Glass Works retail development."



Guy Warner
Managing Director - Warners Retail (South West) Ltd

MY FAVOURITE STORE

WHOLE FOODS, COLOMBUS CIRCLE

NEW YORK, U.S.A

<https://goo.gl/maps/3wEEX3Z71jMFLGYRA>

Type of retailer
Convenience, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?
Everything!

What have I learnt from this store?
It's not all about price. People love great food and an experience too.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, curation, entertainment, fresh local, meal occasion, merchandising, proprietary, service, technology

"Whole Foods at Colombus Circle is sheer food theatre. You can lose hours in here and still not see everything! It's a deli, restaurant, wine bar, sushi bar, bakery, wine merchant, craft butcher, florist, and so much more—all in one. I absolutely love it!"



Hubert Yu
General Manager RATIONAL China - RATIONAL China

MY FAVOURITE STORE

FAMILY MART

SHANGHAI, CHINA

<https://goo.gl/maps/WBxn1Hbx8Eq1GoQK9>

Type of retailer
Convenience

What would I purchase from this store?
Sandwiches, box lunch, snacks, and drinks. The coffee and smoothies are pretty good, too.

What have I learnt from this store?
Always keep being new and fresh. Leading the latest trends of the industry is the key to success.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?
Assortment, fresh local, technology

"FamilyMart is a synonym for convenience stores. There are a large number of stores, and you can see FamilyMart almost everywhere in Shanghai.

They have a rich variety of products with a 70% renewal rate every year, and they always provide quality service."

Angel Yuen

Senior Regional Sales Manager (Hong Kong & Macau) -
RATIONAL International AG

MY FAVOURITE STORE

DON DON DONKI

HONG KONG, CHINA

<https://goo.gl/maps/7oPZ3Wi5TuZe58o6>

Type of retailer

Convenience, department, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?

Sushi, Japanese food (cooked), Japanese beef for hot pots, beverages, daily necessities, and more

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Assortment, curation, meal occasion, proprietary

"It is a megastore that contains a wide variety of products for customers to shop, from fresh food to packaged snacks, sushi to bento boxes, daily necessities to cosmetics, and even toys and pet food. You cannot find local brand products there, but rather only Japanese-branded ones. The stores are very popular in Hong Kong, especially since they were opened during the pandemic period and provide people with Japanese shopping experiences like they are traveling to Japan."

What have I learnt from this store?

The importance of uniqueness. Customers choose to visit because it is way different from the traditional and general stores. Also, the right timing for business development is a significant part of their success.

Paul Boyle

CEO - Retail Insight

MY FAVOURITE STORE

TEBAY SERVICES, CUMBRIA

PENRITH, U.K

<https://goo.gl/maps/ogeRK9brDpGzzBmF9>

Type of retailer

Convenience, foodservice, grocery, roadside (fuel)

What would I purchase from this store?

Foodservice

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Assortment, curation, fresh local, meal occasion, merchandising, proprietary, service

What have I learnt from this store?

"Tebay is a destination before your destination. It's a fantastic food and retail offer that is almost incomparable with all of the others that make up the bulk of the UK's roadside retail segment—you drive past the rest to get there."

When stopping on the motorway, it's usually just a quick pit stop. Get in, get a quick bite to eat, freshen up, and get back on the road. However, Tebay demands a little bit more, and it's worth taking some time."

"For a Scotsman living in London, there is more than one reason to love Tebay Services in Cumbria. It's not just that it sits at the top of the M6—the UK's largest motorway which runs from the Midlands to the border with Scotland. Exiting here for a quick break always makes you think that you're 'almost there'. Almost home."

Parin Gohil

Managing Director - Newtrade Media

MY FAVOURITE STORE

SALE FOOD HALL

MANCHESTER, U.K

<https://goo.gl/maps/ipjZKNEEKqqMZRCR9>

Type of retailer

Convenience, foodservice, grocery

What would I purchase from this store?

I would purchase any of the convenience products that are offered, sourced locally or otherwise, and a sit-down meal—be it in the morning, afternoon, or early evening—and maybe with an alcoholic beverage served up by a specialist alcohol connoisseur.

Please select a category for what you enjoyed most?

Assortment, fresh local, meal occasion, merchandising, proprietary, service

What have I learnt from this store?

What Mital Morar has done with this store is not surprising given his creative and entrepreneurial background. This independent store is essentially a destination store that caters to nearly all parts of the day. You may enter the store to purchase milk but walk away with a hot meal or a sit-down for a coffee to network and socialise. The ambiance is laid-back and relaxing, yet it has a feeling of "I shouldn't spend more than a couple of hours here"—which is good for rotating customer footfall. The cocktail bar is a good add-on, complementing the three huts that host local foodservice suppliers that rotate each week and provide customers with different options. The food hall store is of a good size, and the customer experience is well designed throughout.

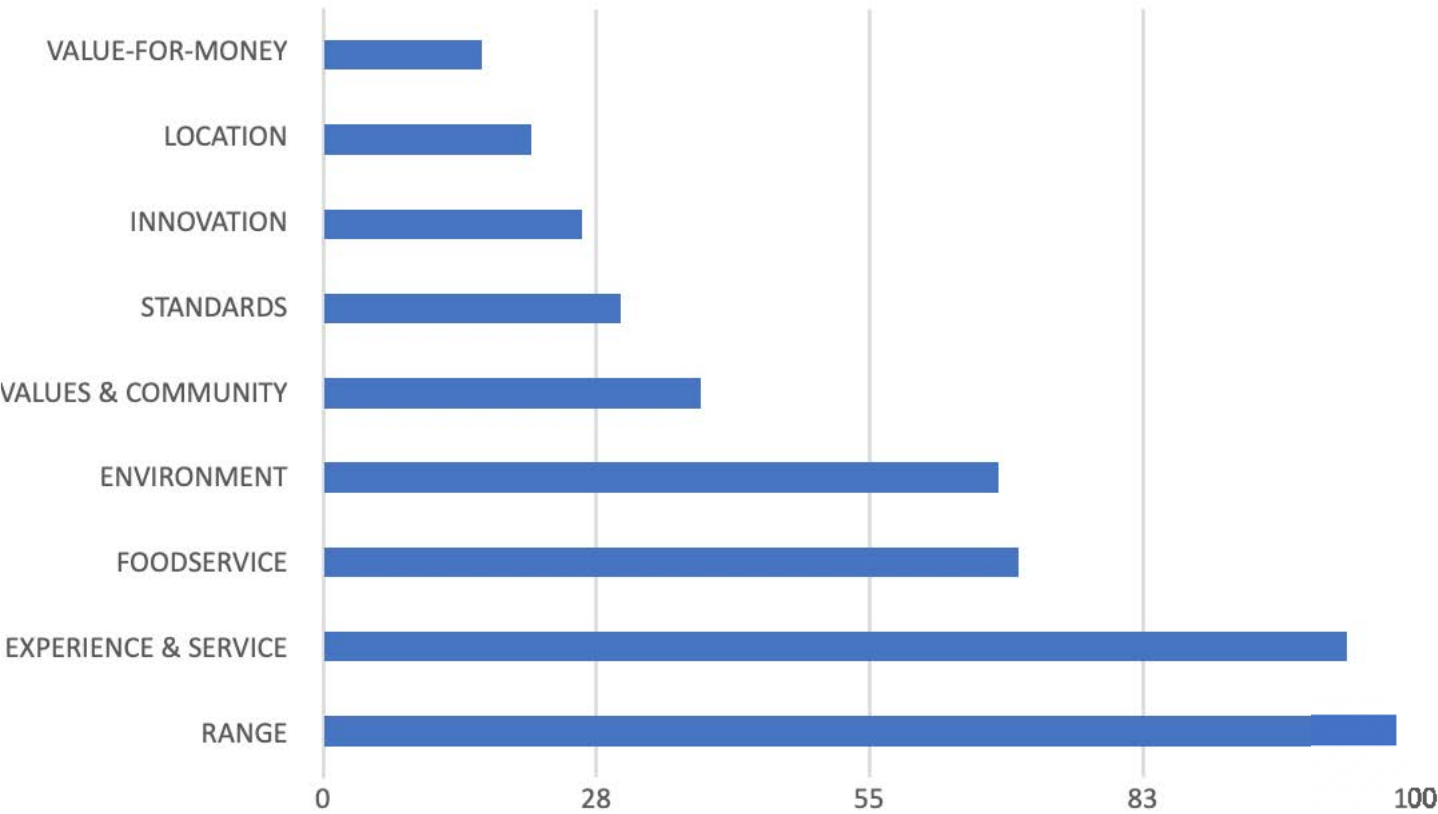
"As a MD of Newtrade Media, we primarily focus on the UK independent convenience market. There are many examples of excellent and fast-paced innovative retailing. What this means is it is hard for me to pick a good favourite store. However, on my recent IROF visit, I was impressed by Mital Morar's Sale FoodHall."

WHY WERE THESE STORES SELECTED?

An analysis of the responses identifies key themes. The stores that truly resonate have a great—and often unique—product assortment combined with a focus on the consumer experience and consistently high levels of service.

Being excellent at foodservice, both for now and for later, is another attribute that scores highly with respondents. Delivering this within an appealing store environment is the final area that was identified by many of the contributors.

AN ANALYSIS OF KEY AREAS MENTIONED IN SUBMISSIONS.



CONCLUSIONS

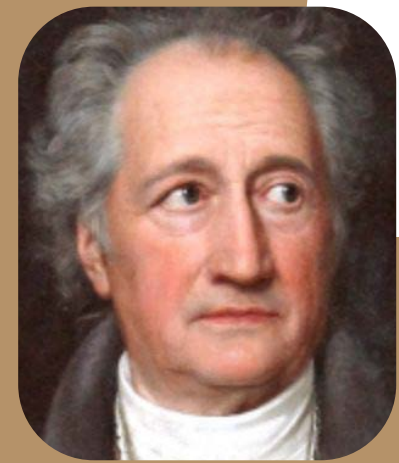
The analysis of the responses identified that stores which truly resonated with our contributors have a great and often unique product assortment, a focus on the consumer experience, and consistently high levels of service. Fresh foodservice and range are also key differentiators. The authors continue to be surprised by various national and global retailers that have the financial, human, and real estate resources to get these key differentiators right—and yet chose not to!

It would be remiss of the authors not to recognize other salient factors impacting retail in addition to those highlighted in this selection of favourite stores. Value for money is recognized, albeit it is the 9th most important factor. Ultra or hyper-convenience also features in the report with India’s Zepto.

Proprietary ranges are increasingly important, especially in fresh food-for-today. Retailers’ brands across core grocery aligned to value and quality are also becoming more important for all convenience and supermarket retailers. Retailers in this report such as Don Don Donki, Trader Joe’s, and Whole Foods Market are firmly in this space.

Retail leaders beyond those in this report were invited to participate. It is telling that some of the negative responses received were “I don’t have time to visit stores” (wow!); “my company does not allow this”, and “I must pick one of our stores or it could impact the share price”. We respect that people are busy; however, these responses highlight—in our view—what differentiates the great from the average or routine.

In keeping with the report tradition, we use a highly relevant quote the great nineteenth century German philosopher and writer, Goethe:

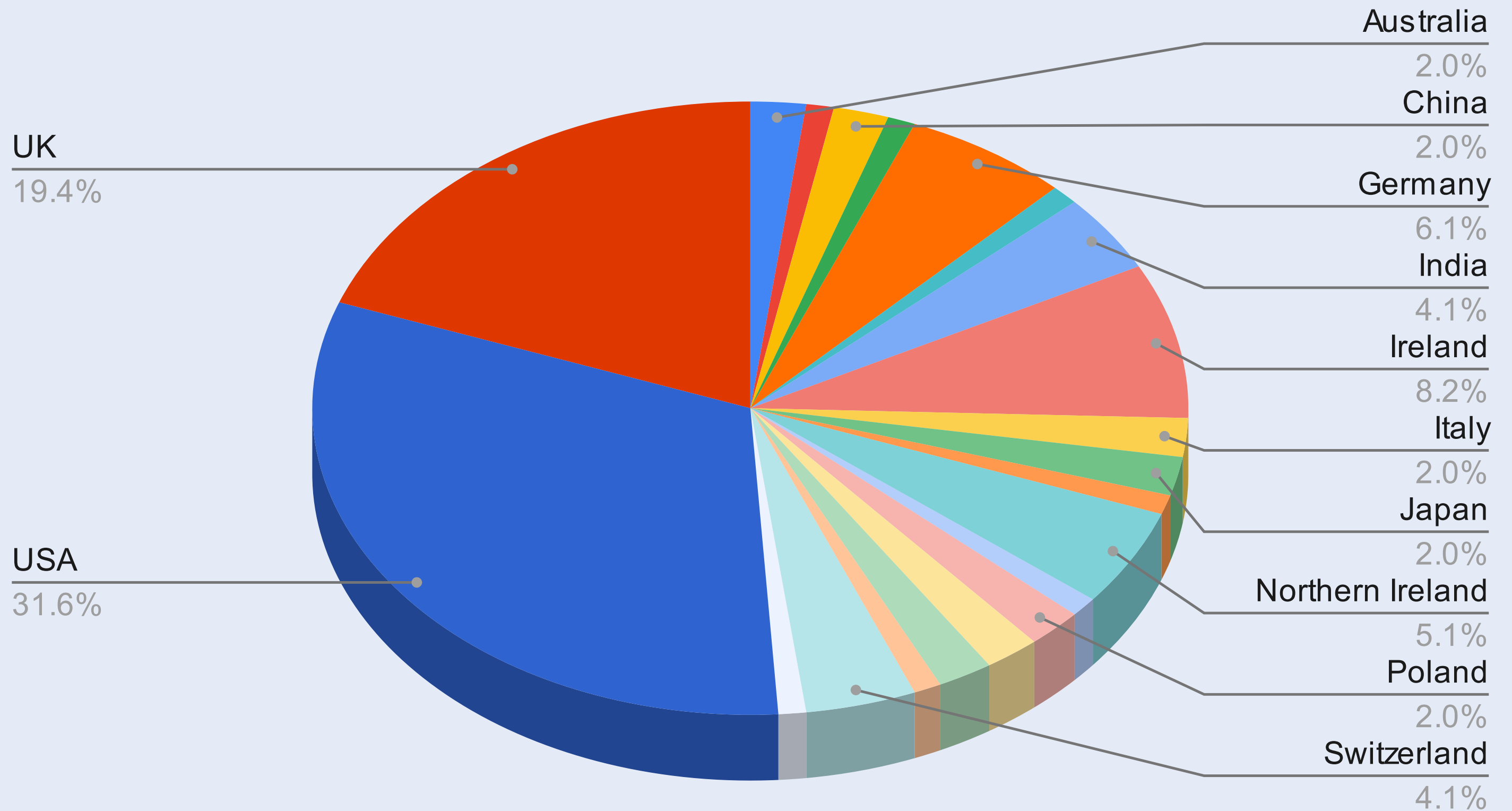


Only where you were walking, you have really been.

”

— JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE.

THE WORLD'S FAVOURITE STORES STATISTICS



“

Of all the reports that we have authored, this is the one that excites me the most. It highlights how convenience is a beacon of innovation, customer experience, and service. My hope is that the report inspires retailers to dedicate more time to store visits.

— Dev Dhillon

”

“

Only those retail leaders who listen to consumers, sales staff, and suppliers at the point of purchase in different formats in different markets—and observe them attentively in action—can learn. Listening, learning, doing, and delivering, the good old retail cycle, is currently more important than ever to stay ahead of your competitors.

— Christian Warning

”

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We also thank those industry leaders—from Australia to the United States and many countries in-between—who kindly contributed their personal favourite stores. To respect their contributions, we have published them in full with only minor edits whilst incorporating the major themes throughout the paper.

Retailers from the Retail Leaders Forum, the Independent Retailer Owners Forum, and our global friends have kindly contributed their favourite stores. The Maxol Group CEO, Brian Donaldson, has provided our cover quote and illustration.

We are privileged that the foreword is written by NACS CEO, Dr Henry Armour. His global retail experience goes beyond his convenience and roadside retail remit.

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