

# THE WORLD'S FAVOURITE STORES

## THE NEXT GENERATION

This is the second edition of The World's Favourite Stores ... and how the industry and the world has changed in just the past two years. The report is a reservoir of great retailing to advance our industry. The featured retailers have been nominated by 51 retail leaders from around the world as their favourites. It's designed as a fun read and is relevant for all convenience, food, foodservice and roadside retailers. Enjoy and learn!



### The authors



*Are we seeing a revolution or an evolution in the stores highlighted this year? Our industry has significantly changed since the 2022 report. Our stores and our offers are always responding to the evolving needs of our customers.*



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# FOOD & DRINK INNOVATION IS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF CONVENIENCE.

## ARE YOU ON BOARD?



[info@theconvenientcube.com](mailto:info@theconvenientcube.com)



Innovation in food and drink “for now” is redefining the convenience sector, with global influences reshaping consumer expectations and retail offerings. Today’s shoppers demand more than products—they crave experiences, exciting flavours, and cultural connections.

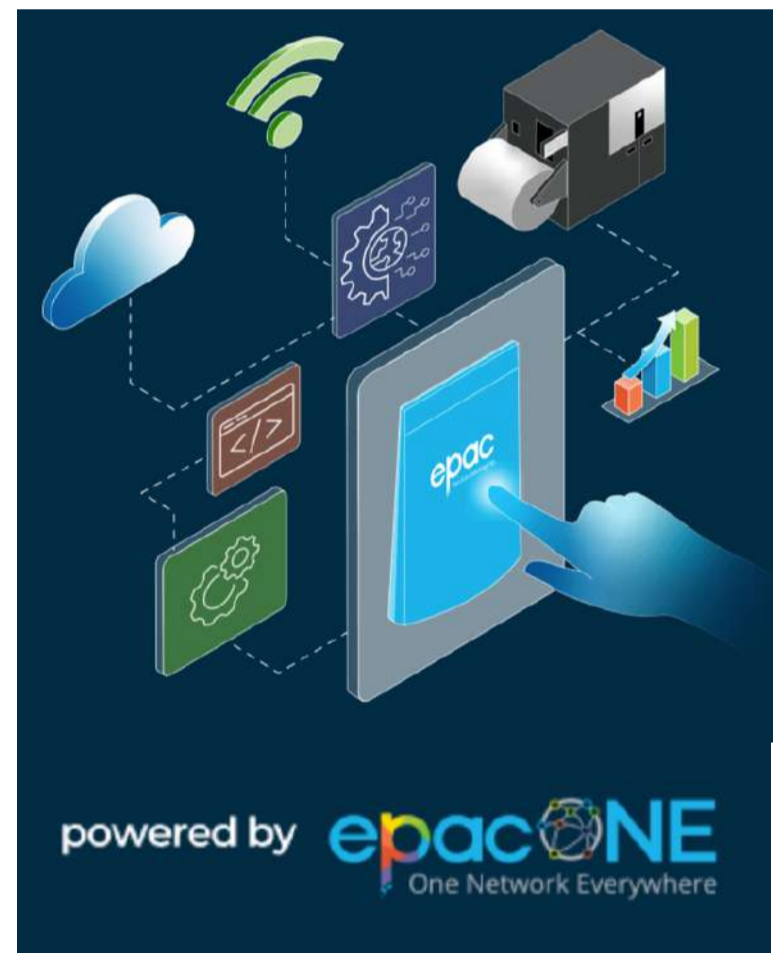
The Hallyu wave from South Korea is a prime example. What began with K-pop and K-dramas has evolved into a culinary and beverage phenomenon sweeping across the world. From unique snacks like honey butter chips to theatrical pouch drinks designed for social sharing, these products fuse authenticity and excitement.

For retailers, the opportunity lies in embracing innovation and global trends to captivate younger, adventurous consumers. It’s time to think beyond the ordinary and tap into the future of convenience.



**In the evolving retail landscape, staying ahead of packaging trends is crucial. ePac Flexible Packaging offers cutting-edge solutions that align with the latest industry developments, providing significant advantages for retailers.**

- **Sustainable materials:** With increasing consumer demand for eco-friendly options, the shift towards sustainable materials in pouch packaging is accelerating. Utilizing recyclable and compostable materials, helping retailers meet environmental goals and appealing to eco-conscious shoppers are key.
- **Convenience and portability:** Consumers seek packaging that supports their on-the-go lifestyles. Flexible pouches are lightweight, resealable, and easy to handle, enhancing user experience and encouraging repeat purchases.
- **Digital printing and personalization:** Advancements in digital printing enable vibrant, high-graphics and personalized designs. Digital printing capability allows retailers to create customized packaging that resonates with target audiences, enhancing brand loyalty.
- **Smart and Interactive Packaging:** The integration of technologies like QR codes and NFC chips in pouches offers consumers interactive experiences, such as accessing product information or promotions.



**ePac Flexible Packaging's connected packaging solution ePacConnect™ enables retailers to engage consumers directly, providing valuable insights whilst enhancing the shopping experience.**





## FOREWORD

**Wow! Another edition of The World's Favourite Stores.. and how the industry and the world has changed in just the past two years.**

Huge investments were being made in new technologies, new formats, new business models, and even new currencies. The meta-verse was going to revolutionize how people interacted. Unmanned stores and Just Walk Out retail formats (a la Amazon Go) were the rage. Quick Commerce (anything, any time, anywhere in just 15 or 30 minutes) was forecasted to be the future of retail. Cryptocurrencies would be the future of payments. And the extinction of internal combustion engines was imminent as EVs were rapidly going to be the dominant form of transportation. Where did it all go wrong? The 13-year aberration in economic history (zero interest rates and almost unlimited financial liquidity) abruptly ended! Suddenly cash was no longer free and the need for profitability replaced the pie-in-the-sky cash burn model. Startups valued at multiples of profitable established companies crashed.

What did we really learn through this exciting though tumultuous ride?

- First of all, if you can't generate positive short-term cashflow at an 10% interest rate you probably shouldn't make the investment.
- Second, seeking a use for a shiny new technology is rarely a path to success; much more effective is identifying a business problem to solve and looking for a new technology to solve it.
- Third, the impact of big technology-based disruptions is almost always overestimated in the short-term (but some may very well be underestimated in the long-term; EVs may be an example of that).
- And finally, the customer wants what they've always wanted...Value!

Value – what an interesting and complex concept. You will see in this year's report 51 examples of how leading retailers are creating value for their customers and the many ways they're doing it.

- Proprietary fresh food at prices that are clearly more affordable than QSR competitors'.
- Private label offerings that deliver comparable quality at lower prices than major brands.
- Multiple ring-up and payment options like self-checkout, touchless card processing, license plate recognition payment processing, mobile order & pay, and real live sales associates.
- Multiple fuel offerings from traditional gasoline and diesel to hydrogen and EV charging.
- Injecting fun in the shopping experience with pop-up non-traditional product offers (cosmetics in Korea and Warby Parker glasses in Philadelphia) and enjoyable beverage and foodservice experiences (wine tastings in Indiana and fresh fish out of the tank in China).

Value is really about being on the ends of the spectrum from price to experience. Being in the middle lacks differentiation; you're just caught in a sea of sameness. There is no sameness in this year's favorite stores!

Are we seeing a revolution or an evolution in the stores highlighted this year? Despite feeling like we've been in the eye of a hurricane of change, I think we're seeing an industry defined by change as evolving. Our stores and our offers are always responding to the evolving needs our customers.

## INTRODUCTION

'The World's Favourite Stores: The Next Generation' report is the ninth in a series of reports that began in early 2020 with 'Adapting to the Realities'. Time, inquiries and history have shown that most of the business and personal restrictions imposed on us were unneeded and politically motivated. The 2022 report 'The World's Favourite Stores' brought 101 of the world's great stores to our inboxes as we began to freely travel again.

The report director Ragini Annan and I visited Seoul, Singapore and Tokyo at the end of 2022, having last visited the cities in January 2020. Over the intermediate two years, retail across all sectors had hugely developed, with new assortments, store designs and formats, proprietary products and technology seemingly 'everywhere'. A joint visit to Seoul and Tokyo by The Retail Leaders and Independent Retailer Owners Forums in March 2023, saw all of us 'wowed' at the retail developments. This was partly the motivation for this second 'The World's Favourite Stores' report and the sub title "The Next Generation".



EDEKA



Zepto, 10 minute grocery delivery, India

The second motivation for the report are the energy and investments seen in the forum members and in many host retailers in markets that we visited through 2023 and 2024. Retailers that are front of mind and feature in this new report are Casey's and Hy-Vee in the USA, Milestone and Moran's in Northern Ireland, Jempson's and Warner's in the UK, Cold Storage in Singapore and EDEKA in Germany. Many others have inspired us, as have our two report supporters, RATIONAL AG and ePac LLC who sit at the core of the lead strategy for most retailers: proprietary foods.

Dr Henry Armour in his Foreword references the huge investments made in new technologies, new formats, new business models and new currencies that were to 'change the world'. I interpret this as similar to the 2000 'dot com bubble', where common sense and economic prudence went out the window, as investors suffered from the financial illness of FOMO. Henry and I shared a platform at the excellent D-A-CH Convenience Leaders conference in Hamburg in April 2024. The host and co-author of this report Christian Warning kindly gave me the role of Chief Summariser / Chef-Zusammenfasser with a brief to 'stir things up a little'. My big message was - as Henry states in the Foreword - is be relevant, bring value and be differentiated. Don't be caught in a sea of sameness.



Jempson's



There is no sameness in this year's favourite stores. The stores featured in this 'The Next Generation' report are always responding to the evolving needs of their customers. That's what makes them enduring and great stores. The authors wish that all readers benefit from the report and that the stores inspire positive change in your businesses.

MY FAVOURITE STORES



Scott Annan  
CS GOLD FRESH

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 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.



### CS GOLD FRESH

📍 THE PARAGON, ORCHARD ROAD, SINGAPORE



This is Cold Storage Singapore's premium food supermarket. There are some 50 Cold Storage stores across Singapore all selling core grocery and fresh foods. CS Gold Fresh in The Paragon offers an extensive selection of fresh produce and premium goods many of which are exclusive to the store. Dedicated shopping sections and experiences and collaborations for fresh vegetables, Ryan's premium butchery for organic fresh meats and dry-aged beef, as well as Chinese restaurant chain Crystal Jade for signature roasts and ready-to-eat meals.

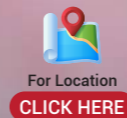
There is an extensive selection of wines, spirits and beers, with over 450 wines directly imported by Cold Storage. There is an excellent choice of craft beers from Singapore, Australia, Hong Kong, the UK and the United States.

CS Fresh Gold replaced four Market Place outlets during the total estate refresh. Cold Storage also operates 7-Eleven stores in Singapore.



### LIFE SUPERMARKET

📍 EBISU, TOKYO, JAPAN



I visited Life twice to prepare for a retail forums visit in 2023. In March 2023, the joint Retail Leaders Forum and Independent Retailer Owners Forum, with leaders from UK, Ireland, USA and Germany were hosted at the store by Director Takashi Katayama. We were hugely impressed by the choice of fresh produce, fish and meats, ready-made day part meals, the store standards and excellent customer service. Takashi-san discussed Life's Customer Value Proposition, how it merchandised by shopping mission and attracted younger and more affluent professionals with their fresh, convenient foods assortment.

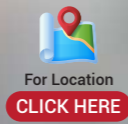
Three forum retailers stated that 'Life Ebisu was the best supermarket they'd visited anywhere in the world'. I have since visited twice and Life Ebisu gets my nomination as 'my favourite store'





### MILESTONE RATHFRILAND

66 NEWRY ST, RATHFRILAND, NEWRY BT34 5PZ, UNITED KINGDOM



I remember driving through endless fields and hedgerows with the inaugural IROF group to visit Milestone in 2017. There were looks of amazement when we arrived at a 16,000 Ft<sup>2</sup> store in the market village of Rathfriland, deep in the Northern Ireland countryside.

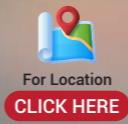
Milestone is famous for its fresh, day-part food prepared in in-house kitchens on the mezzanine floor. There are around 1,000 fresh products with the Milestone brand, across bread, cakes, delicatessens, meats, prepared meals and more. The full-service restaurant Loft 56 is open from breakfast through dinner, making the store a true destination for all things food.

Milestone is the 2023 Northern Ireland Retailer of the Year, an award it has won four times. Owner Tom McAvoy pioneered Morrisons products in Northern Ireland in 2019 and is now expanding the relationship. The store also features a Maxol fuels site.



### HY-VEE SUPERSTORE

GRIMES, DES MOINES IA 50111, USA



I was new to Hy-Vee in 2023 having been introduced by Des Moines resident and this report co-author Frank Beard. A group of UK, Ireland, Germany and USA retail leaders was hosted by Hy-Vee leadership in March 2024 in this store and their excellent Wall-to Wall Wine and Fast & Fresh Express roadside retail stores.

Hy-Vee operates more than 280 retail stores in eight Midwestern states, including Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

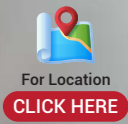
Hy-Vee is synonymous with quality, variety, convenience, healthy lifestyles, culinary expertise and superior customer service. Its slogan, 'A Helpful Smile in Every Aisle', expresses the foundation of the company's operating philosophy. From its foundation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Hy-Vee is employee-owned by direct stockholders – officers, store directors and executive staff members and indirect stockholders - the more than 40,000 Hy-Vee employees who participate in The Hy-Vee and Affiliates 401(k) plan.

The Grimes store is one of my global favorites as it seamlessly combines a wide selection of high-quality food service, delicatessens, fresh bakery, butchery, fish, wines, and a coffee shop, with a wide assortment of grocery, pharmacy, health and beauty and a click & collect / delivery operation. The customer service and retail standards are excellent as one experiences in an employee-owned operation.



### MORAN'S CENTRA

STRAND ROAD, DERRY, NORTHERN IRELAND



Moran's Centra with Go fuels in Strand Road, Derry was my global roadside retailer of 2021-22. This is the flagship of the three Moran's roadside stores in Northern Ireland: two Centra and one Supervalu.

The store is centered on daypart, proprietary fresh food which is prepared daily in the central kitchen at the Supervalu in Ballykelly for the three stores and Moran's longstanding catering business. The Moran's brand is also used for coffee and hot beverages.

The store uses ESLs and connected video screens with data analytics driving the macro space, assortment and pricing.

The Independent Retailer Owners Forum IROF visited the three stores and the new central kitchen in June 2024.



## MY FAVOURITE STORES



**Dev Dhillon**  
CEO, The Convenient Cube

AUTHOR

# “ The introduction to my store choices:

As a lead author of these insight reports, I've had the privilege of watching top convenience stores elevate their game, particularly in foodservice. From our very first report, we've championed the idea that fresh, high-quality food and drink offerings throughout the day could redefine convenience retail. Over the past three years, that vision has partly come to life, with more stores embracing the challenge and evolving into genuine food-first retailers.

What's striking is how the same standout performers continue to lead the way. Many of the stores in my nominations were also featured in our last report, proving that the best retailers don't just innovate—they invest in consistent refinement. The widening gap between these trailblazers and the rest of the field highlights a critical truth: long-term success demands constant evolution.

That said, not every bold idea succeeds. Dom's Kitchen and Market, another of my nominations, serves as a cautionary tale. While their ambition to deliver high-quality foodservice was admirable, their story underscores the risks of overextending without a strong commercial foundation. It's a reminder that innovation alone isn't enough—sustainable growth hinges on balancing creativity with financial viability.

Each nominee in this report highlights different aspects of the transformation sweeping through convenience retail. Whether through fresh ideas, focused daypart strategies, or deep local relevance, they demonstrate how foodservice innovation is shaping the future of convenience stores worldwide.

”

### DON DON DONKI

📍 ORCHARD CENTRAL, SINGAPORE



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

Don Don Donki disrupts conventional shopping norms through sheer unpredictability. Imagine a treasure hunt in the aisles - no two visits feel the same, which keeps customers returning. It's the embodiment of "organised chaos," where sensory overload becomes an experience, not an inconvenience.

What makes Don Don Donki remarkable is its curated randomness. The store blends high-quality Japanese products, quirky novelties, and everyday essentials in a way that entices even casual visitors into impulsive purchases.

”

### MILESTONE

📍 RATHFRILAND, NEWRY



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

Milestone in Rathfriland elevates grocery shopping through its impressive range of food made onsite and a vast selection of quality products. Whether it's freshly baked goods, deli specialties, or artisan meals, the store's in-house creations offer a level of freshness that makes every visit feel like an adventure. This hands-on approach, paired with an extensive selection of great products, gives customers a sense of discovery that draws them in from far outside its catchment area.

”

### M&S FOOD

📍 BATTERSEA POWER STATION, LONDON



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

Housed in the iconic power station, this new M&S Food format feels like a modern urban market, inviting customers with contemporary design features and impeccable presentation.

What truly sets this M&S apart is its extensive "food-to-go" selection, catering to the fast-paced lives of its urban clientele. Freshly baked pizzas, sushi, wraps, and salads are made onsite and vanish within minutes, reflecting their popularity and quality.

”





### DOM'S KITCHEN & MARKET

📍 CHICAGO



Dom's Kitchen in Chicago once epitomised the premium convenience retail experience, merging high-end culinary offerings with a stylish shopping environment. Customers flocked to enjoy artisanal foods and curated meal options. However, the recent closure of Dom's Kitchen and Foxtrot locations highlights the fragility of such ambitions, as rapid expansion, rising costs and a lack of robust infrastructure led to the company's downfall.



### LONGACRES FOODHALL

📍 BAGSHOT, UK



Longacres Foodhall in Bagshot exemplifies the emerging trend of high-quality grocery and foodservice offerings in unexpected locations, such as garden centres. With features like an artisan butcher, a dedicated bakery, and a spacious 6,000 square feet of supermarket space, it provides a diverse range of products, including dedicated concessions for gelato, premium hot dogs and imported American products. This innovative blend of convenience and quality reflects a growing consumer demand for unique shopping experiences that go beyond traditional grocery retail.



# The Evolution of Foodservice in Convenience: A Two-Year Journey



**Dev Dhillon**  
CEO, The Convenient Cube

In the fast-paced world of convenience retail, the past two years have brought significant transformation, with foodservice taking centre stage. This evolution, driven by changing consumer preferences, technological advancements, and bold moves by retailers, has redefined the role of foodservice in convenience stores.

Traditional high-margin categories, such as tobacco and disposable vaping products, have come under increasing pressure due to declining demand and tighter legislation. At the same time, the global cost-of-living crisis has reshaped consumer behaviour, driving more shoppers toward larger grocers and discounters in search of better value.



These shifts have created a challenging environment for convenience retailers, forcing them to adapt quickly to remain competitive.

Amid these challenges, foodservice has emerged as a vital lifeline for profitability and customer engagement. By offering high-quality, ready-to-eat options, convenience stores have not only attracted new customers but also mitigated the impact of shrinking margins in traditional categories. Foodservice has enabled c-stores to differentiate themselves from larger competitors, emphasising immediacy, quality, and the ability to cater to on-the-go lifestyles.

Retailers are doubling down on food offerings, not as a short-term tactic but as a strategic pivot. Across markets, investments in kitchen facilities, staff training, and innovative menus are paying off as stores cater to modern consumers' tastes for fresh, ready-to-eat options.

## Setting the Standard

The leaders in foodservice innovation continue to raise the bar. Our latest store nominations highlight a familiar group of trailblazers who consistently invest in and elevate their offerings. Conversely, those who fail to adopt or update a compelling “food and drink for now” proposition risk

alienating discerning customers. In today's fast-paced market, immediacy and quality are paramount, and lagging behind can erode a retailer's competitive edge.

Markets that were at the forefront of foodservice innovation two years ago remain leaders today. Ireland, for example, continues to set the gold standard with its exceptional foodservice programs in convenience stores. These success stories offer a blueprint for global retailers, proving the value of thoughtful investments in food offerings.



## Fuel Forecourt to roadside retail

Fuel forecourt operators are embracing the need for foodservice innovation. With vehicle electrification on the rise (albeit slower than once predicted) and fuel sales set to decline, forecourts are reinventing themselves as food destinations. By expanding their foodservice offerings, they're future proofing their business models and transforming these stops into attractive hubs for travellers and locals alike. The author is aware of projects being implemented by global petroleum brands,

demonstrating that they are finally taking the challenge of being “food first” seriously.

### Franchise Fever

A standout trend in this evolution is the growth of franchise models within convenience stores. Big names in burgers, pizza, and chicken are finding their way into this space, bringing indulgent offerings that appeal to a broad customer base. For retailers, partnering with well-known franchises reduces the risk of developing in-house concepts while benefiting from the brand recognition and marketing muscle of established players.

This is the simplest route for operators to be successful in foodservice but there are question marks relating to longevity, uniqueness and the lower profit margins associated with franchise models.

### The Rise of C-Store Specific Concessions

One of the most exciting developments in the evolution of foodservice is the rise of concessions designed specifically for deployment in convenience stores. These foodservice solutions are tailored to the unique demands of the c-store environment, offering low capital requirements, high automation, and a focus on delivering familiar favourites with broad customer appeal.

Unlike traditional franchises, these models are designed for simplicity and scalability, making them an attractive option for retailers seeking to enhance their foodservice offerings without

significant upfront investment. With minimal infrastructure and streamlined operations, these concepts are perfect for the fast-paced, space-constrained world of convenience retail.

A standout example is Hunt Brothers Pizza in the United States, which boasts over 9,000 locations nationwide. Its model embodies the advantages of c-store-specific concessions: pre-assembled pizzas, easy-to-operate ovens, and a business structure that allows retailers to tap into the lucrative pizza market with minimal training or overhead.

### Challenges in Digital Foodservice

Not all innovations in digital foodservice have met their initial promise, particularly within the convenience sector. Rapid delivery services, such as those pioneered by hyper-convenience platforms like Deliveroo, and ghost kitchens—facilities designed solely for delivery—have encountered significant hurdles in achieving scalable profitability.

Rapid delivery services in convenience are impacted by low margin products, high customer turnover, and extensive logistics networks, making profitability a persistent challenge. Operational costs, including rider wages, fuel, and technology remain high, while consumer price sensitivity often limits the ability to pass these costs on. Moreover, as competition intensifies, the need for constant discounting and promotional campaigns further erodes margins, leaving many hyper-convenience players

struggling to maintain financial viability.

Ghost kitchens, while innovative in concept, face similar obstacles. Their success hinges on high-order volume and operational efficiency, but the realities of rent, staff, and delivery partnerships can quickly offset their streamlined model. Additionally, the lack of a physical storefront limits opportunities for brand-building and spontaneous purchases, often placing these kitchens at a disadvantage compared to brick-and-mortar competitors.

For convenience retailers exploring these models, the challenges lie in aligning operational realities with consumer expectations. Customers demand fast delivery, affordable pricing, and consistent quality—criteria that are costly to fulfill without economies of scale. Many digital-first foodservice ventures are finding that long-term success requires careful balancing of these factors, strategic geographic expansion, and integration with broader retail ecosystems.



Despite these challenges, digital foodservice remains a space with significant potential. For convenience stores, the key to leveraging it effectively lies in using these models as complementary rather than standalone offerings, ensuring they align with core business strengths and deliver tangible value to both the retailer and the customer.

### A Future Redefined

The past two years have shown that foodservice is no longer an optional add-on for convenience retailers—it’s a cornerstone of their value proposition. By investing in quality, forging strategic partnerships, and focusing on customer experience, the industry is redefining what convenience means. Retailers who embrace this shift are positioning themselves for long-term growth and relevance in a rapidly changing marketplace.



**Christian Warning**  
Owner, The Retail Marketeers

AUTHOR

## “ The introduction to my store choices:

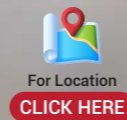
Like my co-authors and Dr Henry Armour who has written the Foreword, I am privileged to have visited many great stores around the world. The five favourites that I have chosen here to reflect my passion for innovative food and coffee presentations, and retailers that are not afraid to lead with different store designs, presentations and merchandise. Globally the best convenience, grocers and roadside retailers are fresh, day-part food led. The days of simply offering core grocery, ‘Cokes and smokes’ or questionable coffee and expecting shoppers to return are long gone. My five choices excel in their food and beverage offers.

”



**AVEC**

📍 ZUGERSTRASSE 231, 8810 HORGEN, SCHWEIZ



“

avec is a modern convenience format for high-frequency locations such as train stations or petrol stations with a wide range of food and fresh produce as well as regional products.

avec is Valora's foodvenience format, which is one of the few convenience formats worldwide to be very successfully marketed hyper locally and with over 370 sites the market leading convenience format in Switzerland. Valora runs among other travel retail and corner store neighbourhood locations amongst other roadside retail partners all Tamoil and BP sites with the Avec format in Switzerland.

Every expert can automatically see the different customer experiences and proximity to the local target groups and every consumer automatically finds what they really need once they are on the move. One can also find other Valora Foodservice formats such as Backwerk or Brezelkönig within an avec and with their latest innovation avec kitchen a true artisan foodservice offer for every part of the day.

Perfectly orchestrated at one BP site in Switzerland. With very welcoming indoor and outdoor seating and a wide assortment of grab & go foodservice items and different coffee to go offers for different target groups.

”



**WHITE BISON COFFEE**

📍 2607 12TH AVE S, NASHVILLE, TN 37204, VEREINIGTE STAATEN



“

White Bison Coffee currently has 15 locations in the middle Tennessee area – including standalone locations in the Nashville area – and four locations in the north Alabama market. Locally owned and operated by Tri Star Energy, Twice Daily has served middle Tennessee communities since 2011 and expanded to the north Alabama market in 2019. Tri Star Energy LLC owns and operates 194 convenience stores under the Twice Daily and White Bison brands. The company made a significant acquisition in 2023 with Cox Oil, Union City, Tennessee. The deal involved 52 company-operated locations and two dealer sites.

For me, White Bison Coffee is of the best stand-alone foodvenience formats from a roadside retail operator globally. A unique customer experience with nice indoor and outdoor seating, a great food counter with barista coffee and juice bar in one half of the store, in the centre of the store a fountain drink self-service offer and in the other half a neighbourhood convenience offer with all you need for top up shopping and drinks and snacks for now and later.

”



## 7-ELEVEN

📍 BANEGÅRDSPLADSEN 5, 7,  
1570 KØBENHAVN, DÄNEMARK



The 7-Eleven store at Copenhagen's main railway station is known for having the highest turnover among 7-Eleven stores in Scandinavia. This location benefits from the high foot traffic of commuters and tourists, making it a particularly busy and profitable store.

7-Eleven in Denmark stands out from other convenience stores in several ways:

- 1. Focus on Fresh Food:** Unlike many traditional convenience stores, 7-Eleven in Denmark places a strong emphasis on fresh food, including bakery items and beverages. They have transformed their stores to resemble more of a food destination rather than just a convenience store.
- 2. Quality and Local Products:** They offer a wide variety of high-quality products, including organic and locally sourced items. This approach resonates well with Danish consumers who prioritize sustainability and health.
- 3. Extended Opening Hours:** Most 7-Eleven stores in Denmark operate 24/7, providing round-the-clock convenience to customers. This is particularly appealing in a country where many stores have limited opening hours.
- 4. Modern Store Layout:** The stores have a modern design with dedicated areas for in-store eating, creating a café-like ambiance. This encourages customers to spend more time in the store, increasing their overall purchase.
- 5. Adaptation to Local Preferences:** 7-Eleven has successfully adapted to local tastes and preferences, offering products that appeal to Danish consumers' love for organic and locally sourced items.

These factors collectively make 7-Eleven a popular choice among Danish consumers, differentiating it from other convenience store chains.



## VINTAGE GROCERS

📍 TRANCAS COUNTRY MARKET, 30745 PACIFIC  
COAST HWY #24, MALIBU, CA 90265



Vintage Grocers, located in Malibu, CA, is a classic hometown grocery store that has become a beloved part of the community since its opening in 2014. The store was founded by Paige Laurie, who envisioned a market that offers a curated selection of local, sustainable, and healthy products.

The success of Vintage Grocers can be attributed to several key factors:

- 1. Community Focus:** From the beginning, Vintage Grocers has been a market for the community, by the community. They host free summer concerts, movies on the lawn, and sponsor local charities and events like the Malibu marathon and triathlon.
- 2. Quality Products:** They stock only the freshest produce, seafood, fine wines, gourmet items, and the best meat, poultry, and pork selections.
- 3. Exceptional Customer Service:** The friendly staff and exceptional customer service have made Vintage Grocers a favourite among locals and visitors alike.



## EREWHON

📍 12833 VENTURA BLVD SUITE #105,  
STUDIO CITY, CA 91604

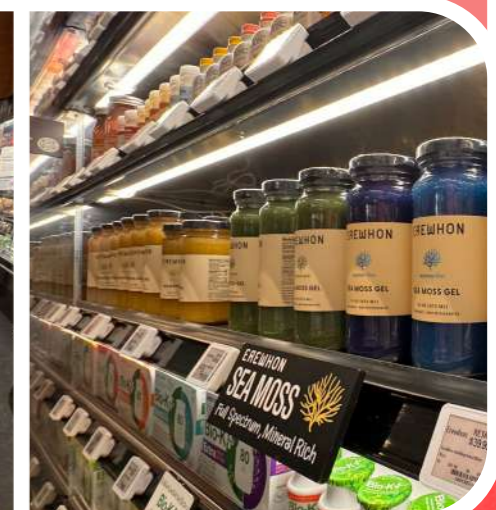
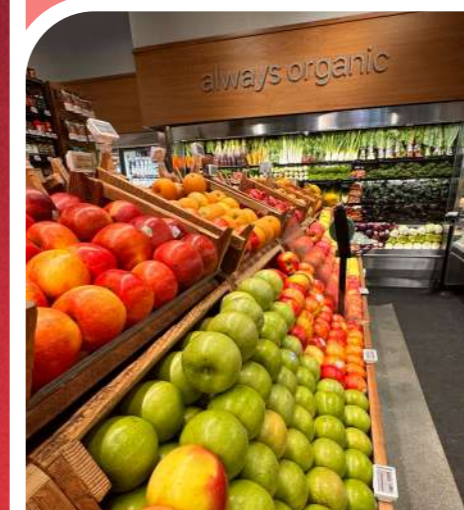


Erewhon is known for its high sales per square foot, often cited as one of the most productive grocery stores in the USA. However, it is not the absolute leader. According to recent data, Apple retail stores and Trader Joe's hold the top spots for the highest sales per square foot among all retailers in the United States.

Erewhon is well-known for its high-end, health-focused products, and several categories stand out in terms of sales:

- 1. Smoothies:** Erewhon's collaboration with celebrities and influencers has made their smoothies extremely popular. For instance, the "Strawberry Skin Glaze" smoothie, created with Hailey Bieber, has been a significant hit, selling around 40,000 units per month.
- 2. Organic and Specialty Groceries:** Erewhon offers a wide range of organic and specialty grocery items, including high-priced, high-quality products like mixed berries and specialty oils.
- 3. Prepared Foods:** Their prepared food section, which includes a variety of health-conscious meals and snacks, is also a major draw for customers.
- 4. Supplements and Wellness Products:** Erewhon stocks a variety of supplements and wellness products, including items like collagen powder and sea moss, which are often featured in their popular smoothies.

These categories not only drive sales but also contribute to Erewhon's reputation as a luxury grocery store.



# The Future of Roadside Retail: Embracing Change and Innovation



**Christian Warning**  
Owner, The Retail Marketeers

In the next five years, roadside retail is poised for a transformative evolution, driven by technological advancements, shifting consumer preferences, and a growing emphasis on sustainability.

Here are the key trends set to redefine the roadside retail landscape:

**Digital Integration:** The integration of digital technologies will become more pronounced, with mobile apps for ordering and payment, digital kiosks, and enhanced loyalty programs leading the charge. These innovations will streamline the customer experience, offering more personalized and efficient services.



**Sustainability:** A heightened focus on sustainability will see the proliferation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, eco-friendly products, and sustainable packaging. Retailers will increasingly adopt greener practices to meet the rising consumer demand for environmentally responsible options.



**Expanded Offerings:** Roadside retail will diversify beyond traditional staples like fuel, tobacco, and snacks. Expect to see a broader range of healthier food options, local products, and even non-food items such as electronics and household goods, catering to a wider array of customer needs.

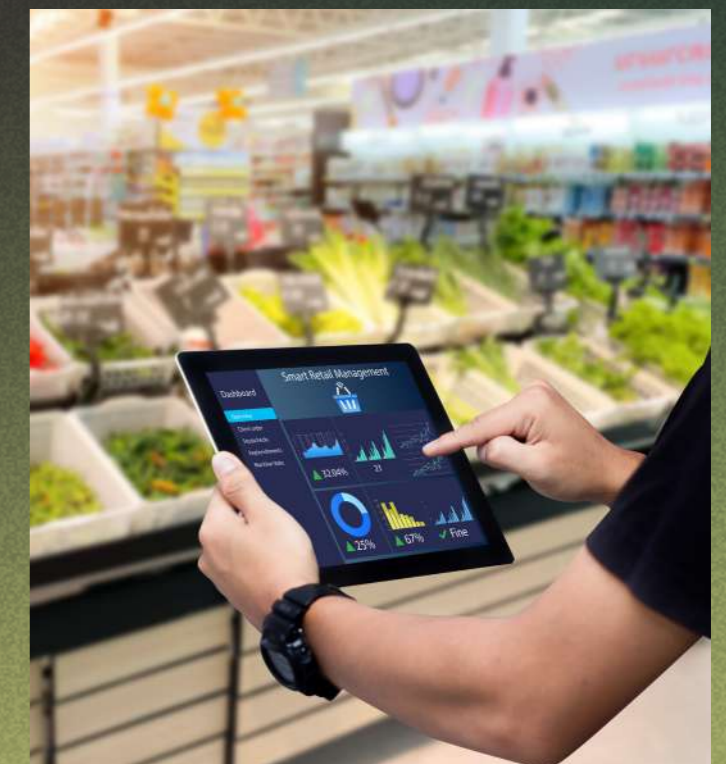


**Convenience and Speed:** The drive for convenience will intensify, with more drive-thru options, curbside pickup, and faster service times becoming the norm. Automation and AI will play pivotal roles in enhancing operational efficiency and customer satisfaction.



**Data-Driven Insights:** Retailers will leverage data analytics to optimize inventory management, personalize marketing efforts, and improve customer service. This data-driven approach will enable retailers to better understand and anticipate customer needs, ensuring a more tailored shopping experience.

These trends signal a shift towards a



more digital, sustainable, and customer-centric roadside retail experience. Location, location, location will still matter most for roadside retail but tech, tech, tech will make the difference to utilize the real estate in the most profitable way possible.

## MY FAVOURITE STORES



**Frank Beard**  
Head of Marketing, Rovertown

AUTHOR

# “ The introduction to my store choices:

Reports about favorite stores, or the world’s best, often focus on those that are the biggest, most innovative, most technologically advanced. And to be fair, I love all of those things—I’m easily excited by the latest and greatest.

But here’s a different question: What do you wish existed in your community—and why?

I think about this a lot, especially living in the suburbs of a mid-sized city like Des Moines. Our communities are designed around the needs of cars, not people. I’m fortunate to live near one of the nation’s largest bike trail systems, but that doesn’t change the reality that visiting any of the few locally-owned cafés, third-wave coffee shops, unique restaurants, bars, or independent grocery stores means getting in a car and driving several miles. It’s a problem that works against the concept of community and keeps us socially isolated, lonely, and distrustful of others.

Through this lens, I see a tremendous opportunity for convenience stores. I don’t fool myself into thinking America’s car-centric culture will change anytime soon—some have even been convinced that walkability is a bad thing. Rather than fighting it, I believe we should look for ways to do what we do better. And few places are more conveniently located—or more naturally suited for bringing together people from all walks of life—than the local convenience store.

My list includes five stores that have figured out a piece of this puzzle. In their own way, they add something to their communities that the status quo simply does not. If you ever find yourself nearby, do yourself a favor and check them out. (And if you’re ever in Des Moines, let me know—I’ll take you to two of them.)



## 36 LYN REFUEL STATION

📍 MINNEAPOLIS, MN, USA



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

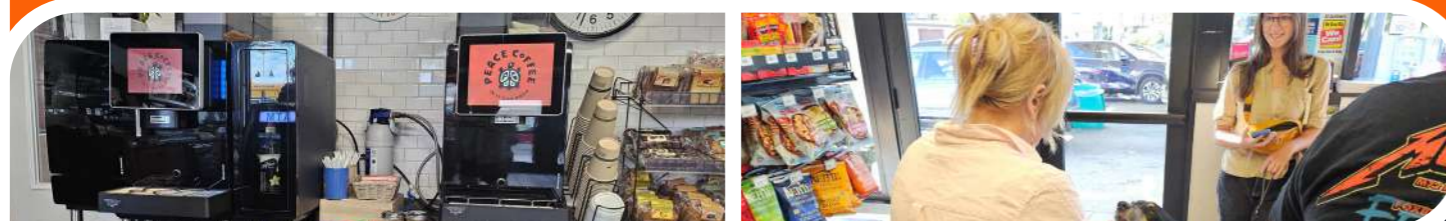
“

My favorite store isn’t the largest or fanciest, but it’s definitely one of the best.

The 36 Lyn Refuel Station in Minneapolis has all the qualities that make for a good store. Great employees, well-maintained facilities, quality products—many of them locally-produced—and much more make it an exceptional place to stop whether you live in the area or just happen to be passing through.

It’s a breath of fresh air amidst a sea of generic corporate stores in the surrounding area. Cashiers know their customers, local brands fill the shelves, and you might even get to meet someone’s dog while they stop by to grab a few snacks. Those things matter. Visit the 36 Lyn Refuel Station, and you’ll see how retail can contribute to a sense of community—something that many Americans are unfortunately lacking.

”



## URBAN VALUE CORNER STORES

📍 DALLAS, TX, USA



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

Urban convenience stores have struggled to take off in the United States. From Choice Market to Foxtrot, there have been several high-profile failures at attempts to “redefine” the convenience store. Even legacy brands have struggled to decouple fuel from the business as it remains essential.

However, there’s a small chain in Dallas that’s worth watching.

Urban Value Corner Stores positions each of their stores as amenities for high-density residential buildings. Rather than focusing on overpriced, niche brands like Foxtrot or Choice Market, Urban Value’s stores are full of high-velocity products with the selection constantly evolving based on the purchases of its customers. Local brands are also sprinkled in where it counts.

In short: it’s a modern take on the old “corner store.”

”





## HY-VEE FAST & FRESH

📍 WEST DES MOINES, IA, USA



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“ I’d be remiss if I didn’t mention my local convenience store: the Hy-Vee Fast & Fresh in West Des Moines.

Hy-Vee doesn’t get nearly enough attention for these stores. Not only are they large, modern, and full of a great selection of products, but many have partnered with a local coffee chain—Smokey Row—to feature their cafes. Whereas Starbucks has deprioritized comfortable indoor seating, Smokey Row is full of large, comfortable booths where you’re encouraged to stay a while. Sometimes my wife will even walk over and get ice cream at night, or just swing by for lunch after taking our dog for a walk.

Kudos to Hy-Vee for a job well-done, and I’m excited to see where they take this concept in the near-future.



## WALL TO WALL WINE AND SPIRITS

📍 WEST DES MOINES, IA, USA



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“ Wall to Wall isn’t a convenience store, but it does deserve mention in this report.

Hy-Vee simply hit a home run with this concept. I do not exaggerate when I say that Wall to Wall is perhaps the single best corporate, scalable wine concept that I’ve ever encountered. It even puts Total Wine to shame.

There’s too much to unpack with this one. However, I encourage everyone to take the time to visit next time you’re in the Des Moines area—especially if you can show up during one of the tasting events. Just be warned that parking will be tight. People love to come to events at this store!



## HIGH COUNTRY MARKET BISTRO & GASTROPUB

📍 ROUND ROCK, TX, USA



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“ Ever enjoyed the full lineup from Tenuta San Guido at a gas station?

Probably not. America’s convenience stores aren’t typically destinations for fine wine. However, that’s exactly what I did one evening at High Country Market Bistro & Gastropub.

Operated by a Level 2 sommelier, HCM is one of the most unique businesses found in a convenience store anywhere in the United States. As one of the premiere dealers of French and Italian wine in Central Texas, it’s become both a neighborhood hangout and a sought-after destination for oenophiles who want something unique.





# Navigating Distractions and Disruptions

I was asked to say a few words on technology, and this is usually the point where someone explains how a new trend will change everything.

But as I reflect on nearly a decade in this industry, I find it interesting how many of the so-called “disruptive” technologies that captured our attention during that time ended up making little to no impact.

I witnessed this firsthand when I worked in the autonomous checkout space. Prior to the pandemic, convenience retailers were inundated with hype about how Amazon’s autonomous stores were set to revolutionize retail. And yet, the disruption never happened.

To be fair, the opening of the first Amazon Go to the public in January 2018 was something of a Sputnik moment. It garnered intense attention from trade publications, conferences, and even mainstream business and tech media. Nobody back then wanted to bet against Amazon or get caught in its crosshairs. Later that year, the hype reached critical mass when Bloomberg ran a story claiming that Amazon would open more than 3,000 stores across the United States. Several competing startups were in stealth mode at that time. Amazon’s entry into the space—along with a zero interest rate policy (ZIRP) environment—resulted in venture



capitalists pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into these companies. It wasn’t long before the disruption hype intensified even further.

While the promise of “no lines” is alluring and simple to grasp, the reality of deploying this technology—at least for convenience retailers who piloted it—was far more complicated. High costs, lengthy installation timelines, reliance on human oversight (“human-in-the-loop”), difficulties with age-restricted products, and countless other issues were barriers to widespread adoption. Moreover, for convenience store customers, the value proposition just wasn’t compelling. Shaving a few seconds off of an already quick and convenient self-checkout

experience wasn’t a game-changer.

That’s not to say autonomous checkout has been a failure. Far from it. Although companies like Grabango and Accel Robotics that focused on the wrong verticals fizzled away—and despite Amazon’s very public challenges—some very compelling use cases have emerged.

Consider stadiums and arenas. I recently toured the new \$2 billion Intuit Dome in Los Angeles, and each of its more than 40 concessions and stores are powered by AiFi’s autonomous checkout technology. The entire arena is nothing short of a technological marvel.

But I bring this up only to say that it’s okay to react to hype cycles with a critical eye. Asking hard questions or applying a bit of skepticism doesn’t make you resistant to change or an enemy of progress—nor does it mean that you’re Blockbuster and something else is Netflix. Remember when metaverse and web3 technologies were all the rage only a few years ago? Many of us were wise to react with skepticism. This isn’t to say that these won’t have disruptive use cases at some point in the future, but it was simply too early—regardless of how many venture capitalists spent hundreds of thousands on JPEGs of cartoon apes.

At the same time, even the best ideas can



**Frank Beard**

Head of Marketing,  
Rovertown

fall flat when nobody is bold enough to champion them. Maybe autonomous checkout didn’t disrupt the convenience store industry, but it’s hard to visit the Intuit Dome and feel that this is the beginning of something big. What if a convenience retailer had similarly gone all-in on this technology, or at least saw the potential to do more with computer vision than simply process transactions? Let’s not forget that while Kmart adopted barcodes for checkout purposes, it was Walmart who saw the potential to go further and leverage the data to fuel an ‘everyday low prices’ strategy that ultimately delivered a lights-out blow to the Blue Light Special.

So while I urge everyone to ask tough questions whenever you’re told that everything’s about to change, don’t lose your sense of wonder and possibility. You may very well be the one who turns a distraction into a disruption.



## MY FAVOURITE STORES



### Sabine Benoit

Professor of Marketing (Practice, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, Singapore Management University)

AUTHOR

## “ The introduction to my store choices: ”

As an academic specialising in 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 and by companies innovating and being at the forefront of development. Hence, two of my favourite stores are unstaffed stores that I came across scanning all concepts around the world.

Second, in the last 14 years I worked with a continental European wholesaler supplying retailers attached to petrol stations (Lekkerland). During this time, I have seen the transition of many of those stores (focussing on value propositions for the car, i.e., fuel) into roadside retailers (focussing on value propositions for people and communities). I am impressed by how well some of them have reinvented themselves preparing for a business with less and less fuel. To me this is the aspect that can make a store really unique and provide a great experience. Hence, I chose two of the stores for their great food offer.

Third, starting pre-pandemic in 2021 I'm Director of the Convenience Leadership Programme created by the University of Surrey and the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS). A programme that aims to develop people on the level of e.g., store and district managers to leadership positions in convenience retailing. Store visits are part of the programme, and I always listen very carefully 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, half of a year it is buzzing. And 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 lenses I'm a consumer and shopper myself. I travel a lot and usually try to put more things in the day than hours available for that. That's why I particularly like stores that make my life easy, 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 in particular 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 then gets really tough to buy a lunch, but not in my favourite five!



### AMAZON FRESH

📍 BANKSIDE, LONDON, UK



For Location

[CLICK HERE](#)

“ I love the clean look of the assortment. Because most products are retail brands, Amazon can adjust the packaging and the colouring, so that everything looks neat and not the often-cluttered look of different packaging sizes and colours. It makes choosing so easy and I like convenience of it. Beyond this, I'm a technology fan and have conducted research on autonomous stores (as in store in which consumers can shop without personal interaction). ”

As a retail and consumer behaviour academic, I'm interested in all topics relating to Retail Technology. And I personally don't mind shopping without talking to anybody. Often, I'm in my own world anyway, wearing headphones and listening to the radio, audiobooks, or music. And yes, retailers are still in the experimentation phase with autonomous stores. Amazon has quietly abandoned the just-walk-out, but autonomous stores are

here to stay, and Amazon is years ahead in the learning curve ”



### FRISCHWERK

📍 HAMBURG, GERMANY



For Location

[CLICK HERE](#)

“ Many roadside retailer stores in Germany appear as a negligible side business to the fuel business. Frischwerk is a great exception. The store concept developed by Lekkerland is clean, puts a focus on bakery, without neglecting the other assortments which are important. Disclaimer, I'm not neutral back then I contributed consumer research on what they want from a roadside retail store which was used (amongst many other pieces of information) to the development of this store concept. I'm very happy to have played in a part in such an awesome store concept. ”



## COOP CENTRAL ENGLAND

📍 LICHFIELD, UK

 For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

This is one of the newer stores from Coop Central England. What I like about the store is the mix of different retail elements and their alignment. A spacious parking lot, with some seasonal assortment outside and a parcel pick up, very easy access. The store looks very neat and orderly, some store fixtures are in wood, which nicely communicates the connection of food to nature. The assortment seems perfectly matched to the neighborhood, various meal deals make family meals quick, enjoyable and affordable. Coop also very gently informs the community about other services, such as the app and the funeral plans, but in a very subtle way. It is firmly embedded in the community with various community activities, a parcel pickup point and other elements.

”



## PLANET ORGANIC

📍 TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, LONDON, UK

 For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

As a retail academic, I'm always on the hunt for new trends since they might be worth researching. When I want to get an idea about assortment trends, one stop on my list is Planet Organic in London. Every now and then, I organize tastings for my students or retailers of all sorts of new snacks (e.g., chickpea or kale chips) and/or drinks (chili shots, coconut water or dozens of different Kombuchas). Then you see me going to Planet Organic since I can be sure I find products no one has ever heard of or tried. This fosters out-of-the-box thinking!

I like the store wooden store fittings, it aligns with their positioning as organic. I also noted (and found interesting) the wide range of plant-based products very early on.

”



## CIRCLE K

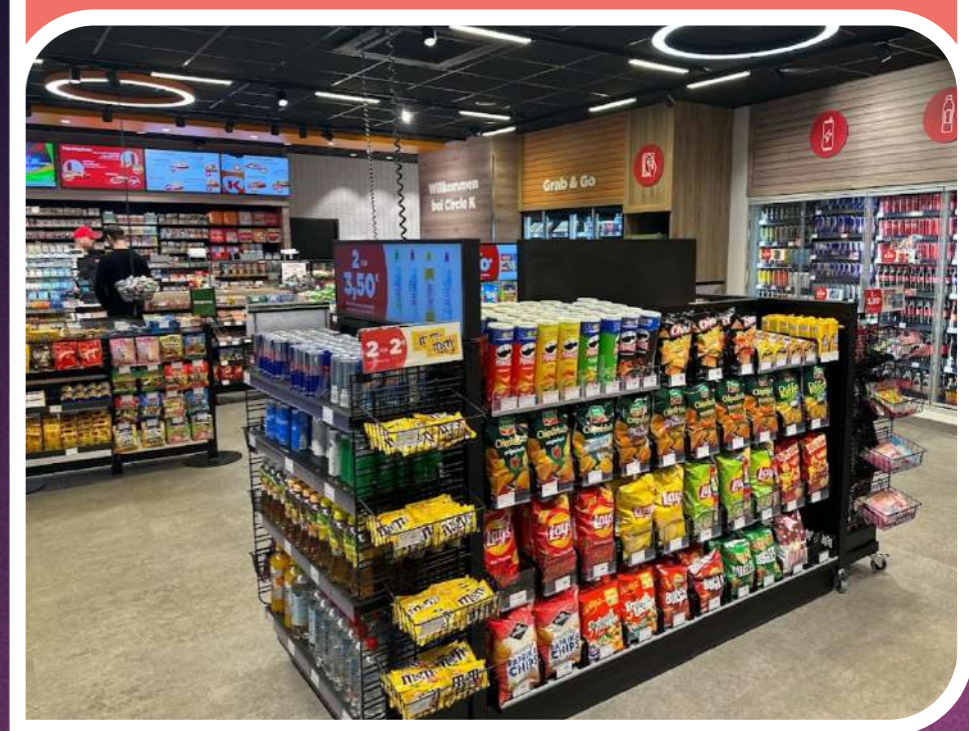
📍 PRENZLAUER ALLEE, BERLIN, GERMANY

 For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

I like the clean design features of the store. The wooden elements give it a natural and the black elements a modern feel. It wasn't cluttered with trying to put to many things into one roadside retail store. The fresh assortment also looked very appealing, fresh and a good variety. The high chairs allow customers to take a break and not having to eat in the car, at the same time it is clear this is not a place to stay for long. Just spot-on for a city forecourt retailer.

”



# How best to learn in food retailing.

“You don’t learn to walk by following rules. You learn by doing, and by falling over” so said Richard Branson, a very innovative and brave entrepreneur. We can draw three learnings for grocery retailing by taking this quote apart.



First, are there any ‘rules’ for grocery retailing we could follow? In my view, some general principles apply everywhere. For instance, customer orientation is probably a pathway to success no matter where in the world the retailer operates. Or that choice overload can lead to choice deferral, so too extensive an assortment isn’t a good idea anywhere in the world because it can overwhelm consumers. Or that happy employees lead to happy customers.

Many retailers I have met have a good intuition on these general principles.

Identifying these general principles or rules is our job in academia. That’s what we do for a living. Why did I still choose the quote that points to the fact that we cannot learn from ‘rules’? Because the rules or general principles are just the first step. The retailers in the respective countries need to translate what customer orientation means in their countries. For example, in some markets, like the US, customer orientation means a staff member packs customer bags. In some countries, like Germany, it means that no staff member handles products that the customer has bought since they no longer belong to the retailer but to the customer. The retailer also has to decide for their respective assortments and customers at what level choice becomes too much and how to optimise assortments to avoid overload. Which products should be listed, and which



should not be listed needs to be adapted to the context.

Then, in the second step, retailers need to identify new ideas, translate them to their context, and decide which ones to try. We hope to inspire some of these ideas with our report and show how other retailers have translated general principles, such as customer orientation. Then you ‘learn by doing’, which might involve ‘falling over’. I have two recommendations. Firstly, make your employees part of the process of generating ideas. Make them feel comfortable to suggest things. Reward those who suggest, and don’t make the mistake of punishing those who have ideas by just saying: “great, do it.” People learn. If suggesting something new means more work, when most retail workers are already at their limit, they will think about this very carefully next time. My second recommendation is to try fast with a small blast radius, which means label your trial very clearly as a trial, even if you are pretty sure it will work, or you might even want it to work.

I’m assuming many of the readers of this report are in managerial positions and/or the leaders in their retail stores or chains. Your employees are hired to get things done and to solve problems for you. If you want this idea to work, they will want this too, and they might keep evidence from



**Sabine Benoit**

Professor of Marketing (Practice),  
Lee Kong Chian School of  
Business, Singapore Management  
University



you that this idea is a failure. No one wants to fail. And no one wants to tell their boss that they had a failing idea. Label the idea as a trial, be open about the outcome, and make it the responsibility of the employee who runs the trial to either protect the firm from a rollout failure or to identify an opportunity for the rest of the firm.

Happy learning and trialling!



## Adam O'Connor

Managing Director, Cashel Global

MY FAVOURITE STORE



EVERY

SINGAPORE



For Location  
CLICK HERE

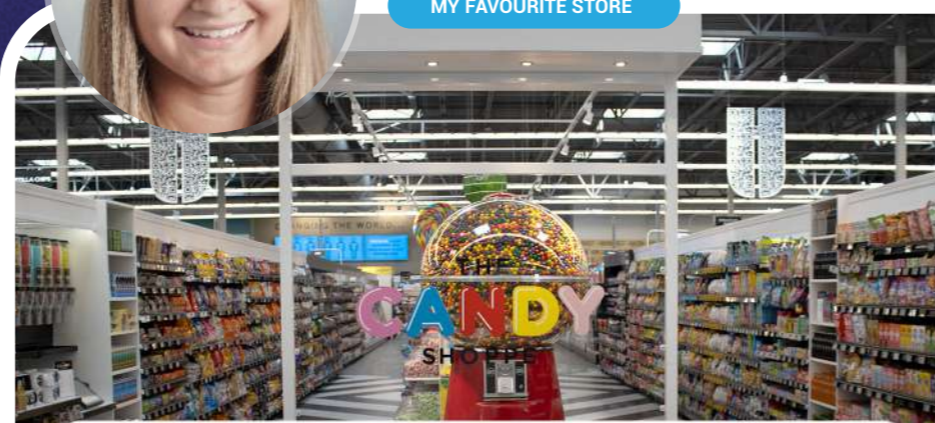
“ The store is a one-off and brings a little bit of Tokyo to the city, their relentless focus on quality and authenticity along with a humble, almost deliberately below the radar marketing plan makes this outlet a best kept secret ”



## Ashley Skokan

Corporate Communications, Hy-Vee Inc

MY FAVOURITE STORE



GRIMES HY-VEE SUPERSTORE

GRIMES, IOWA, U.S



For Location  
CLICK HERE

“ In 2021, Hy-Vee unveiled an entirely reimagined grocery store in Grimes, Iowa. The 93,000Ft² flagship store was designed with convenience in mind and offers customers an in-store shopping experience unlike any other. Some of our favourite highlights of the store include: ”

- Produce: With an obsessive focus on fresh, Hy-Vee's produce department features a wide selection of locally grown and organic fruits and vegetables and is staffed by a team of produce pros.
- The Food Hall: Hy-Vee's newest dining concept offers a large, open area for fast-casual dining. Here, customers and their families can choose from a wide selection of fresh, made-to-order meals, including: full-service breakfast, a pub with a full bar and outdoor patio, Mia Italian, HyChi & Hibachi, Nori Sushi, Long Island Deli, Wahlburgers at Hy-Vee and more.
- Cake This! Bakery: Hy-Vee's full-service bakery is the place to go to find fresh artisan breads, gourmet pastries, cookies and more. Best of all, customers can work directly with Hy-Vee's professional cake designers to customize and design cakes for any occasion.
- The Candy Shoppe: Also known as the "sweet spot" of the store, this department attracts customers of all ages. The department is brought to life with a life-size 7-foot gumball machine and a wide selection of novelty, bulk, premium and other confectionery items.

Hy-Vee has since opened six additional store locations modelled after the Grimes store design. The Grimes store has also been featured in articles across the nation for its innovative design and wide product selection.



## Brian Donaldson

CEO The Maxol Group

MY FAVOURITE STORE



MCKEE'S COUNTRY STORE & RESTAURANT

NEWTOWNARDS BT23 4TQ, UNITED KINGDOM



For Location  
CLICK HERE

“ Looking beyond the traditional retail led offers that have been established in cities and neighbourhoods with large catchments on their doorstep, I want to share a hidden gem in Northern Ireland. In visiting this location recently, I can't think of any better customer experience offered than at 'McKee's Country Store & Restaurant.' A five-generational family farming business, McKee's has diversified into being a leading retail destination for fresh homegrown food, which can be purchased from their farm shop or enjoyed in the onsite restaurant. ”

The business is located on McKee's 400 acre farm situated 5km north west of Newtownards in County Down, a region that is known for its fertile soil, located close to the sandy shores of Strangford. McKee's, now fifth generation owners of the farm, offers a truly authentic store that has built a strong following on its quality food credentials, much of which is produced on their own farm or sourced from local artisan businesses. The in-store butchery serves its own cuts of meat and poultry, complemented by fresh seasonal vegetables, in-house made salads, chutneys & sauces, fresh bakery offering breads, tray bakes, cakes for all occasions, and ready-made meals for all tastes. And then there's the eggs! Around 900 eggs are gathered every day from the family's flock of 1,000 free range hens, which they use to bake and cook and sell to customers. You just can't get fresher than McKee's.

The instore design is simple, rustic and capturing the backdrop of the surrounding green fields and countryside. Personal service is second to none with family members working alongside their 80+ colleagues. A loyalty programme is also in place, just to say thank you.





## Claudio Reboredo

Director, FGC Fuels Marketing, Argentina

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### LION PLACE

📍 INTERSECCION RUTA PROVINCIA 58 Y, RP16, B1804 CANNING, PROVINCIA DE BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

Lion Place chain has redefined the convenience store experience, earning the prestigious “LATAM Convenience Store of the Year” award from the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) in 2023 and Retailer of the Year for Shell International. More than just a pit stop for fuel, Lion Place locations offer a modern, inviting atmosphere with spacious architecture, comfortable seating areas, and dedicated co-working and meeting spaces. It’s the chain’s commitment to quality food and beverages that truly sets it apart.

From the renowned Havana coffee shop and chocolaterie to the familiar flavours of Subway, Lion Place offers a diverse range of dining options. Its proprietary fast-casual brand, TanGrill, provides fresh, healthy meals prepared to order in an open kitchen.

Lion Place’s innovative approach to convenience stores has not only elevated the customer experience but has also earned the industry’s highest recognition.

”



## Frank Tilbürger

Founder & CEO, Coffee Jungle & Best in Food

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### ARAL FUEL STATION WITH COFFEE JUNGLE SHOP

📍 GEBRÜDER DERKSEN, GERMANY



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

I picked this independent owner site which I know quite well, and it really has impressive numbers. Founded in 1996, Gebrüder Derksen GmbH has been an Aral brand partner since 2009. The company owns and operates 2 petrol stations at the German/Dutch border.

It has a large store with a distinctive bakery and food range. The site has a modern Washtec car wash with textile washing material, biological water treatment and state-of-the-art paint care programs offers customers the optimum car wash. The very latest technology is also guaranteed here. Five wash bays and 15 vacuum cleaner bays (7 covered) round off the complete program.

The site additionally offers a range of additional services and facilities:

- Dog washing facility
- Camper disposal station
- Washing machine/dryer up to 20 kg
- 300 KW charging columns (4 charging points)

The bakery store and coffee shop are the key customer store draws. The location serves around 2,000 customers per day and operates 24/7.

”



## Colin McLean

CEO, C J Lang & Son Ltd.

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### CS GOLD FRESH

📍 TANGLIN MALL, SINGAPORE

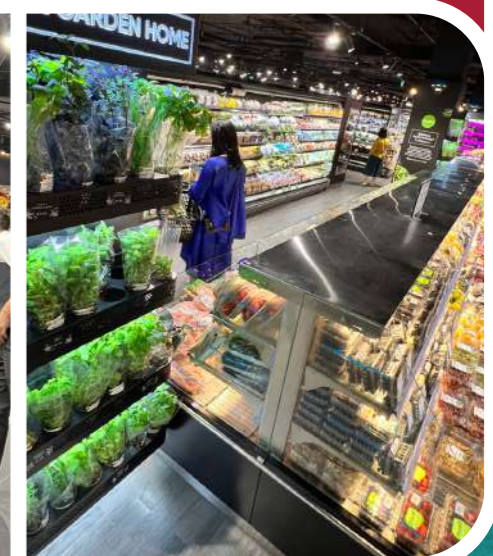


For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

I love this latest development from Cold Storage in Singapore. CS Gold Fresh is their premium food store offer. It inspires in its assortment, fresh counters, produce, wide wines, craft beers and spirits sections and the use of payment and ESL technologies. The staff are knowledgeable and incredibly helpful for out-of-town visitors and locals alike.

”





## Derek Clark

Award winning independent retailer, Ireland

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### SPAR CLANCY QUAY

📍 THE WATCHTOWER, CLANCY QUAY, ISLAND BRIDGE, DUBLIN D08 CTK8



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

Spar Clancy Quay is a flagship store with an extensive range of fresh food, ambient core grocery and proprietary food to go. The instore bakery with its wide selection of breads and rolls is a particular attraction.

There is a seating area adjacent to the MTO delicatessens.

The store is central to Phoenix Park, Heuston Rail Station, The Guinness Storehouse and The Museum of Modern Art.

”



## Ian Scott

Consultant

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### GYMSHARK

📍 165 REGENT STREET, LONDON, UK



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

An online athleisure brand's first physical store has become one of the leading experiential stores that embraces it's community so effectively. Free services can be booked via their app including one-on-one workouts with qualified instructors, aerobics sessions, weekly runs around central London, and a 1:1 personalised shopping room that delivers 18% of the store revenue.

The staff are well trained, engaging and hugely passionate about the brand. The business recognises this store is a physical touchpoint and they offer so many services, all for free.

The store has a Joe & The Juice offering fresh juices, healthy shakes and protein-packed sandwiches. Customers can grab a shake before a class in the Sweat Room, then refuel with lunch and a coffee post-workout in the relaxed seating area.

In addition, their windows have gone from initially boring to stunning and engaging, demonstrating their growth and skill as a physical store retailer.

”



## John Moran

Award winning independent retailer, Northern Ireland

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### MILESTONE RATHFRILAND

📍 NEWRY, NORTHERN IRELAND



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

The range and exceptionally wide availability of fresh, quality product, all prepared in-store.

”





## Jonathan Tout

Award winning independent retailer, England

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### KAVANAGH'S

📍 HAVERSTOCK HILL, BELSIZE PARK, LONDON NW3 4QG



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

Prepared in-store food range to rival the best of Ireland with great branding and on-trend, inspiring recipes and flavours

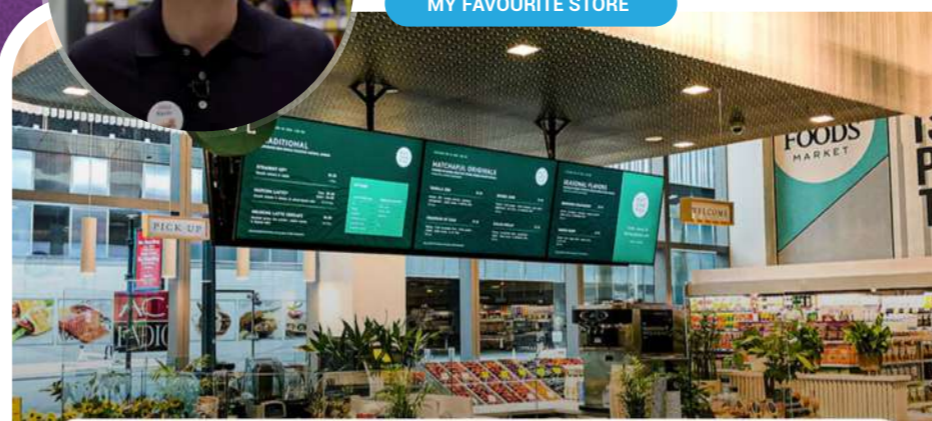
”



## Kevin Tindall

Managing Director, Stores Tesco UK

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### WHOLE FOODS MARKET

📍 HUDSON YARDS, NEW YORK CITY



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

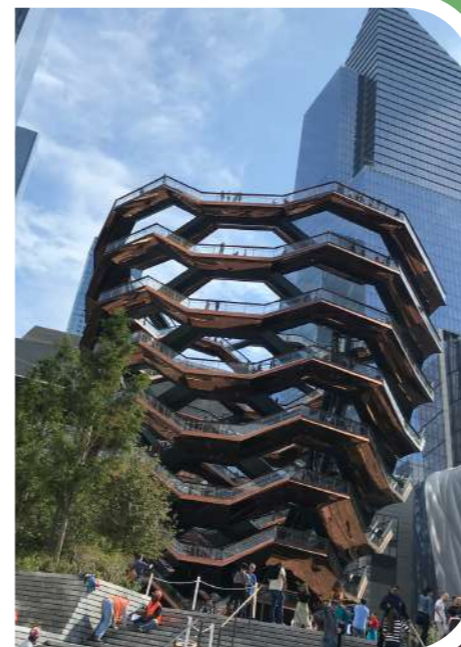
“

Hudson Yards is the 14th store of 17 Whole Foods Market and Whole Foods Market Daily Shop stores in New York City. For the 2022 report I selected the largest Whole Foods at Columbus Circle. This Manhattan West store opened in July 2020 and is large format at over 60,000 Ft<sup>2</sup>.

The store features a wide assortment of day part, fresh foods, produce, meats, fish, delicatessens, health and beauty, beers and wines, and core grocery, from local suppliers and proprietary Whole Foods items. The store also features a café and a cocktail bar. There is a street-level convenience market offering grab and go meal and snack options and cold beverages.

More than 500 products are sourced from about 200 local suppliers, many of which are new to Whole Foods Market or are recipients of Whole Foods Market's 'Local Producer Loan Program' which provides low-interest loans to help grow their businesses.

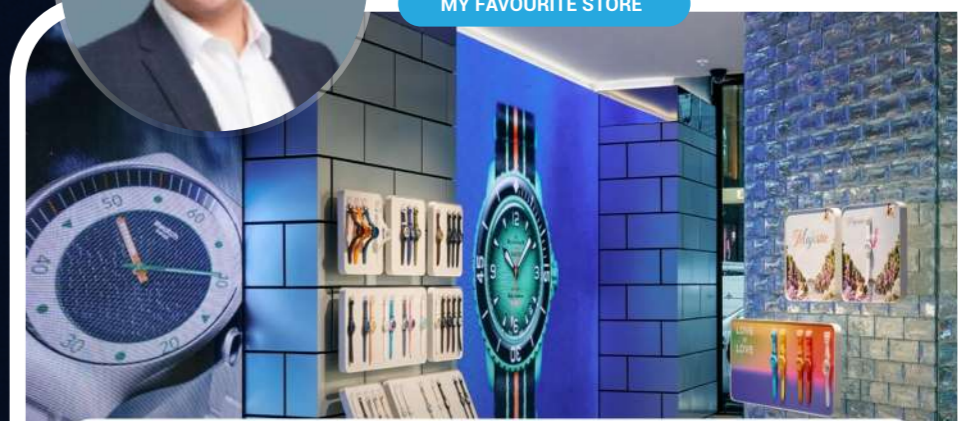
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## Leif Olson

Head of Retail Leasing Australia, CBRE Australia

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### SWATCH STORE

📍 260 COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

The store in Melbourne CBD, is the largest Swatch store in Australia at an impressive 315M<sup>2</sup>. The store boasts an extensive array of Swatch collections, including Swatch Neon, Swatch Art Journey, Big Bold, and the latest Bioceramic What If collection.

With its contemporary and lively design, the store brilliantly encapsulates the playful and innovative spirit of the Swatch brand.

Like some of the neighbouring Collins Street luxury stores, the Swatch flagship also features a coffee bar where customers can relax while the retail team shows Swatch collections.

”



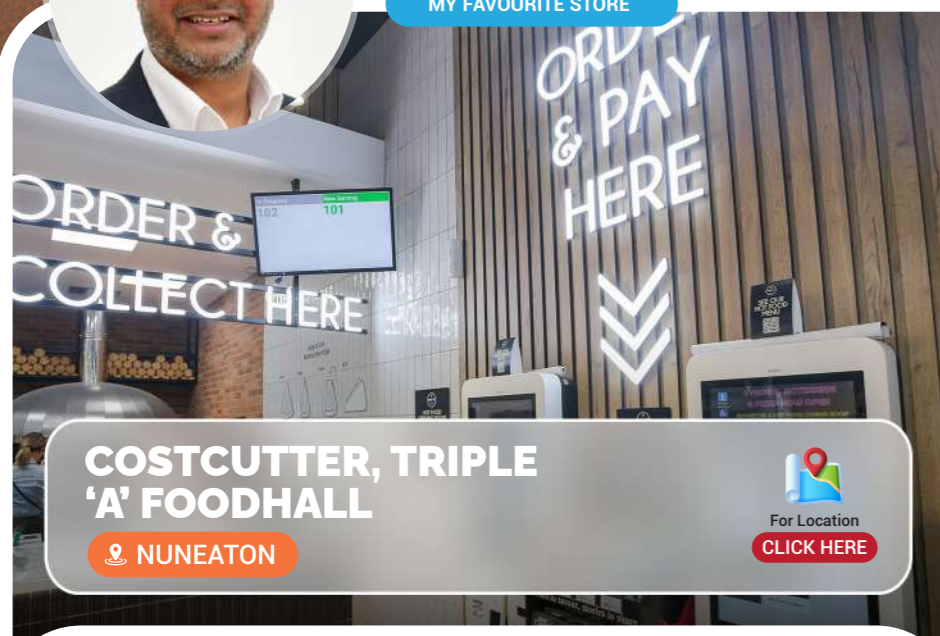




## Parin Gohil

Managing Director, Newtrade Media

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### COSTCUTTER, TRIPLE 'A' FOODHALL

NUNEATON



For Location  
CLICK HERE



Multiple award-winning Ashan and his team have created a remarkable 3,400 sq ft food hall that combines exceptional convenience with a diverse range of fresh offerings, including hand-stretched Neapolitan pizzas, home-made ice creams and a renowned Sunday roast made with locally sourced ingredients.

Their innovative approach, where he has taken learnings from across the globe, has transformed the store into a destination, attracting customers from afar and serving nearly 500 Sunday dinners weekly, thanks to a commitment to quality and customer satisfaction. The store has quickly become a community hub and the look and feel is unique with careful consideration taken to making each part of the store appealing to its audience.

Additionally, Ashan's focus on staff development and teamwork has fostered a positive work environment, ensuring a dedicated team that shares his vision for excellence in the retail experience.

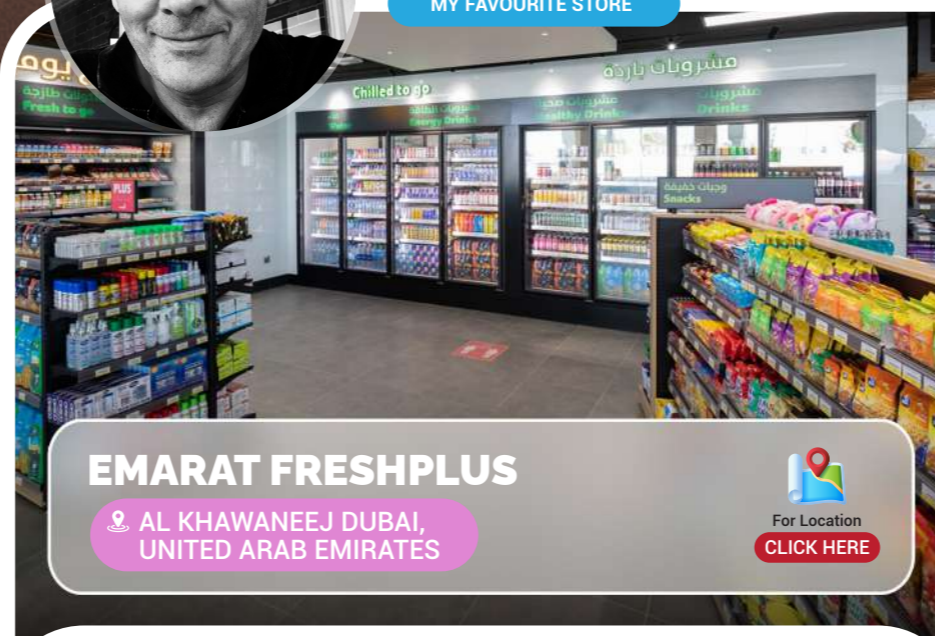
It's definitely a store that makes you feel inspired!



## Robert Onion

Chairman Circle Brands

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### EMARAT FRESHPLUS

AL KHAWANEEJ DUBAI,  
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



For Location  
CLICK HERE



Freshplus is convenience offer from Emarat the UAE Federal Governments fuel retailing corporation established in 1980.

In the highly competitive roadside retailing market of Dubai the Freshplus convenience offer from Emarat stands apart. Offering a high quality family friendly destinations, convenience staples are offered in conjunction with quality fresh food.

The store environment has been configured to encourage customers to browse in a 'low pressure' spacious relaxed environment. 'Fresh for now' is at the heart of the offer, with Bakeria and Café Arabicca recognised as destination brands by adoring customers. Bakeria holds centre stage, with an ever-changing great value menu attractive to the tastes and pockets of a diverse cosmopolitan audience.

The interior design is clear, warm and friendly and consciously transports customers away from the atmosphere of the 'fuel forecourt', into a more relaxed space. With a focus on customer service and quality Emarat have installed 'business class' WCs a clear differentiator in forecourt retailing.

The Freshplus offer is equally differentiated through excellent service standards delivered by friendly and welcoming staff on all of its roadside locations.



## Stefan Heuer

Retail Business Development  
Advisor Esso

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### ESSO PETRO-CENTER

SENNINGERBERG, LUXEMBURG



For Location  
CLICK HERE



Fresh, local and seasonal. Our culinary know-how is recognized by the "Made in Luxembourg" label.

ESSO Gourmet Restaurants are revolutionizing the culinary experience of travellers by offering a diverse selection of delicious dishes. We strive to awaken your taste buds and satisfy you every time you visit. With a new menu every week to offer you fresh and innovative dishes to take away.

At Esso Senningerberg, the Petro-Center food concept Resto Gourmet Rapide is the ideal solution, especially for the many employees at Findel Airport and the surrounding area who are looking for a restaurant where they can be served well and quickly during their limited lunch break.

All cooking takes place in the in-house kitchen. Paul Kaiser insists on emphasizing that only quality products are used, and that all food is prepared fresh on site without additives. A "steak minute" with French fries and salad without a long wait has so far been just wishful thinking.

Whether at lunch or in the evening, be it soups, salads, pizza, pasta, sushi, freshly grilled chicken, daily menu with homemade dessert, delicacies, take-away meals or snacks for those in a hurry; there is something for every customer and every wallet. There is no flower shop within a seven-kilometre radius of the new gas station. In this respect, the flower and plant department, which is open around the clock, is a real treasure trove. The Floral Design Shop is run by professional florists. Safety and comfort are standard in Senningerberg.





# Sunder Sandher

Award winning independent retailer, England

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## ONE STOP

📍 143-145 TACHBROOK ROAD, LEAMINGTON SPA CV31 3EE UK



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

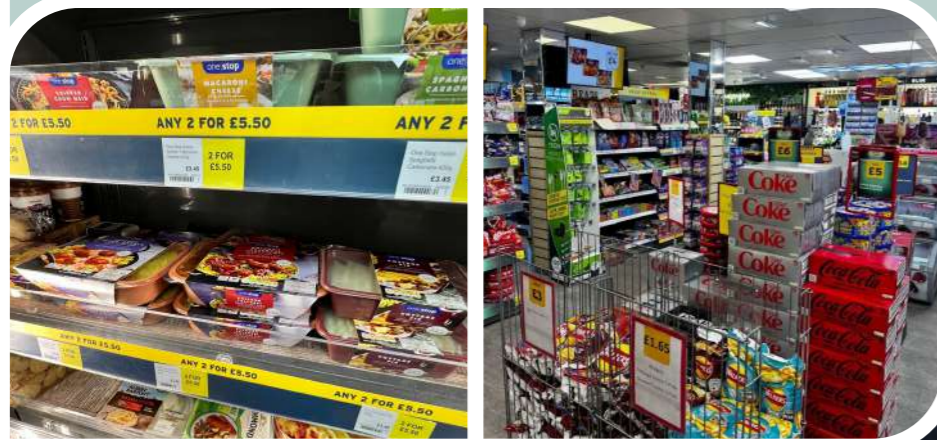
The store was opened 41 years ago as a 250 Ft<sup>2</sup> shop. It has grown through refits and extensions to a 2,000 Ft<sup>2</sup> convenience store. The store places the local community at its heart.

The store has developed a range of proprietary, fresh food to go which is in strong growth. Making samosas from scratch a big winner.

The funds from the shop have helped to open 3 restaurants.

The retailer Sunder Sandher's community work was recognised by the King with an invitation to a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. He has won many national awards, most recently presented by the Prime Minister for over 25 years in retailing. Sunder also sits on many CPG panels including for P&G, Coca Cola, K.P and Phillip Morris.

”



# Takashi Katayama

Independent Director, Life Corporation

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## LIFE SUPERMARKET

📍 CENTRAL SQUARE YEBISU GARDEN PLACE STORE, YEBISU TOKYO, JAPAN



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

Life Corporation operates 8 Central Square format stores out of 311 stores across Japan.

Not only are there ingredients - fresh and other foods - for cooking, but there is also a variety of delicatessen items, including bento, yakitori, and even wagyu beef bento, all freshly prepared in-store. The fish department features a tank with live fish, and shoppers can order these fresh fish with clean up by the fishmonger.

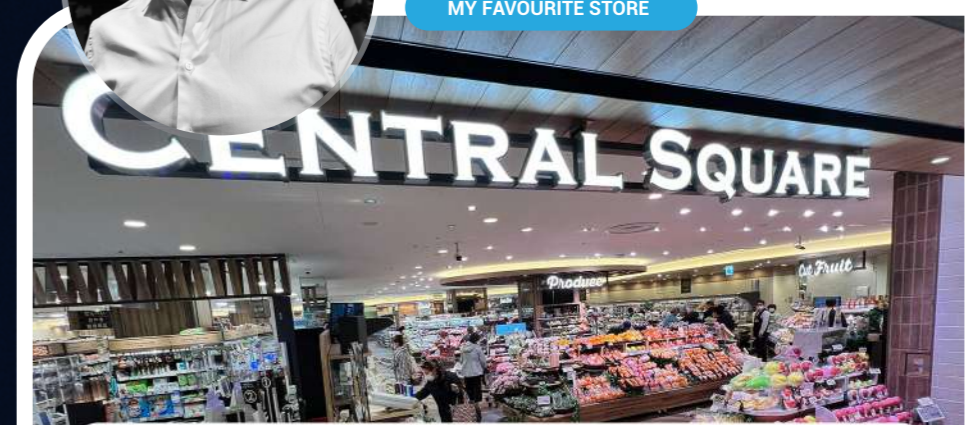
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# Thomas Ennis

Award winning independent retailer, Ireland

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## LIFE SUPERMARKET

📍 EBISU, TOKYO, JAPAN



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

I first visited Life in March 2023 on the joint IROF, and Retail Leaders visit to Tokyo and Seoul. I also visited this year when in Japan for the Tokyo marathon.

It is the best fresh supermarket that I have visited anywhere in the world! The assortment of proprietary daypart food, prepared and packaged food, core grocery, bakery, fish, meats, non-alcoholic and alcoholic drinks, health and beauty and more is outstanding.

Technology with ESL's and linked video screens is used throughout the store.

”





## Tom McAvoy

Award winning independent retailer,  
Northern Ireland

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### DUNNES CORNELSCOURT

DUBLIN, REPUBLIC OF IRELAND



For Location  
CLICK HERE

“

Dunnes Stores launched in Ireland 80 years ago and revolutionized the concept of retail in Ireland by promising 'better value' to its customers. A family business that has grown to be the Ireland market leader with stores selling a wide assortment from core grocery through delicatessens, fresh foodservice to fashion, textiles, and homewares. There are 119 stores in the Republic of Ireland, 15 in Northern Ireland and 4 in Spain.

*"Anyone could have done what I did – but they didn't do it. That's the only difference."*

– Ben Dunne, founder of Dunnes Stores

I have nominated Dunnes Cornelscourt as my favourite store because of its wide assortment of fresh foods for today, high operating standards and continuous innovation. One can buy the assortment of food and non-food instore and on-line.

It remains a family business like my own Milestone store.

”



## David Sands

Chairman, David's Kitchen Ltd

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### MILESTONE RATHFRILAND

RATHFRILAND, NORTHERN IRELAND



For Location  
CLICK HERE

“

Described by its owner as a convenience store, this store has had a profound influence on my thinking. The store continues to excel in proprietary food as well as retail excellence. The store attracts customers from a wide area and their own produced meals and foods are a distinct point of difference. They answer the simple retail question, what is this store famous for?

This store has a great combination of leading brands good own label, local products and of course the many products that are produced instore

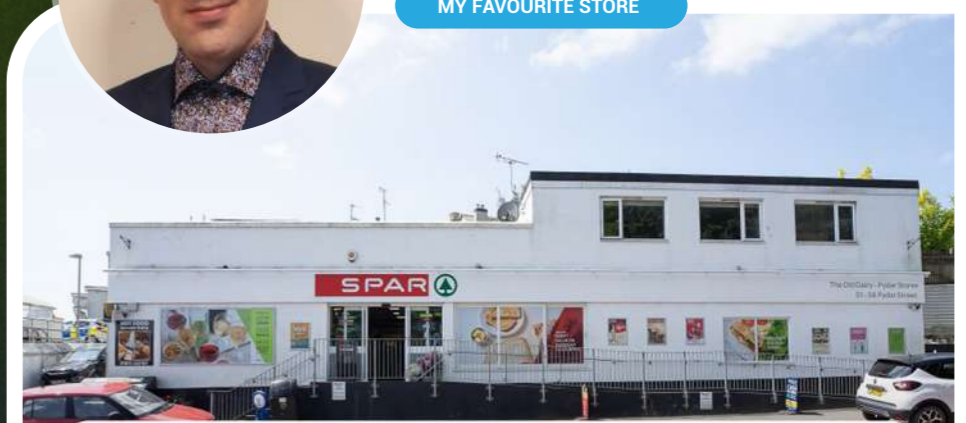
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## Jack Courtez

Editor, Newtrade Media

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### THE OLD DAIRY – PYDAR STORES

TRURO, ENGLAND



For Location  
CLICK HERE

“

This store takes the same foodservice concepts normally confined to major UK cities into a small town, amending it to serve its older demographic. The store offers innovative contract catering to utilise space throughout the week, it hosts events and has a 'walk the aisles' approach to customer service. Strong connections with local suppliers also set it apart from major chains.

”





## Lisa Biggs

Partner, W Capra, LLC

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### TXB

📍 GEORGETOWN, TEXAS, UNITED STATES



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

My favourite store is TXB, in Georgetown, Texas. If you think Customer Service can make a difference, you should think TXB because they prove every day that the key to retail success is empowering a team whose mission starts and ends each day with serving their customers and the communities. They coined the phrase “C-Store doesn’t just stand for Convenience Store... it stands for Community Store” and they stand behind it.

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are made fresh or packaged to go when you are on the run. The food is fresh, made to order and brings home their Texas roots. Order big flavours with their hot meals or cool off with fresh fruits, and salads. There is something for everyone at TXB.

The atmosphere is contagious. The doors open wide to receive you and you are greeted by the team at every turn. The smell of fresh food may draw you in, but the hospitality will keep you there. They are Texas Born and Texas proud. From sourcing local growers and suppliers to the TXB branded merchandise, you know when you walk in, you are part of something big.

”



## Pradeep Chechani

Retail Consultant, India

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### SOCIETY STORES

📍 LOKHANDWALA, ANDHERI WEST, MUMBAI, INDIA



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

Store caters to highend residential catchment. One of the most affluent people in Mumbai. Very finicky, well travelled & well educated people. The merchandise spread is customised to such customer pool which is very well liked by them. Range extends from authentic Indian snacks representing multiple regions of the country to gourmet chocolates, artisanal cheese & premium ingredients for various cuisines, natural & organic groceries, spices, dry fruits & health snacks. Home section offers premium crockery & cookware to luxurious bed & bath linens. The private label is blended into the grocery & home range very seamlessly. Plus there are live street food counters for the tired shopper. This chain has succeeded in the city of Mumbai, where many national & local retailers have failed.

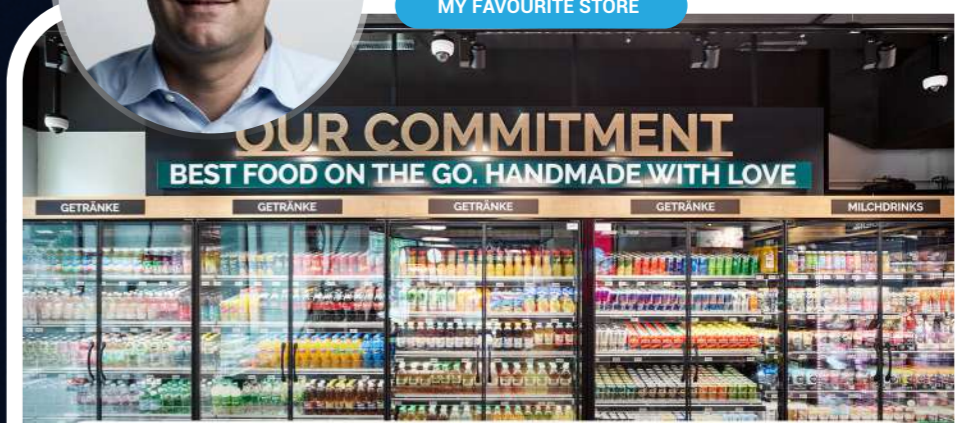
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## Roger Vogt

CEO Retail Valora Group, Switzerland

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### THE KITCHEN BY AVEC

📍 ZURICH, SWITZERLAND



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

The Kitchen by avec” offers a comprehensive, high-quality shopping and dining experience, fulfilling our customer promise: “Best food on the go. Handmade with love.” Our new avec, the first of its kind in a residential area, appeals to a broad customer base. It masterfully combines a wide range of food services, a visible bakery module, a popular coffee brand, an extensive cooler, a distinctive nut tower, a commitment to regional products, a fruit and vegetable shelf, a comprehensive retail corner, and user-friendly digital services. Our state-of-the-art foodservice clip caters to lunchtime needs from Monday to Saturday, attracting customers with a wide selection of freshly produced on-site products like pizzas, döner kebabs, paninis, burgers, hot dogs, humus sticks, Italian sandwiches, and daily menus like lasagne, bolognese or couscous oriental. About 20% of our offerings are vegetarian or vegan.

The Bakery Tower showcases various bread and breakfast items, while Starbucks provides popular coffee options. The Nut Tower features over 50 organic products from our own brand ok-. The “From here. Regional for you.” label highlights local products, supporting small businesses and reducing transport emissions. The 7.25 m cooler offers the area’s largest selection of fresh products and popular beverages. The Retail Corner offers a reliable one-stop shopping experience for household, hygiene, and cosmetic products, catering to local residents. Our digital services include self-order terminals, an online pre-order feature, in-house developed self-checkout stations, and the avec 24/7 shopping app for mobile scan & pay, especially useful during non-staffed hours.

”





# Stacey Williams

Director, Gander

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## WESTON MARKS AND SPENCER FOODHALL

BATH, UNITED KINGDOM



For Location  
CLICK HERE

“ Nestled in the picturesque city of Bath, the M&S at Weston Lock is more than just a retail store, it's a cherished part of the community. Known for its commitment to quality, convenience, and customer service, this store has become a go-to destination for locals and visitors alike. M&S has always been synonymous with quality, and Weston Lock is no exception. The food hall features a wide selection of fresh produce, ready meals, extensive wine range and bakery items that are hard to beat in terms of quality and taste. M&S has always been synonymous with quality, and the Weston Lock branch is no exception. One of the standout features of the Weston Lock M&S is its customer service. The staff here are known for their friendliness, attentiveness, and willingness to go the extra mile to help customers. The store is 8 years old but still feels as fresh and inspiring as the day it opened. Marks & Spencer has a long history of community engagement, and the Weston Lock branch continues this tradition. The store frequently participates in local initiatives, from supporting food banks to organizing fundraising events for charities. This commitment to the community enhances the store's role as not just a retail outlet, but a key player in the social fabric of the area. Weston Lock is more than just a place to shop; it's a community hub where quality meets convenience. Its commitment to providing top-notch products, excellent customer service, and supporting local initiatives makes it my go to store. ”



# Ragini Annan

Director, Blue Ananta

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## RAMANLAL VITHALDAS & CO

MUMBAI, INDIA



For Location  
CLICK HERE

“ There are hundreds if not thousands of dried fruits and sweets shops in Mumbai. RV has been in business for nearly 6 decades and I remember visiting with family when I was at school. RV's superior grade products command a premium price compared to similar products available in other retailers. ”

Sixty years is a long time in any business, and now with the third generation of family, the business has maintained the same tradition of quality and hospitality and bonding with our customers. The selection is available in three stores and online. ”



# Martin Swadling

Customer Director - Retail, Booker

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## SCOTMID COOP

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND



For Location  
CLICK HERE

“ This store is mind blowing on so many levels. I have never seen such abundance, product quality, beautiful displays, expert staff in one place. The general quality and display of fresh foods was awe inspiring. Simply as good as it gets in my opinion. ”





## Dawood Pervez

Managing Director, Bestway Wholesale

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### COSTCUTTER TRIPLE A

NUNEATON, UNITED KINGDOM



For Location  
CLICK HERE

“

"Triple A Foodhall stands proud in Convenience Retailing. It's unique and it hasn't happened by accident. The store's approach follows a year-long journey of research, learning and investment by owner, Ashan (Shaan) Chaudry and his team, who undertook study tours across two continents (Ireland, Germany, Greece, Canada), exploring global trends, best practice, and innovation in countries renowned for their progressive approach to food-to-go and Convenience.

Shaan then turned his vision into reality, investing £3m into a new store that redefines Convenience Retailing in the UK. The result is a vibrant, exciting, energised destination store that customers visit up to three times a day! It's packed with theatre, delivering 'magic and sparkle' to customers, day-in, day-out. Customers are greeted with freshly baked madeleines at the door. They then enjoy an incredible experience of pizza ovens 'on the go', a bakery (from 5.30am) baking more than 45 lines (all made from scratch), 18 flavours of home-made Gelato (people drive for miles to enjoy), a special cake stand offering 24 types of home-baked cakes and special commissions, a 'make your own baguette' counter, and freshly stocked salad bar.

A new Sunday Roast offer is now enjoyed by over 500 customers each week, giving incredible value. It has a milk station, a hybrid store within a store' (the much-loved Bargain Booze brand) giving unique drinks offer. Shaan imbeds technological advancement, sustainability and community engagement into everything he does. Its success is evident. In the last year alone, the store has increased turnover by more than £1m.

”



## John Stevenson

Managing Director, Stevenson of Oxbridge Limited

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### CREIGHTONS OF BALMORAL

BELFAST NORTHERN IRELAND



For Location  
CLICK HERE

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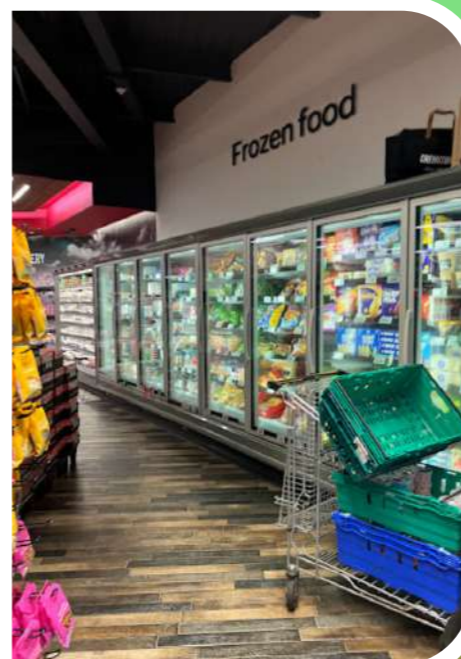
"This store blew my mind 4/5 years ago. From driving down the road and seeing the canopy and then the shop design with the LED lights was something seriously special!

The amazement didn't stop on the outside, walking in and seeing the attention to detail with the design inside was also quite remarkable. The wooden raft, the counters, the open tills with gelato offering all amazing.

Then we had a tour of the kitchens, and it reminded me of a seriously large hotel kitchen with more than a dozen people working down there feeding the counters, mind blowing!

There is so much I could write about this store but to sum it up there is something for me here that has the edge in just about every area that makes it stand out in my opinion to be the best site I have ever seen."

”



## Patrick Sewell

Owner / MD, Sewell on the go

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### HY-VEE FAST & FRESH

WEST DES MOINES, USA



For Location  
CLICK HERE

“

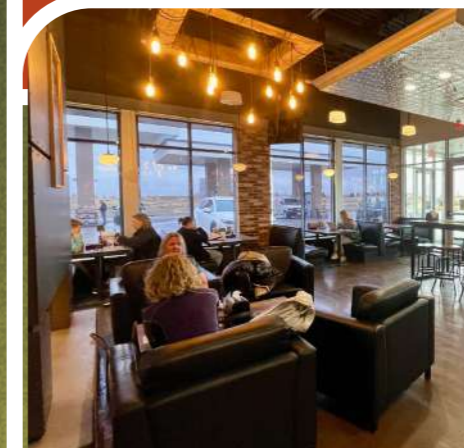
I was really taken with this store and the company itself (Hy-Vee). They are an employee-owned business and their culture shone through positively upon my visit. Their store standards were exceptional.

Moreover, the roadside site in West Des Moines covered all bases. It was a transient location and the range suited that. Great use of technology, in particular the ESLs and array of media screens (all up selling). I also liked that it focused on sustainability, with skylights, auto dimming lights and provision for solar.

There is an excellent delivery of their vision, most evident through their team but also the clear messaging on media screens. They are driving efficiency through good use of technology, whether that's front of house making it easier for customers or behind the scenes, in providing better information, to make better decisions.

There is an excellent casual restaurant 'Smokey Row' built into the store. It is definitely a place I'd stop and meet for a quick catch up."

”

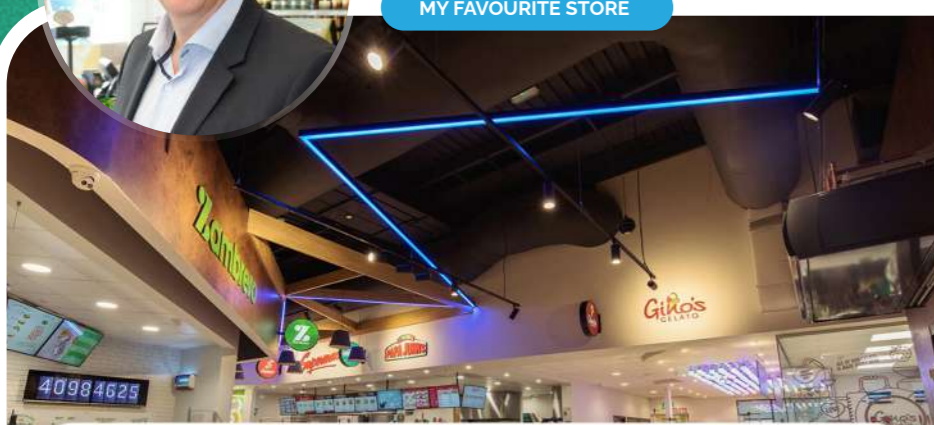




# Shane Cantillon

CEO, Cantillon Group

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## JUNCTION 14 MAYFIELD

[KILDARE IRELAND](#)



To Watch Video  
[CLICK HERE](#)



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

This is the ultimate roadside stop & the future of convenience retailing. The store demonstrates how to operate at the highest level, while executing super standards & customer experience in such a smooth fashion. The site includes a SPAR Store with 8 Concessions, a newly opened off licence & seating/services for over 150 people. This is an award-winning superstore that has everything. The foodservice offering is second to none that just happens to sell fuel.

”



# Aurélien Gainche

Key Account Manager, Rational France

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## GRAND FRAIS

[LA QUEUE-EN-BRIE, FRANCE](#)



To Watch Video  
[CLICK HERE](#)



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

As soon as we step into Grand Frais, it feels like we're back at the markets of our childhood. Everything is designed to find the essentials of daily products, from meat to cheese, including seafood and fine groceries. No big brands, just quality products.

The concept makes us want to fill our cart in every aisle. We find products directly supplied by local producers, beautifully showcased in the best way possible, all at a very attractive price. The little extra is finishing my shopping with a freshly roasted chicken for Sunday, or some wonderful roasted baby potatoes and coquelet cooked on-site, which rarely make it home before the car ride is over "

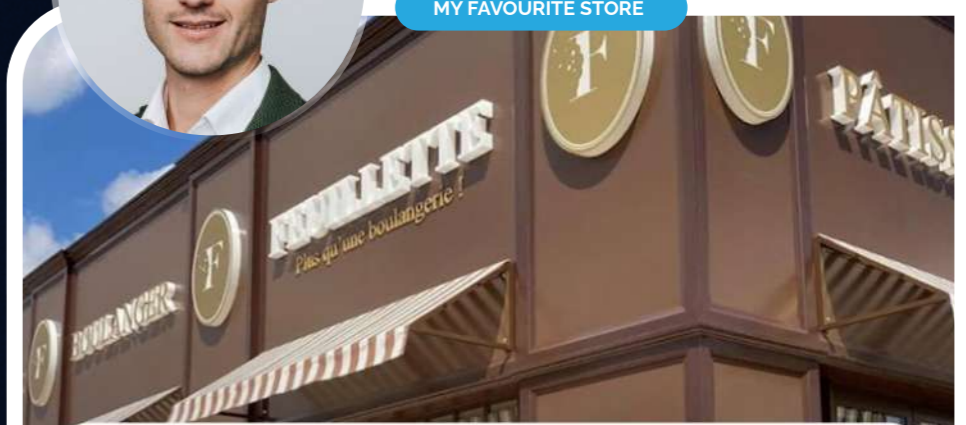
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# Olivier Brion

Key Account Manager, Rational France

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## BAKERY & FRESH PASTRY CHAIN - FEUILLETTE

[BLOIS, FRANCE](#)



To Watch Video  
[CLICK HERE](#)



For Location  
[CLICK HERE](#)

“

Imagine the feeling at home when entering the Feuillette shop. We always leave with more items in our basket than we have planned to buy. It's an excellent experience with a dedicated attention from the staff: they are very caring the clients upon they pass the front door. The details are also based on a beautiful presentation and highlighting products. They make fresh, quality products, offer homemade savoury and sweet treats: salads, hot dishes, sandwiches, fougasses, fruit tarts, Paris-Brest, rum babas, macarons and much more.

The bakery becomes a must-have in everyone's day, whether for breakfast or lunch.

”





**Eva Strasburger**  
 President StrasGlobal, CEO Compliance  
 Safe, Co-Founder Vision Group Network,

MY FAVOURITE STORE



**M&S SIMPLY FOOD**

📍 ARRIVALS AT TERMINAL 3 IN LONDON  
 HEATHROW AIRPORT, UK



For Location  
 CLICK HERE

“

You don't often see a grocery store in an airport arrival terminal- especially one that is so well stocked. M&S provides an invaluable service as it means travellers do not to have to make an extra stop on their way home or wherever their destination, to pick up food and groceries.

They have figured out how to provide the right selection of enticing, impulse items as well as staples to customers who have just stepped off a plane and are either returning home to empty fridges, or are visitors needing refreshments and snacks. They do it very well by offering a huge selection of items in a small footprint.

I enjoy going through each aisle and seeing what is new and delicious since my last visit. It means we always leave with more items in our basket than we have planned to buy! When Roy and I emerge from customs in Terminal 3, London Heathrow, we never leave without making a stop at the M&S located inside Arrivals. In fact it is something we look forward to. This small convenience/grocery store not only stocks everything we need for our first few days in the UK but is also a pleasure to shop in because it often gives us a taste of what is new and popular in the UK market, and we discover items that do not exist in other countries. We typically grab a bouquet of flowers, beautifully packaged chocolate boxes and tins of biscuits with a card or two as host gifts for whoever we will be seeing.

The offer includes Indian, Thai and Italian ready-made meals, a good British shepherd's pie, hearty fresh soups, fresh salmon & pork sausages for the next few days; staples like milk and eggs; a cold shot of turmeric and ginger with a fresh orange juice and a few bottles of coconut water after being dehydrated on the plane. There are interesting international snacks for the next few hours' drive like mini empanadas, chorizo bites, mini lamb samosas, tomato and mozzarella arancini rice balls and sweet chili crisps, very British ham and cheese sandwiches, Luxury Gold teabags, crumpets and organic honey from a M&S select farm, a selection of artisan cheeses and fresh baguettes, fresh fruit and some healthy snacks like super green salads. Oh, and a jar of English mustard to take back to Texas!

Bottom line is that this is one of the few shops in the world where I get excited about being able to dash in and pick up a wide range of tasty, fresh and interesting food items as well as staples in a few quick minutes of shopping.

”



**Jonathan Reynolds**  
 Professor in Retail Marketing

MY FAVOURITE STORE



**LIBERTY**

📍 LONDON, UK



For Location  
 CLICK HERE

“

My overall favourite store is Liberty of London. By its own admission, Liberty "has always been more than a store - it's an artistic movement". Liberty celebrated artisanal craft 130 years before Etsy was founded. Its longstanding reputation for luxury fabrics, especially its floral and art nouveau products, set in an iconic mock-Tudor store, has been carefully set alongside evolving fashion branding, progressive & disruptive beauty products & jewellery designs and artisanal talent-driven homewares. A visit to Liberty has a calming effect on the soul, a reassurance that, despite evidence to the contrary, all is right with the world and that craft and creativity continue to thrive in a marketplace of digits and mass production.

”



**Colin Peacock**  
 Group Strategy Director, ECR Retail Loss

MY FAVOURITE STORE



**KAVANAGH'S**

📍 BELSIZE PARK, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM



For Location  
 CLICK HERE

“

This store looks amazing and makes you hungry! What I love the most is the focus on the use of technology to make the store associates work better and safer through the automation of daily tasks such as checking for expiry dates, such as being on the lookout for prolific thieves and the application of yellow stickers for markdowns

I also really like is the use of the ESLs to display actionable insights to management.

Examples include an alert for items that had not sold for an unusually long period of time, for example, 100 days, another one was for items with high food waste rates, and another for items with excess stock in the back room. These alerts displayed inside the ESLs helped the store manager take faster action by avoiding having to find a hand-held and doing their own investigations, leading to faster actions to prevent food waste, increase the sales of slow sellers and new ways to reduce stocks on the lines overstocked.

From the store manager, I learnt that by using an app and a flasher on ESLs, they have been able to find more quickly the items that are due to expire that day faster. Instead of spending two hours a day on this task, the store associate now just spends one hour checking for shelf life & applying the markdown sticker. In addition, the store manager used to spend one hour themselves, 2-3 days a week checking that the work had been done. With this new application, they now spend just one hour a week doing this work.

For the prolific shoplifting offenders, before introducing their face recognition system the store was unable and unwilling to fill the chocolate aisle [and other high shrink departments] such was the level of theft. With the face recognition technology, they are now able to recognise previous offenders the moment they enter the store, allowing the store manager and others to make an early and non-confrontational intervention to prevent theft, making the store safer while growing their sales on chocolates.

For Bakery - one day shelf-life products - an associate was required to apply a yellow sticker at 4pm to every item. Now, at 4pm, all of the ESLs automatically move to a new by 50% price, helping more items sell through that day, protecting losses while reducing food waste."

”





## Nick Ruffner

Public Affairs Manager, Sheetz, Inc.

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### SHEETZ STORE #837

📍 ROMULUS, MI, UNITED STATES



For Location  
CLICK HERE

“

This store has been very well received by the Romulus MI community, with approximately 550 people attending grand opening ceremony. Our teams have worked to get engaged with the community, in addition to the communities across the region where we are planning new store locations. Our goal is to be the best neighbour we can in every community where our stores operate.

We give customers the opportunity to get what they want, when they want it and how they want it - 24/7/365. The store is the "ultimate one-stop-shop," with fresh Made-to-Order food/beverages, an extensive selection of snacks/bottled beverages, self-serve beverages, clean restrooms and more!

This is the first location for Sheetz in the state of Michigan, where we are planning to open 50-60 stores in the next five years. It uses our newest store design, offering enhanced restaurant and convenience features for our customers - and the same 24/7/365 dependability they know and love!

”



## Amarnath Mylavarapu

Regional Sales Manager, Rational

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### THE KITCHEN BY SPINNEYS

📍 DUBAI MALL



For Location  
CLICK HERE

“

Standalone food hall and dine-in in Dubai Mall. Very innovative concept with many attractive stations for your grab & go. 5,000 Ft<sup>2</sup> of salads, sushi, fresh fruits, rotisserie and even a gelato bar to satisfy all cravings.

”



## Aimen Ben Abdeljelil

Regional Sales Manager, Rational

MY FAVOURITE STORE



### GRANDIOSE PRIME BAKERY

📍 SPRING SOUK, DUBAI



For Location  
CLICK HERE

“

Visually impressive selection of fresh bakery products. Eye catching and mouthwatering food display. Innovative design concept. Plus: great cheese selection and very knowledgeable staff.

”

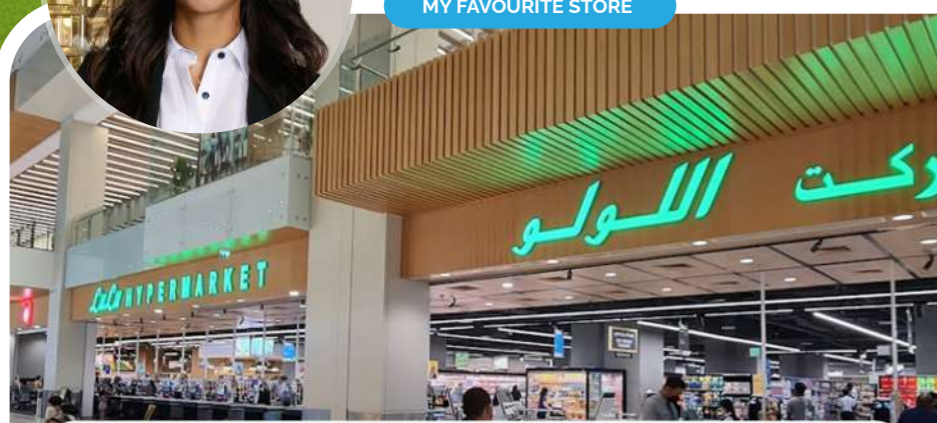




# Simona Saputo

Sales Director, UAE, Rational

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## LULU HYPERMARKET

SILICON OASIS, DUBAI



For Location  
CLICK HERE

360 degree shopping experience, including in store dining. Massive display of fresh fruits and veggies as well option to grab your raw food and ask to prepare it for you.

Family oriented and budget friendly. Plus: innovative offer of terrarium, great place to grab a unique gift for your beloved ones.



# Lee Harding

Key Account Director, Rational UK Ltd

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## SCOTMID COOP

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND



For Location  
CLICK HERE

Every time I have visited this store, it's always been welcoming, very well designed to make a great customer experience, it's clean, bright, well stocked, and easy to find the products I'm looking for, the highlight is the centrally located "The Kitchen" Food to Go area. Always fully stocked at the right time of day with a fantastic range of freshly cooked and prepared foods, consistent quality of the core offer and constantly bringing in and changing the range with new and innovative products that I don't see available elsewhere, always have a seasonal or special event promotion on offer to tempt you and try, all this served by a very professional and friendly team, it's my place to grab a bite to eat whenever I'm in the great city of Edinburgh.



# Theo Bostock

RATIONAL UKI

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## EUROSPAR

MALLUSK, NORTHERN IRELAND



For Location  
CLICK HERE

I chose this store because of its excellent food to go offer encompassing a deli plus burrito bar, pizza and burger concept with the drive-through barista bar. I think this store offers unique opportunity for customers to experience this amazing food offer along with a well laid out retail store offering a range of local suppliers. It was also the first Henderson Retail store which I had the pleasure to introduce the iVario Pro oven.





# Adam Vincent

Dike and Son Ltd Superstore

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## GLOUCESTER SERVICE STATION FARM SHOP AND KITCHEN



For Location

[CLICK HERE](#)

M5 NORTHBOUND, GLOUCESTER GL4 0DN, UK

“

‘Bringing you Proper Food on the motorway’.

The independent retail family have invested a lot of money and made the place a food destination as opposed to somewhere you just stop.

Whenever I have stopped, I have been impressed by the range and variety of products available on offer and often thought how on earth they manage it but I guess it boils down to the fact that they have such a wide demographic of customer base that it is possible to sell all sorts.

”



# Bruce Lori

Senior Manager Media Relations Wawa, Inc.

MY FAVOURITE STORE



## WAWA STORE #1



For Location

[CLICK HERE](#)

MACDADE BLVD. & KEDRON AVE., FOLSOM, PA

“

This year, Wawa marked the milestone of our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the first Wawa store in 1964. So, it's only fitting that our favorite store in the world is our Wawa Store #1. The original Store 1 was rebuilt in 2016 to a modern store with fuel, and today it is located at MacDade Blvd. & Kedron Avenue, Folsom, PA. The new location is just steps away from its original location and has a replica of the original store's "Wawa Food Market" pole sign on site to pay homage to the first store. And while there are many changes and innovations that have occurred over the past six decades – our offer, store design, technology to name a few; some things that won't ever change are our core values and the dedication of our Wawa associates who remain committed to going beyond filling customer orders to fulfilling the lives of every community we serve with the best experience, friendship, kindness and smiles. Our Founder, Grahame Wood's vision and dream for Wawa forever changed our history on April 16, 1964, when he set into motion 60 years of continued innovation and change. But with all the change, we believe he would be most proud of how our promise of making everyone feel welcome and our purpose of fulfilling lives every day continues to grow and reach new communities at a record pace. And with so much growth ahead of us, we are most excited to see how our associates share this purpose and our culture to help our communities – and the world - in even more ways. Happy Wawaversary store #1!

”



# THREE TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL HOT FOOD OFFER IN THE SUPERMARKET

A snack between meals, a hot meal during the lunch break or a quick dinner without having to cook yourself - ready-prepared meals have become an integral part of the supermarket. The advantages for customers are obvious: the prices are cheaper than in a restaurant and if you want, you can do your weekly shopping at the same time. In addition, more and more people are working - time for cooking is short, so quick, practical and flexible alternatives are in demand. Supermarkets, on the other hand, can differentiate themselves from the competition with their food concept, reach new target groups and increase their sales - provided the strategy is right. Three tips on how to achieve this.

## 1 'Outside', 'Beside' or 'Inside': it's all about the right positioning

The first step to success is positioning the goods in the supermarket. A distinction is made between 'Outside', the area in front of the checkouts, 'Beside', the transition between the checkout and the supermarket, and 'Inside', i.e. in the centre of the supermarket. Each location has its advantages and disadvantages - depending on the objective of the product in question: Is the customer supposed to pick something up quickly? Or do they want to spot a new product on their way through the shop? In an environment with a lot of offices, for example, lunch or hot, pre-packed take-away meals that can be found directly in the supermarket are ideal. This makes it easy to take other items with you. Savoury snacks, fresh rolls and sweet pastries, on the other hand, fit well in the checkout area - the aroma attracts customers and at the same time the supermarket is less busy.

## 2. The power of habit: ensuring quality and flavour standards

Reliability in terms of quality and flavour is the be-all and end-all for customers. For example, if they have little time during their lunch break or just want to pick up something quickly for dinner while shopping, they usually go for products that they know and that they know how they taste. This can be an organisational challenge, especially for supermarket chains with several branches. Digital kitchen management systems, such as the ConnectedCooking app from RATIONAL, are helpful here, as they allow you to create your own cooking programmes centrally and send them to networked RATIONAL cooking systems across multiple locations. This means that even employees without specialist knowledge can easily prepare standardised dishes. And for customers, this means that the food always looks and tastes the same - no matter which branch they shop in.

## 3 Vegan, with meat, side dishes and baked goods: Variety despite a lack of space

A large selection of hot meals not only helps supermarkets to retain existing customers, but also to attract new target groups. In addition to the existing range, they can appeal to a younger target group with vegetarian or vegan dishes, for example. However, the more dishes on offer, the more important it is to plan the kitchen carefully. Because if you have different equipment for each application, a lot of space is lost that is actually needed as sales space. It therefore makes sense to use multifunctional cooking systems that replace several appliances at once. With its iCombi Pro, for example, RATIONAL offers an intelligent combi-steamer that covers 95% of all common cooking applications and can grill, roast, steam, bake and braise - all in just one square metre of space.



**Dr Max Schwaller**  
Segment Director Retail RATIONAL AG



**JAMES LOWMAN**  
Chief Executive  
Association of Convenience Stores

## AFTERWORD

### *The Next Great Stores ...*

Many of the stores that will appear in future compendiums of our sector's best in class are already trading, and it's unlikely that their ascent onto this list will be due to them adopting a whole new paradigm of retailing, or transforming their business from top to bottom. It's far more likely they will have tried, tested, adjusted, re-started, honed and delivered a number of smaller changes, and will have executed their plans with every customer, every day.

What makes one store stand out from another isn't so much strategic insight and the plan on paper, it's their applicability to the environment where the store operates and the way a retailer goes beyond the demographic analysis and gets to the heart of what that customer base needs. There is no blueprint as to what offer makes a great convenience store.

Will Q-commerce be a core part of our sector's offer in the future? Probably not, the majority of stores are unlikely to have a developed delivery offer that accounts for a large proportion of their business... but some stores will have a local delivery business that confounds any traditional modelling and lifts their business to another level commercially and in their ability to offer true convenience to their customers.

Is food-to-go a big part of our future? For sure, but some stores will be constrained by space and local demographics and will be nowhere near the world-class offers featured here.

Local produce? Yes, but not as a major part of most stores.

Fully automated sites? Maybe Amazon's row back will cool the pace of development, but retailers will need to invest in technology to maintain customer service standards at an affordable cost.

Will roadside retailers, and other sites, embrace EV-charging as a core service and build their retail and foodservice offer around serving those drivers? Will this sector host a viable hydrogen fuelling network?

Beer caves, in-store pharmacies, vape concessions, parcel collections over the counter or lockers, banking services ... the opportunities for this sector are greater than ever because we are, fundamentally, more relevant than ever to the busy, connected, omnichannel lifestyles that our customers want to live. Which of these opportunities can work in any given location is a fine judgement, and it's that which defines the best retailers. Our adaptability to create a hyperlocal offer is our superpower.

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