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Retail automation  
& payment solutions

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business in  
an automated  
world**



**Store design  
best practice**

Delight your customers  
**...The Pratfall Effect  
and why your customers  
could like your mistakes**



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The International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA) is the largest and most diverse international association serving the global fresh produce and floral supply chain. The association is the combination of the Produce Marketing Association (PMA, founded in 1949) and the United Fresh Produce Association (UFPA, founded in 1904).





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Image courtesy of <https://www.anybotics.com/>

## FEATURES

### Retail automation & payment solutions

Self-checkouts, robots running the warehouse, AI-managed inventory, groceries delivered by drone. This is today's reality, and the field of retail automation continues to improve ... and impress. From accuracy and efficiency to cost savings and data-driven insights, there are some exciting opportunities on offer for the supermarket, wholesale and retail environment.



Image courtesy of <https://tckrs.co.za/>

### Store design best practice

The South African retail landscape has undergone significant transformation in the past year, driven by the race to recover profitability, encourage growth, and most importantly, get more feet through their doors. This has prompted retailers and supermarkets to reimagine their store designs to cater to the evolving needs and expectations of their customers.

### Sweets & chocolates

The South African Sweets and Chocolates category offers can sometimes feel over-full, to the point of saturation. And yet new products continue to launch, new players enter the market, and old-favourites hold firm against a tide of newcomers.

### Food health & safety in South Africa

Supermarkets play a critical role in upholding standards to protect the health of their customers, and ensuring the well-being of their employees. They need to work closely with Government to ensure its regulatory requirements are always met.

## STOREWATCH

### Sole 365, region of Campania, Italy

Sole 365 is built on the concept of attractive offers that focus on the lowest prices on the market with a year-round commitment, delivered with a quality service experience as well.

### Aldi, a German chain's Italian outlets

Aldi has an eco-friendly model built on low prices. With over 6 600 outlets in 11 countries in four different continents (Europe, America, Asia, Oceania), it counts on the support of around 156 000 employees. Only 2% of its global workforce is employed in Italy, from the moment in which (in March 2018) it chose to also engage the Italian market.

## COLUMNS



### Delight your customers

Aki Kalliatakis considers The Pratfall Effect, that is people who are considered highly competent are found to be more likeable when they perform an everyday blunder than those who don't.

## NEWS

### Trade intelligence SA FMCG retail report

The complexity of the consumer goods industry sector is mind-blowing, with thousands of suppliers bringing brands to market in a competitive and rapidly evolving retail environment, dependent on a vast network of logistics providers across an increasingly globalised supply chain.

### Beverage trends in Africa

A glimpse into Africa's dynamic beverage consumption landscape ... the driving forces and the cultural significance they hold.

### Campaign to put doors on Britain's fridges

Open fridges are favoured by supermarkets because it means customers are able to grab products quickly. But they use up one per cent of all UK electricity. These appliances use far more energy to stay cool than alternatives with doors.

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# Embracing the return of the sun From Winter Solstice to the promise of summer in retail



Helen Maister

In recent times, the world has seen a gradual opening up to trade shows and events, marking a positive shift towards global economic recovery and reconnection. Trade shows and events provide a platform for businesses and industries to showcase their products, services, and innovations, fostering networking opportunities and knowledge exchange. This is revitalising industries, and promoting international collaboration. The reopening of trade shows and events signifies a renewed sense of optimism and a collective effort to rebuild economies, reignite business interactions, and propel industries forward through face-to-face engagement, fostering innovation, and driving global trade.

Being a part of Big 7 – DMG Events last week was an incredible experience. The turnout was remarkable, exceeding our expectations. However, what truly made

it exceptional was the sheer enjoyment and fulfilment we derived from participating in the expo. The atmosphere was brimming with excitement, and the event proved to be immensely rewarding, making every moment worthwhile.

**Retail Automation.** The rapid advancements in retail automation have transformed the industry, bringing futuristic concepts into today's reality. From self-checkouts to robots managing warehouses, AI-powered inventory systems, and even drone deliveries, these technological innovations have revolutionised the way businesses operate. The benefits are numerous, ranging from increased accuracy and efficiency to significant cost savings and valuable data-driven insights. In the supermarket, wholesale, and retail environments, exciting opportunities promise enhanced customer experiences, streamlined operations, and a competitive edge. The continuous evolution of retail automation continues to impress, paving the way for a more efficient and interconnected future in the world of commerce.

**Store Design.** The SA retail landscape has witnessed remarkable transformation in the past year as businesses have navigated the challenges posed by the global pandemic. With the imperative to recover profitability and spur growth, retailers and supermarkets have embarked on a journey of reinvention, prioritising the goal of attracting more customers to their physical stores. They have undertaken a strategic overhaul of their store designs, recognising the need to align with the changing needs and expectations of consumers. From layout modifications to the integration of innovative technologies, retailers are reimagining their spaces to create immersive and engaging environments to provide an exceptional customer experience that goes beyond mere shopping – fostering loyalty and differentiation in a highly competitive market. This proactive approach by SA retailers to adapt to the new normal and forge ahead with resilience, promises an exciting era of retail evolution and customer-centricity.

*Helen Maister*

Helen Maister



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# The Pratfall Effect

## ... and why your customers could like your mistakes

The English certainly have a way with words. There's a four-letter word which has so much meaning behind it and is used effectively in the English language to describe so much meaning. That word is 'prat'. It's a demeaning word used to describe someone who has done something really stupid, as in ... "He looked a right prat in that silly cowboy hat."

And most people like to see prats get taken down.

Since this is a column about delighting your customers and not English grammar, let me move on to why I brought it up. In the world of consumer psychology, there is a wonderful phenomenon called The Pratfall Effect. It states that, "people who are considered highly competent are found to be more likeable when they perform an everyday blunder than those who don't."

There have been quite a few studies of this and one of the first was done by psychologist Elliot Aronson in the 1960s. Aronson wondered if who were considered 'superior' by others could become more appealing upon committing a small pratfall – because it allows us to see them as more human, and therefore to like them more.

So he set up an experiment in which some top-quality, almost untouchable leaders, would boast about their achievements, and then either stop

by simply staying quiet on the subject. But as the old adage goes, "fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

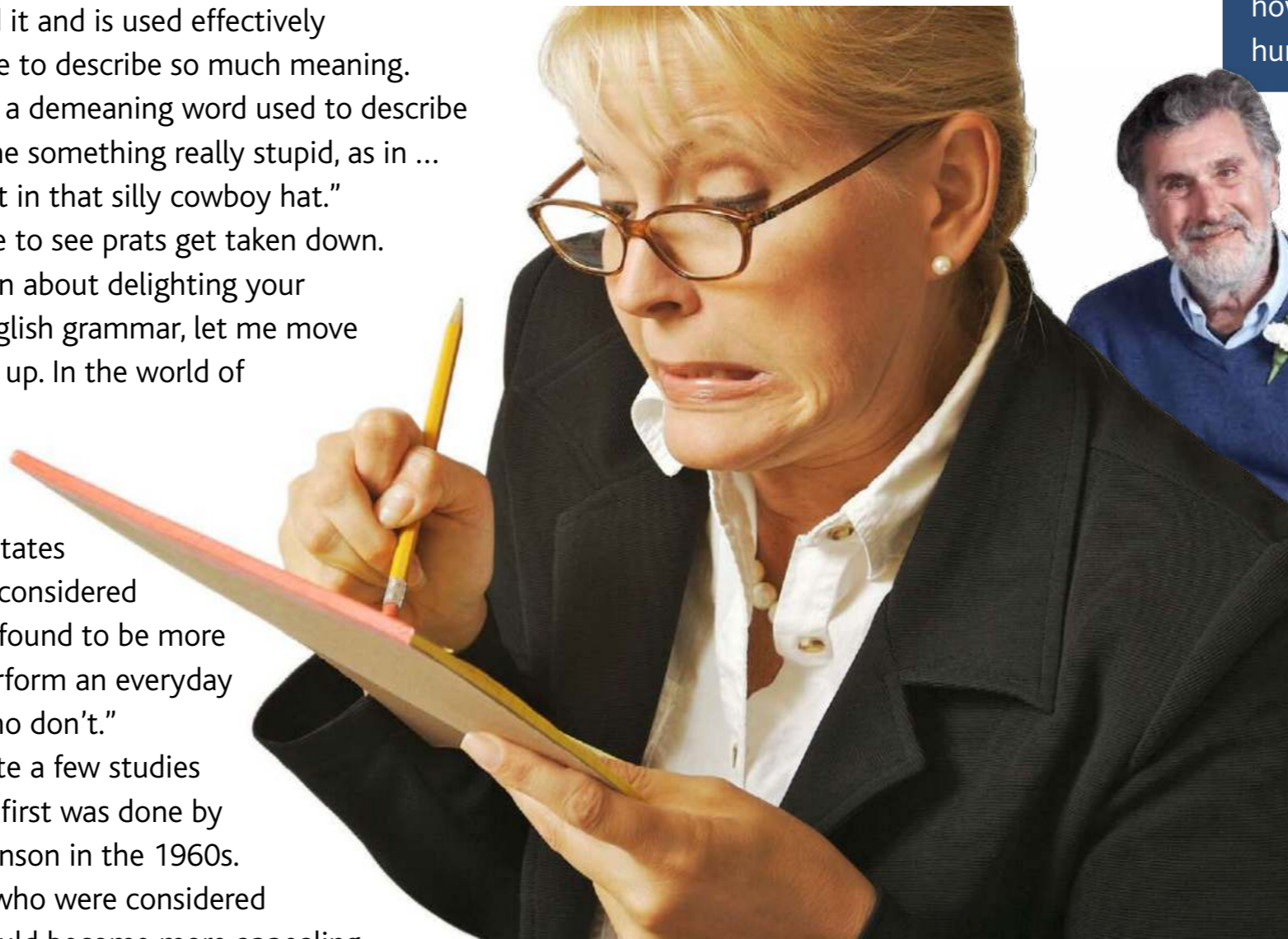
This is the next article in a series on how behavioural economics and 'being human' affects your business.

Professor  
Elliot Aronson

talking or, right the end, with the sound of clattering of cups and cutlery, dropped coffee all over themselves and said, "Oh my goodness, I've spilled coffee all over my new suit." People were then

asked to rate, among other things, the likeability of these two leaders. And yes, you guessed it right ... those people considered superior were found to be more likeable if they had committed a blunder.

After all the controversies both in the USA and SA over LGBTQIA+ rights, one would think that businesses would avoid scandals





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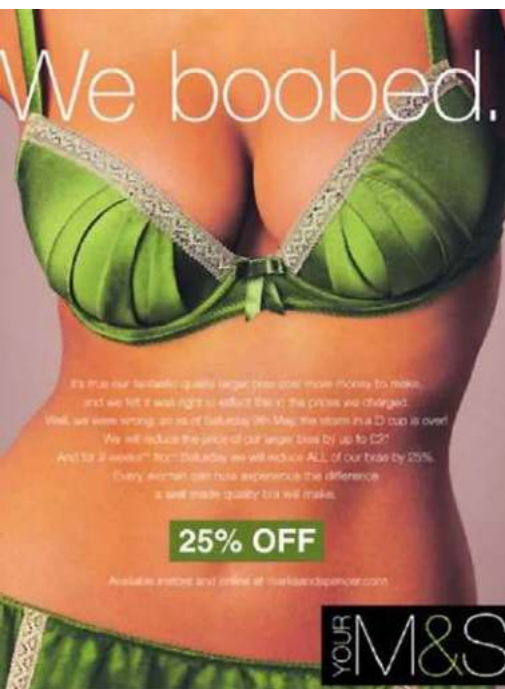
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The question now is, what should a company do when it's opened up Pandora's Box? It's always tempting to try to hide your mistakes as a brand. Being perfect is the best way to get people to buy, right? If you believe that, you are just plain wrong. Or you have been given bad advice by lawyers.

The Pratfall Effect demonstrates that customers and members of the public actually like it more when people (and brands) show their flaws. And we've seen a couple of great examples.

For example, when Marks and Spencer in the UK



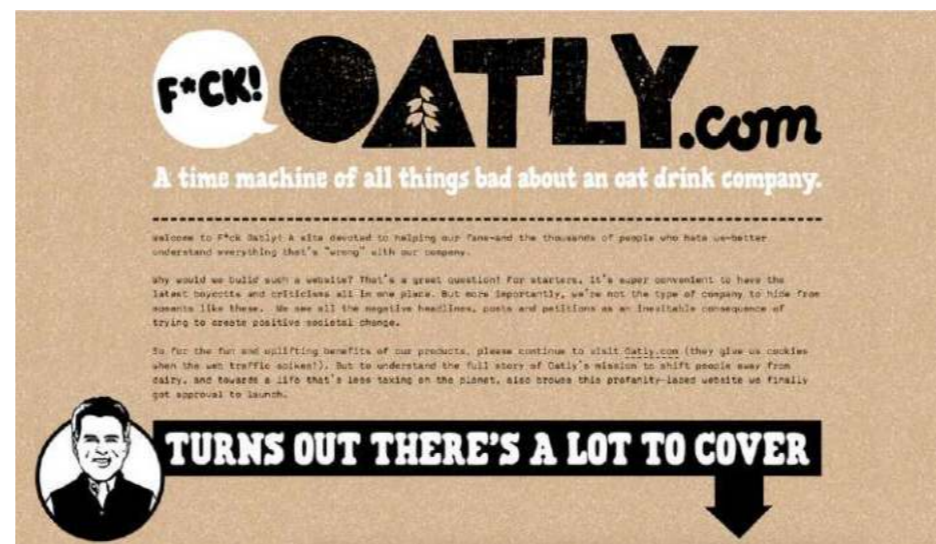
decided to charge a £2 additional surcharge for larger sized bras, there was, understandably, a big national outcry. To their credit, M&S almost immediately reversed their decision and took out full-page advertising in major newspapers saying, "We Boobed!"

In another UK example, in 2018 KFC in the UK ran out of chicken. (How can you run out of chicken when your primary products is chicken? It's like a pizza shop saying they've run out of dough.) Nevertheless, after some half-hearted, "We suffered from supply chain issues," which led to really negative sentiment and media coverage, the brand was in crisis and the fast food chain and its

advertising agency dragged victory from the jaws of defeat, again, with full-page adverts which



showed a KFC Bucket with the initials somewhat reversed to read "FCK." Below this was copy that read, "We're Sorry. A chicken restaurant without any chicken. It's not ideal. Huge apologies to our customers..."



Another oat-milk drinks, yoghurt and ice-cream company in the USA, Oatly, also messed up by selling a 10% stake in their company to Blackstone. Why was this controversial? Because they claimed to be environmentally friendly in all their advertis-

ing (for example, "One gallon of oat milk produces far less greenhouse gasses than cow's milk"), but Blackstone is a company that is partly responsible for the deforestation of the Amazon forests and is a great supporter of Donald Trump.

So what they did was start a new website called FCKOatly.com, and turned it into what they called "a time machine of all things bad about an oat drink company." Once again they used this to apologise and to create respectful discussion of their mistake. Surveys showed that this created trust and reliability by making buyers feel like they're willing to flaunt their flaws — not to hide them.

Image courtesy of Teddy O, Unsplash



Contrast that firstly with the fact that the company embroiled in the LGBTQIA+ controversy



In the spirit of full transparency, I have to say that I completely agree that ...

“ ... we need a world of greater acceptance and compassion, and it saddens me that the debate has reached this appalling level of hate. But it is foolish to think that the problem will just go away if we ignore it. ”

We also know that another SA retailer has also lost billions in market value and turnover because of their stance on BEE.

“ Nobody ever said that your customers would be reasonable and rational, and if you don't take that into consideration, expect to pay a very high price. So, your best strategy is to avoid getting embroiled in debates which alienate people, but if you do, then you need to remember that the only strategy that will work for you is the Pratfall Effect. ”

And as a footnote, I'd also like to share with you another of Aronson's findings in his experiment. There was also another group of 'actors' that were tested. These were not superior experts, but rather people who admitted that they were pretty 'average' said that they had always made

doesn't even address their stance or the resulting customer rebellion, on their website. And secondly, they have issued a handful of bland media statements that neither acknowledge the fact that there are customers and staff offended by their stance ... and trying to justify it with words like, "The [XYZ Initiative] sets out to acknowledge that certain groups in society are marginalised, and to help shape a world in which everyone feels they belong. We certainly see a world characterised by rising levels of inequality, discrimination and marginalisation, and we believe that we have a responsibility to use the platform we have as a business to make a broader contribution to the world around us."

average grades at school, and admitted that they had never really excelled at anything.

They then also went into the whole Pratfall performance of spilling coffee over their suit, and were rated by the observers for likeability. Aronson discovered that their likeability decreased upon committing the same gaffe.

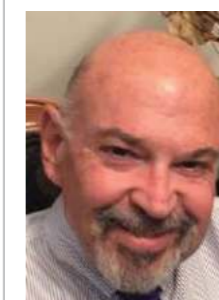


Image courtesy of <https://www.sv-sachsen.de/> SR

Aki Kalliatakis is the managing partner of The Leadership LaunchPad, a company dedicated to helping clients become more customer driven. He can be contacted at +27 (0) 83 379 3466, or via the website at [www.leadershiplaunchpad.co.za](http://www.leadershiplaunchpad.co.za)



Serves: 4  
Preparation time: 25 minutes  
Cooking time: 50 minutes

## GOLDI, COUNTY FAIR, FESTIVE or MOUNTAIN VALLEY Chicken Thighs

### INGREDIENTS

#### Chicken:

30ml ghee or sunflower oil  
8 chicken thighs  
1 large onion, chopped  
5ml paprika  
2,5ml turmeric  
2,5ml ground cinnamon  
50ml pomegranate molasses  
200ml chicken stock  
80g walnuts, pounded with a pestle and mortar until coarsely ground

#### Jewelled rice:

500ml basmati rice, cooked  
40ml ghee or butter  
1 onion, chopped  
2 garlic cloves, crushed  
2,5ml ground cumin  
2,5ml turmeric  
a pinch of cinnamon  
5ml honey  
salt and pepper  
100ml cranberries or sultanas  
60ml pistachios, chopped  
125ml pomegranate rubies  
fresh coriander and parsley

## PERSIAN CHICKEN BAKE WITH JEWELLED RICE

This Persian chicken dish is packed with wonderful flavours that are set to wow your dinner guests.

#### Method:

Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Heat the ghee or oil in an ovenproof casserole on medium heat. Brown the chicken on both sides. Season and remove from the casserole.

Add the onion and cook until softened. Add the spices, pomegranate molasses, stock and walnuts, and bring to the boil. Add the chicken back into the casserole. Place in the oven for about 40 minutes until cooked through (the sauce should have thickened). Taste and adjust the seasoning, if necessary. Serve with the jewelled rice (see below), fresh parsley and coriander.

#### To make the jewelled rice:

Heat the ghee or butter in a large frying pan and cook the onion and garlic until soft and golden brown. Add the rice, spices, honey and cranberries. Allow to cook for a few minutes to allow the flavours to develop. Add the pistachios and pomegranate rubies and serve with the chicken.



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Serves: 4  
Preparation time: 60 minutes  
Cooking time: 30 minutes

## GOLDI or COUNTY FAIR Chicken Livers

### INGREDIENTS

#### Chicken:

250g chicken livers  
60ml oil  
1 can chopped tomato  
1 onion, sliced  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 tsp chilli flakes  
salt and pepper

#### Amagwinya:

3 cups flour  
10g yeast  
1 tbsp salt  
2 tbsp sugar  
2 tbsp oil  
375ml warm water  
1,5–2 litres oil for deep frying

## AMAGWINYA WITH TOMATO-AND-ONION CHICKEN LIVERS

An easy, affordable snack that's perfect for some summer entertaining.

#### Method:

Drain chicken livers and pat dry. Heat half the oil in a pan and fry the livers until firm (8–10 minutes). Remove livers from the pan and set aside. Add the remaining oil and lightly caramelize the onions for about 10 minutes. Add the garlic and chilli flakes and cook for 1 minute. Now add the can of tomatoes and a pinch of salt, and simmer for 5 minutes until reduced. Once the tomato-and-onion mixture has thickened, add the livers. Serve with amagwinya.

#### Amagwinya:

Combine all the dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients and add the warm water and oil. Slowly combine the mixture until it forms a dough. Knead on a lightly floured surface for 10 minutes, until the dough is smooth and bounces back when gently pressed. Place the dough in a lightly oiled bowl, cover, and leave in a warm place to rise for 40 minutes. Knock air out of the dough and divide into golf-sized balls. In a saucepan, heat the oil. To test when the oil is ready, dip a wooden spoon in the oil. It's ready when small bubbles appear around the spoon. Add 3–4 amagwinya to the saucepan. Don't overcrowd the pan and cook for 4 minutes, until golden in colour. Remove from oil. Drain.

Serve with tomato-and-onion chicken livers.



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# Taking care of business in an automated world

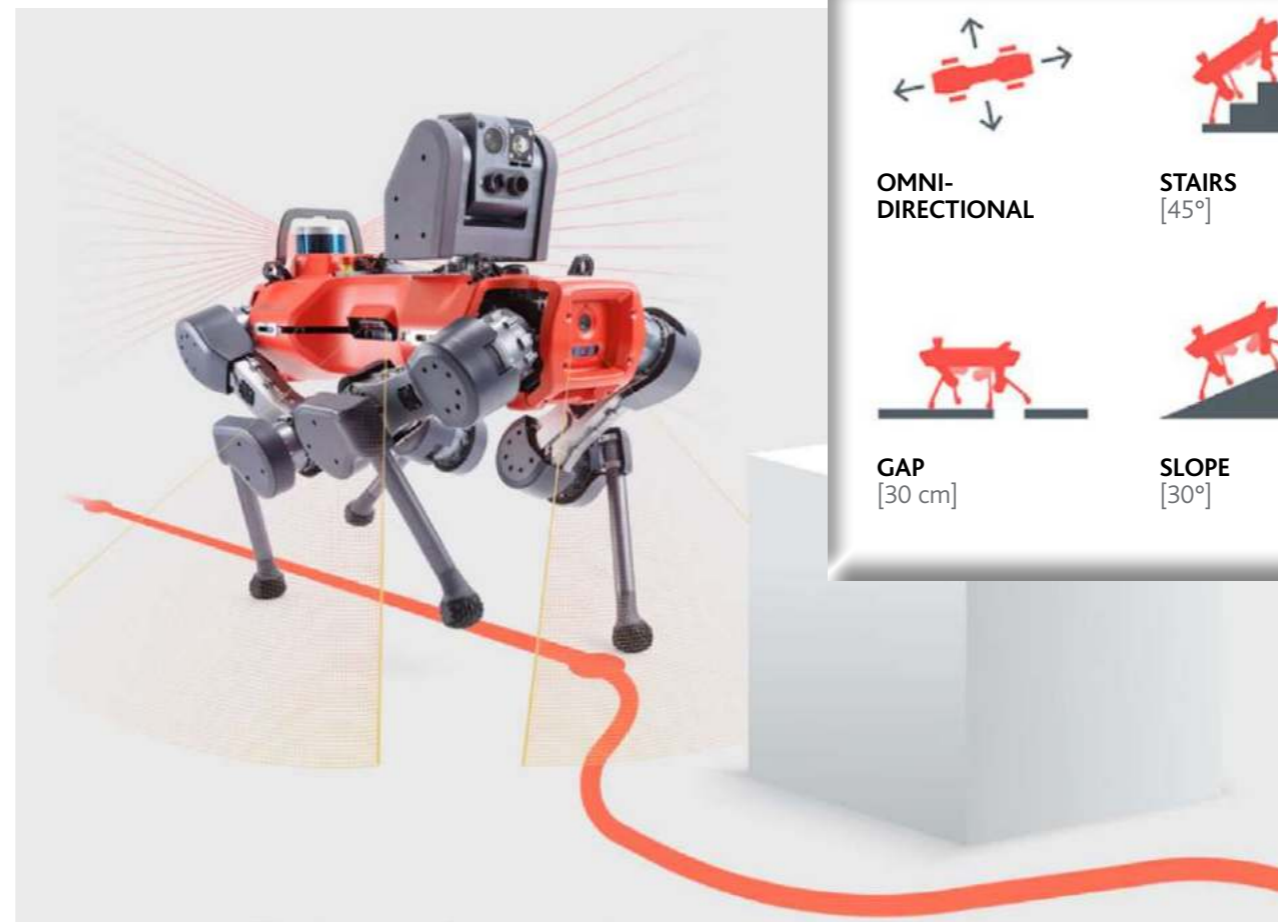
Self-checkouts, robots running the warehouse, AI-managed inventory, groceries delivered by drone. It may sound like science fiction, but this is today's reality, and the field of retail automation continues to improve... and impress. From accuracy and efficiency to cost savings and data-driven insights, there are some exciting opportunities on offer for the supermarket, wholesale, and retail environment.

## Retail automation and payment solutions: present and future landscape

Although self-checkout, electronic labels, and RFID security tags are all part of retail automation, they're just a small part of a much bigger, more complex solution that touches every aspect of retail.

From farm and manufacturer to packing, transport, warehousing, and shelf merchandising, retail automation can make business simpler and faster. But it's not a plug-and-play solution, either. Many of these processes are multi-faceted, and automation solutions need to integrate seamlessly with existing technology and hardware.

Supermarkets and wholesalers who are installing, updating, or integrating retail automation solutions



Images courtesy of <https://www.anybotics.com/>

need their systems to be compliant, integrated, provide a positive user experience and able to manage heavy load or increased user demand over peak periods or promotions.

The Covid pandemic accelerated online shopping, while the growth of e-commerce in South Africa has led to the development of online platforms and mobile apps that offer automated purchasing,

personalised recommendations, and secure payment options.

Automation adoption rates across South Africa vary, notes Leon Lodewyks, Managing Executive at software testing and digital services provider Inspired Testing.

"Larger chains and organisations are generally further along the automation process than smaller



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business, however most retailers in South Africa have implemented modern Point of Sale (POS) systems that incorporate automation features like barcode scanning, inventory management, and integrated payment processing.”

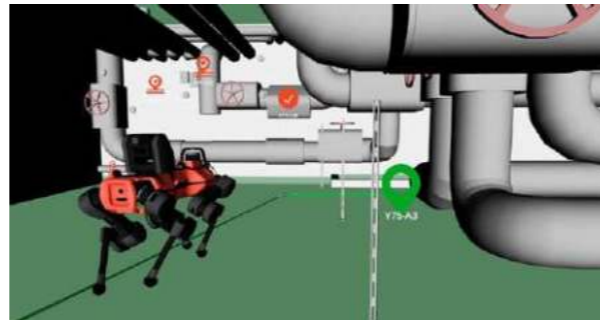
Self-service kiosks have also become more prevalent, especially in supermarkets and fast-food restaurants, enabling customers to place orders, make payments, and customise their purchases.

While still emerging, there are instances of robotic automation being used in South African retail, such as robots assisting with tasks like shelf stocking, cleaning, and order fulfilment. Retailers in South Africa are also increasingly leveraging data analytics tools to gain insights into customer behaviour, optimise pricing strategies, and improve decision-making processes.

## What retailers and wholesalers should consider about automation

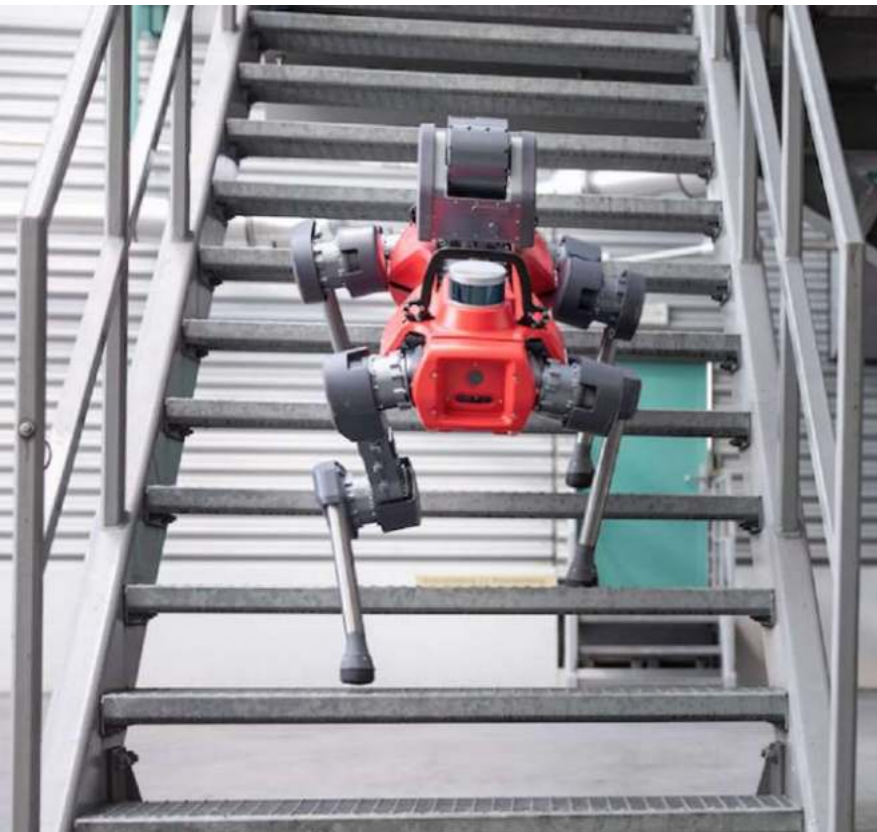
### Challenges

- The initial cost can be prohibitive, particularly for smaller enterprises or retailers with limited resources.
- There may be resistance from employees who fear job losses. However, this can be mitigated with user training and skills transfer. The introduction of new technology requires training and upskilling at all levels.
- Challenges of technology dependence cannot be overstated – outages, system glitches and failures can be costly.
- Possible loss of personalised customer experience with self-service checkout.

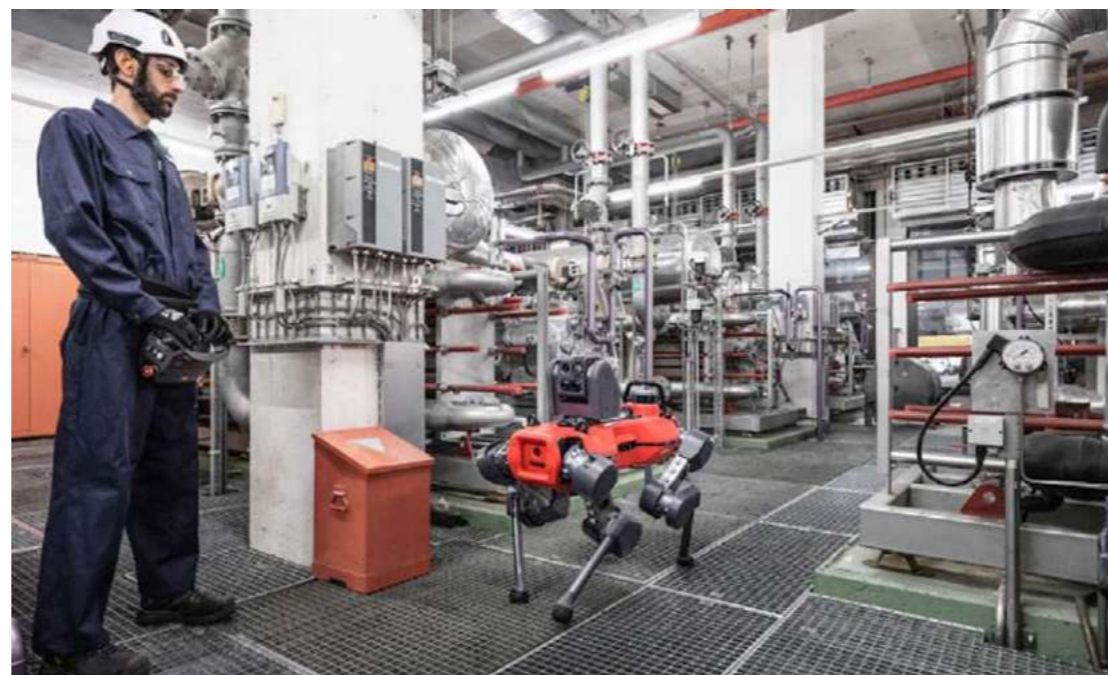


### Benefits

- Increased operational efficiency, streamlined processes, and fewer manual errors.
- Cost savings from reduced labour costs.
- Technologies such as self-service checkout, personalised shopper recommendations, and chatbots can all enhance the overall customer experience.
- Improved inventory management.
- Lodewyks says data-driven insights help provide a personalised experience, tailored recommendations, and targeted promotions based on customer behaviour and preferences.
- “Accurate inventory in real-time, streamlining the returns process, and improving compliance on pricing are key benefits of retail automation,” says Neil Gouveia, Director Africa at Zebra Technologies. “Automation that works consistently and shows improvements over time can increase customer trust and satisfaction, improve convenience, and provide shopping flexibility.”



Images courtesy of <https://www.anybotics.com/>



- Automated systems such as barcode scanning, inventory management, and integrated payment processing lead to faster transactions and smoother store operations.
- Augmented customer service efforts with virtual assistants or chatbots provide support and free up human staff to focus on personalised assistance.

Successful implementation of automation solutions requires...

## A skilled approach

There is no doubt that automation can have a positive impact on your business, but it is a process that needs to be undertaken with care.

“Implementing a new retail automation solution or integrating it into existing software is a complex undertaking for retailers,” explains Lodewyks. “The risks associated with software failure or system-wide crashes can have severe consequences.”

This is where software testing plays a crucial role, providing valuable insights and mitigating potential problems before the solution goes live. Testing ensures quality and compliance in retail automation – it can verify that the software functions as intended, from both the retailer



Images courtesy of <https://www.bidvestmobility.co.za/>



and the consumer’s point of view, aligning with their specific requirements, and meeting expected quality standards.

Potential bugs, errors, or malfunctions can be identified and addressed, ensuring a reliable and efficient system. A successful retail automation solution must provide a positive user experience, and feedback from consumers will allow a retailer or wholesaler to assess the system’s usability, efficiency, and overall user satisfaction.

By involving end-users in the testing process, retailers can identify areas where the software may be confusing or difficult to navigate and make the necessary improvements.

Performance and scalability are key considerations in retail automation. Retailers can evaluate how the software performs under different scenarios, volumes of data, and user loads. Load testing, stress testing, and performance profiling help identify potential bottlenecks and optimise

system resources. Performance testing allows retailers to ensure that the solution can handle expected user demand without compromising efficiency or user experience, such as on Black Friday. In 2022, 84% of consumers stated they would be searching for bargains (either online or in-store), while online transactions increased significantly compared to previous years.

Testing also serves as a proactive measure to mitigate risks associated with retail automation implementation. By uncovering and addressing issues early in the testing phase, retailers and wholesalers can minimise the potential negative impact on their operations. This includes system crashes, data loss, security vulnerabilities, or disruptions to business operations – everything you want to avoid at all costs. Gaining insights into these issues provides an opportunity for retailers to make informed decisions and take necessary actions before the solution is rolled out.



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## Self-service checkout: the pros and cons

Globally, self-service checkout is growing. In 2020, according to an article on Gitnux.com, the global self-checkout systems market was valued at \$3.44b, with 56% women and 61% men making use of this option. The main benefit perceived by consumers is a reduction in waiting/queueing time. Global statistics also show that in 2020:

- 73% of consumers preferred self-checkout to a staffed checkout option.
- 85% of Gen Z consumers used self-checkout when available.
- Australia had one of the highest rates of theft at self-service checkout.
- 34.8% of respondents aged 30-49 used self-checkout multiple times a week.
- 78% of customers did not like to weigh produce items by themselves, in a survey of respondents between the ages of 26-45.
- The Asia-Pacific region has the fastest rate of adoption of self-checkout.
- 405 of retailers in the United States and Canada planned to increase their staff-assisted mobile self-checkout solutions in the near future.

Source: <https://blog.gitnux.com/self-checkout-statistics/>



## Shoprite launches self-checkout clothing stores

Interestingly, the Shoprite Group's recently launched clothing brand UNIQ offers only self-service checkout at its standalone stores, saying that "customers will be assisted on the floor by well-trained employees, with on average nine new jobs created with the opening of each UNIQ store." The model includes "smart tags and advanced RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) that allows customers to easily scan and pay for their items." In this instance, the customer experience is created long before the checkout, while the technology has the potential to enhance the customer experience.

The first store opened in March 2023 Canal Walk shopping centre, Cape Town, with eight more following countrywide.

Source: <https://www.shopriteholdings.co.za/newsroom/2023/uniq-store-launch.html>



Image courtesy of <https://spar-international.com/>

In a country such as South Africa, with high levels of unemployment, staffed checkouts provide much-needed job opportunities and consequently there has not been the same level of implementation from supermarkets and wholesalers.

However, a blended approach that combines both options may well be the answer, providing shoppers with a choice while mitigating potential job losses and ensuring customer service levels and the customer experience are not impacted.



Albert Fayard is the Regional Sales Manager for Sub Saharan Africa at Posiflex Technology Inc. The company designs and produces point of sale (PoS) management systems and peripheral products, specialising in touch screen terminals. Fayard believes that the interest in self-checkout solutions in South Africa is growing, albeit slowly. He agrees that job creation is paramount in a country with such a high unemployment rate, but the two are not, in his opinion, mutually exclusive. "Self-checkout and manned checkout can work in perfect harmony," he says.

"Let us take hospitality as an example. In the South African Quick Service Restaurant (QSR) sector, Self-Service Ordering Kiosks have become the norm," Fayard explains. "Initially, concerns around job security and employee retention were key considerations before the major QSR groups decided to embark on any Self-Service Ordering Kiosk projects." The results, Fayard declares, have been a resounding success. "

Image courtesy of <https://connect.zebra.com/>



Not only have employees kept their jobs, but QSR franchisees have also reported an increase in revenue. This is because on average, customers spend up to 15% more when ordering on a Self-Service Ordering Kiosk as opposed to ordering at the point-of-sale counter."

Fayard believes the same will apply in the retail space. He adds, "The main benefit of a blended approach is the enhanced service offering and quicker processing of transactions that is enabled by offering both models as a service, plus it gives customers a choice."

However, it won't all be plain sailing. Stock loss and theft are very real concerns when it comes to automated checkouts, but Fayard is confident that technology can compensate for this too. He says, "In our region security and trust will always play a part in these decisions, but surveillance technology has advanced to the degree that it is quite likely that stock loss levels will remain fairly stable and won't change too much from what store owners currently experience."

Zebra Technologies' Neil Gouveia is equally optimistic. He says, "We do believe that retailers are now more open to consider self-checkout, and this is currently being tabled and explored more seriously locally. In saying this however, we do believe that retailers will have a mix of self-checkout and traditional stores in the future. We don't see this technology being deployed in all stores."

The effect of retail automation on employees is one Zebra Technologies is also acutely aware of. Gouveia says, "Retailers now realise that self-checkout as well as other automation solutions do not necessarily create a risk for their employee's job security, but rather gives them the opportunity to redeploy employees to other areas. Reskilling of the workforce to perform other tasks is an important part of their business evolution. Some automation solutions also enhance their employee's performance as they enable them to be more efficient and productive."



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\*Posiflex does not sell the EMV payment devices, but can provide bracket support with an additional charge

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With the choice of floor-standing or countertop, the Mercury EK-2100 Series ensures flexibility to meet the needs in any retail setting.

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Engineered for easy assembly and maintenance, Mercury EK-2100 Series lets retailers assemble and switch out components easily.

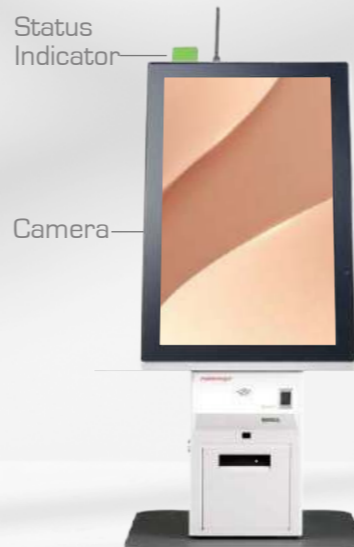
## Seamless Integration

Mercury EK-2100 Series offers a flexible solution with a variety of choices of peripherals including a Fingerprint sensor, an NFC/RFID reader, a 2D scanner, and a bracket for EMV payment devices.

# PRODUCT SHOWCASE



COUNTERTOP



Status Indicator

Camera



Camera

NFC/RFID Reader  
Fingerprint Sensor  
2D Scanner  
Proximity Sensor

Thermal Printer

FLOOR-STANDING



## Retail automation and payment systems

# Striving for seamless integration

Retail automation solutions often need to integrate seamlessly with existing software systems such as inventory management or point-of-sale (PoS) systems. Testing of the software verifies the compatibility of the new solution with the existing software infrastructure and ensures that data exchange, communication, and functionality across integrated components work smoothly, minimising any disruptions or inconsistencies.

## Embracing an open mind to retail automation

For digital solutions, hardware and software service provider Zebra Technologies, the adoption rate in South Africa is an exciting development.

Gouveia says, "We can expect to see several new tech and industry advancements in local retailers. These advancements include accelerated adoption of mobile payments, as well as the increased utilisation of RFID technology, which enables efficient inventory management and tracking. We also expect increased implementation of more connected employees, who will utilise mobile devices and wearable devices for enhanced communication and app-based functionalities". An openness to new technology and a desire to improve the shopping experience for their customers means local retailers are embracing the future.



## Retail automation and security

RFID is not a new technology, but it has seen significant developments over the years. Gouveia says, "South African retail is rapidly adopting RFID and is uniquely suited to ensuring the safety

and security of retail automation. We see many benefits of this technology for retailers. RFID enables retailers to dramatically improve inventory accuracy which is critically important for on shelf availability and visibility of stock levels for

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Image courtesy of <https://www.inspiredtesting.com/>



There are a few more functions where Gouveia believes local retailers could be taking better advantage of available automation solutions and technologies.

He says, "Improving in-store communications and automated task management are areas that we believe will enable

ecommerce activity. If there is the right product on the shelf at the right time, your chance of a sale is dramatically increased. Not only does this drive your revenue growth, but it also improves the customer experience, whether in-store or online."

### Automation and the customer experience

Automation is essential for elevating the customer experience, something which is, according to Gouveia, on many a retailer's priority list. He says ...

“We are seeing more consumers wanting a frictionless shopping experience. Adoption of self-checkout solutions is a great way to move closer to frictionless shopping.”

“With the adoption of technologies in parallel with this, such as Zebra's personal shopping solution (PSS), retailers are able to give their customers the ultimate personalised shopping experience in the palm of their hands.”

retailers to optimise their employees to drive an enhanced customer experience.”

He feels that giving employees real-time access to information and tasks such as in-store picking and fulfilment, order from store, click and collect handover, returns management and product recalls would be invaluable.



Image courtesy of Tima Miroshnichenko, Pexels



Image courtesy of <https://www.identitec.co.za/>

### Adopting automation technology

## Where to from here?

South African retailers are fairly well-informed regarding automation solutions. Uptake varies depending on cost and customer access to certain technologies.

Lodewyks believes that local retailers could consider taking a closer look at retail automation solutions such as self-service checkout and robotic automation on the logistics side. More focus should also be given to creating true omnichannel integration.

“With the rapid growth of e-commerce in South Africa, retailers should focus on establishing or enhancing their online presence. Developing robust e-commerce websites, mobile apps, and online marketplaces can expand customer reach, provide convenient shopping options, and cater to the increasing demand for online purchasing.”

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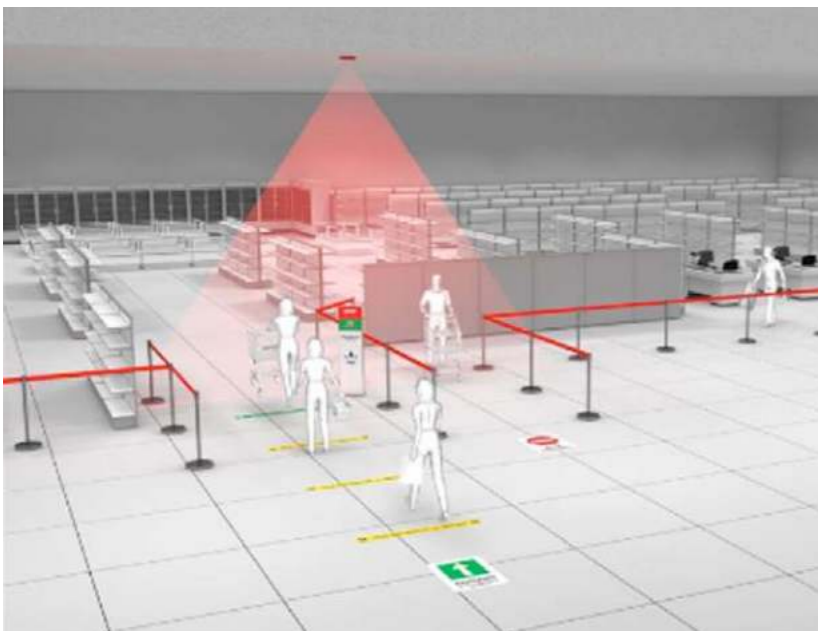
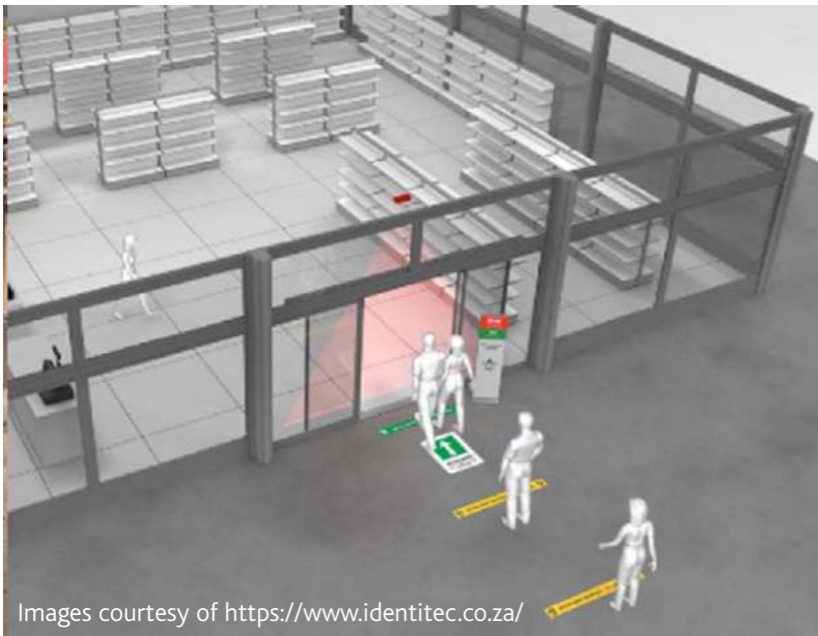
  
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Automated inventory management systems that utilise technologies like barcode scanning, RFID tags, and real-time tracking can optimise stock levels, reduce out-of-stock situations, and improve overall supply chain efficiency.

Robotics and automation technologies in tasks such as order picking, sorting, and warehouse management can enhance logistics efficiency, reduce manual errors, and optimise operational costs.



**A unique market – the South African situation**

# Upcoming trends & a positive outlook



South Africa has a unique demographic where many consumers do not necessarily have access to certain technologies that first world consumers and retailers take for granted. But this shouldn't be a deterrent to automation. Retailers and wholesalers can expect to see more mobile payment and digital wallet offerings as these provide secure and convenient payment options, while inventory management systems utilising barcode scanning and real-time tracking to streamline stock management will become more prevalent. Ecommerce platforms and online marketplaces provide anytime, anywhere shopping experiences and are on an upward trajectory in South Africa. "Data analytics and personalisation

enhance customer engagement and enable targeted marketing – another increasingly popular retail approach. Robotic process automation optimises logistics operations, while AI-powered chatbots improve customer service. And lastly,

digital signage and interactive displays create engaging in-store experiences," says Lodewyks.

In terms of Artificial Intelligence, this will also be making its presence felt in South Africa. Lodewyks believes that we will see more investment into AI technologies, especially customer service chatbots and personalised product recommendations.



Images courtesy of <https://skywell.software/>

Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) will also start playing a bigger role in our shopping habits. These technologies offer immersive and interactive experiences, while also meeting the need for online or remote shopping. Customers will be able to visualise products in real-world



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settings or virtually try on items, without entering a physical store. Voice commerce is also on the horizon, thanks to the rise of voice assistants and smart speakers. It is feasible that we will see retailers increasingly integrate voice-enabled shopping experiences, meaning customers can make purchases or access product information through voice commands.

The benefits of retail automation are indisputable, and although the initial cost may deter smaller businesses or those with fewer resources, the savings can be significant. With improved efficiency and accuracy, reduced labour costs and errors, and better-managed stock, it's hard to argue against this type of progress.

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# Top technologies to consider

No matter the size of your business or where you are on your automation journey, here are five solutions that offer the most bang-for-buck in terms of potential impact and broad applicability.

**Data-driven Analytics.** Gouveia believes that data-driven analytics are becoming an essential for task management and execution and in-store communications. Lodewyks agrees, saying data analytics tools can be leveraged to gather insights into customer behaviour, preferences, and market trends, optimise pricing strategies, and implement targeted promotions to specific consumer segments.



Image courtesy of <https://www.dscanning.co.za/>

**E-commerce and Online Platforms.** Establishing a strong online presence through robust ecommerce websites, mobile apps, and online marketplaces enable retailers to tap into the growing online customer base and expand market reach.

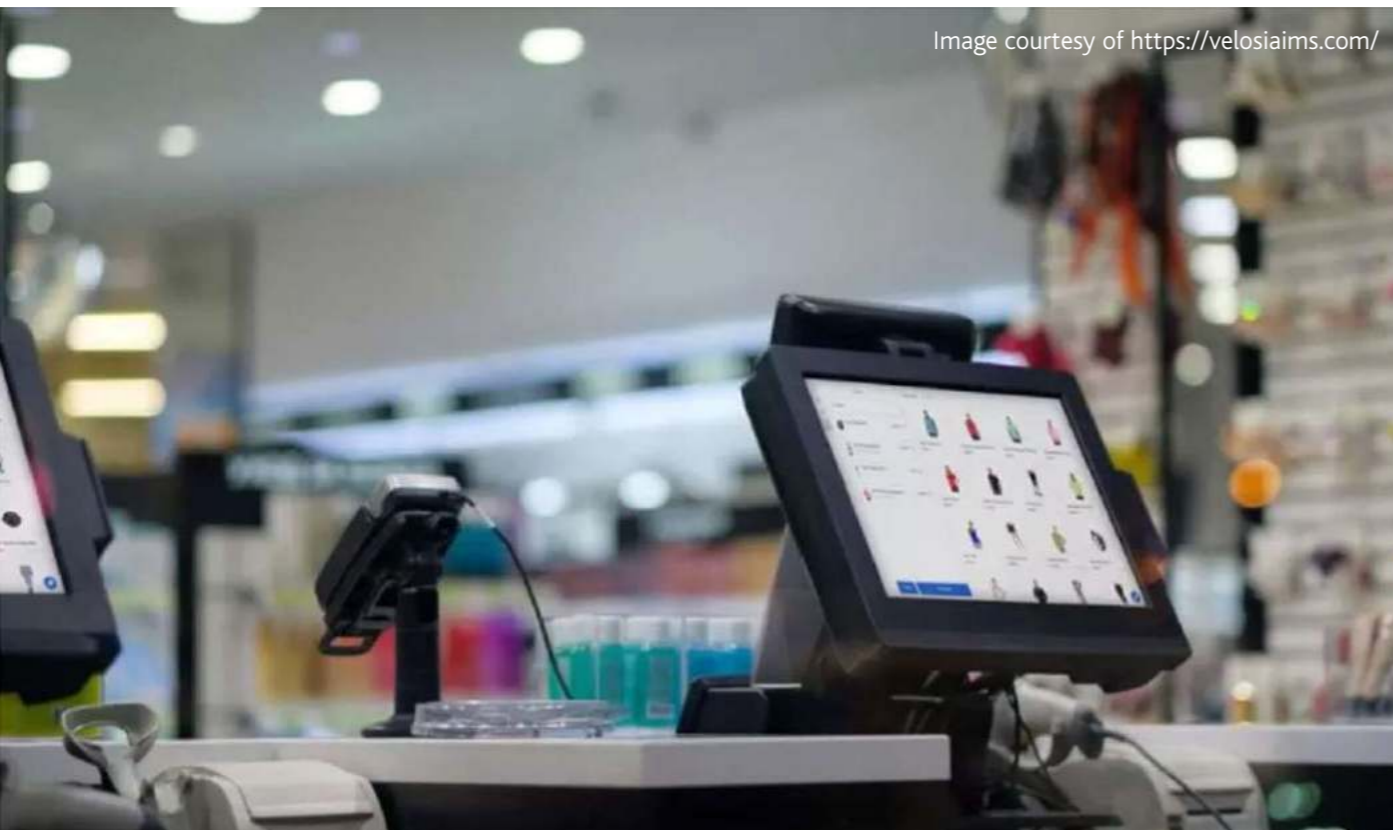


Image courtesy of <https://velosiaims.com/>



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**Point of Sale (POS) Systems.** Lodewyks says implementing modern and feature rich POS systems is crucial for efficient transactions, inventory management, and customer data analysis. This provides essential functionalities such as barcode scanning, integrated payment processing, and real-time sales tracking.

**Robotic Process Automation (RPA) in Logistics.** Deploying robots and automation technologies in logistics processes can greatly enhance efficiency and accuracy. RPA solutions for tasks such as order picking, sorting, and warehouse management improve operational speed, minimise errors, and optimise labour resources. This solution can address labour shortages, reduce costs, and improve order fulfilment speed.



Image courtesy of <https://www.gaap.co.za/>

### What is driving retail automation?

There are several factors driving the recent upswing in automation, explains Gouveia. "These include pressure from lower margins, the cost of managing the ecommerce supply chain, rising labour costs as well as the investment they need to make to be competitive." Zebra Technologies expects to see increased adoption of data-driven solutions for inventory management, to better track and understand consumer behaviour, and solutions that assist retailers to manage vast estates of mobility equipment more efficiently and effectively.



Image courtesy of <https://www.cigen.com.au/>

"Retail automation is a journey and I believe many South African retailers are already on their way," says Gouveia. "Automation can be seen in many shapes and forms and is adopted in different areas, from manufacturing to the distribution centre and right through the supply chain into the stores. Local retailers are already investing in different areas and those that have not yet definitely have this on their priority list as it is a key part of their evolution. The return on investment in many cases can be well justified in all areas of the supply chain." **SR**



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**Ann Baker-Keulemans** writes on topics related to business, lifestyle, technology, and health, with extensive knowledge on the SA retail and wholesale landscape. Contact [annbk@wilkinsross.co.za](mailto:annbk@wilkinsross.co.za) | [www.wilkinsrossglobal.com](http://www.wilkinsrossglobal.com)

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# The rise and rise of the township economy.

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**With half of South Africa's population living in the estimated 532 townships around the country, vast potential lies in the so-called 'township economy'.** According to Roger Wilco's *2022 Township CX Report*, the vibrant, culture-rich township economy representing hundreds of billions of rands in spending power is largely untapped and misunderstood.

The total market value of the township economy is estimated to be R900 billion with approximately 60% of the market considered formal and 40% informal. Around R150 billion in cash is spent at the estimated 150 000 spaza shops every year, which contribute as much as 5.2% to South Africa's GDP and employ 2.6 million people.

Testimony to its potential, big retailers are seeking to tap into the township economy with big brands such as Pick n Pay, Checkers and MRP emulating the spaza shop model by offering smaller-format stores constructed from shipping containers in a bid to get closer to where its shoppers live.

According to the report, the relationship between retailers and spaza shops is symbiotic, but spaza shops are increasingly competitive and are continuously upping their game technologically, resulting in growth of 29% last year. Township residents generally use spaza shops as convenience stores from which to buy immediate consumption needs such as bread and milk while large supermarkets are seen as destinations for the big monthly shop – largely due to prohibitive transport costs.

## A difficult market to understand

However, a major barrier to entry is that brands find it challenging to understand and communicate with this market because of the lack of in-depth research and communication platforms available. 'Brands recognise the importance of tailoring their products and messages for the unique ecosystem developing in townships, but intelligence on this market is limited,' says Andrew Weinberg, Group CEO of fintech and

customer engagement group AKELO. 'However, there are reliable means to both reach and learn more about this market.'

AKELO subsidiary, **Retail Engage**, runs **bonsella**<sup>®</sup>, South Africa's largest digital rewards and loyalty programme in the independent retail sector, which targets over 10 million LSM 3-7 consumers and represents some 60% of the economically active consumer base in South Africa.

The bonsella programme has grown to 2,1 million members and offers comprehensive basket analytics and unmatched customer behaviour insight, particularly in the informal and township economy. Because of our immersion and the level of trust we've established in this market, we also regularly undertake market research for our stores and clients, which leads to enhanced understanding of what motivates this market and how to market their brand,' says Weinberg.

## Lack of financial infrastructure impeding growth

A significant challenge in townships is carrying cash due to safety concerns, yet there is increased utilisation of cash in the informal market, despite there being more than 80 million bank cards in circulation and a mobile penetration rate of 157%.

For informal merchants, one of the main hurdles is acceptance of electronic payments: a Mastercard study entitled *Insights into the Informal Economy Report* noted that while more than 50% of South Africa's informal enterprises had encountered strong customer interest in card payments, around 90% of them remain cash-only businesses. This loyalty to cash is often due to the lack of acquiring infrastructure in the informal sector and, while cards are widely accepted in the formal market, this is not the case in the informal market.

Traditional acceptance channels, such as physical point-of-sale (POS) devices, are perceived as expensive, especially by micro enterprises. In fact, although rural and township residents were found to use cards for 60% of their transactions at formal retailers, only 4% of transactions were card-based at informal retailers.

Weinberg says that AKELO believes it has a key role to play in bringing financial services to the underserved. 'To this end, our subsidiary **Efficacy Payments** has been granted a designated clearing participant license by the South African Reserve Bank, which will be utilised to enable small and medium enterprises to accept electronic payments through innovative and accessible solutions. In the process, uplifting these communities through financial inclusion.

Another important area of innovation, particularly in simplifying transactions in the informal economy, is the move towards instant payments. 'Instant payments are safer, more secure and more convenient than cash,' says Weinberg. 'Efficacy Payments' instant payments products enable immediate payments to card-linked accounts, providing a facility that's more efficient and often cheaper than EFT, in real-time and offering instant access to funds.'

It's clear that South Africa's township economy is on a trajectory to continue its exponential growth. Although it's a tough market to understand and reach, the potential is substantial and there are experienced companies and tried-and-tested systems in place that brands can leverage to take advantage of the myriad opportunities offered by this considerable portion of the South African market.

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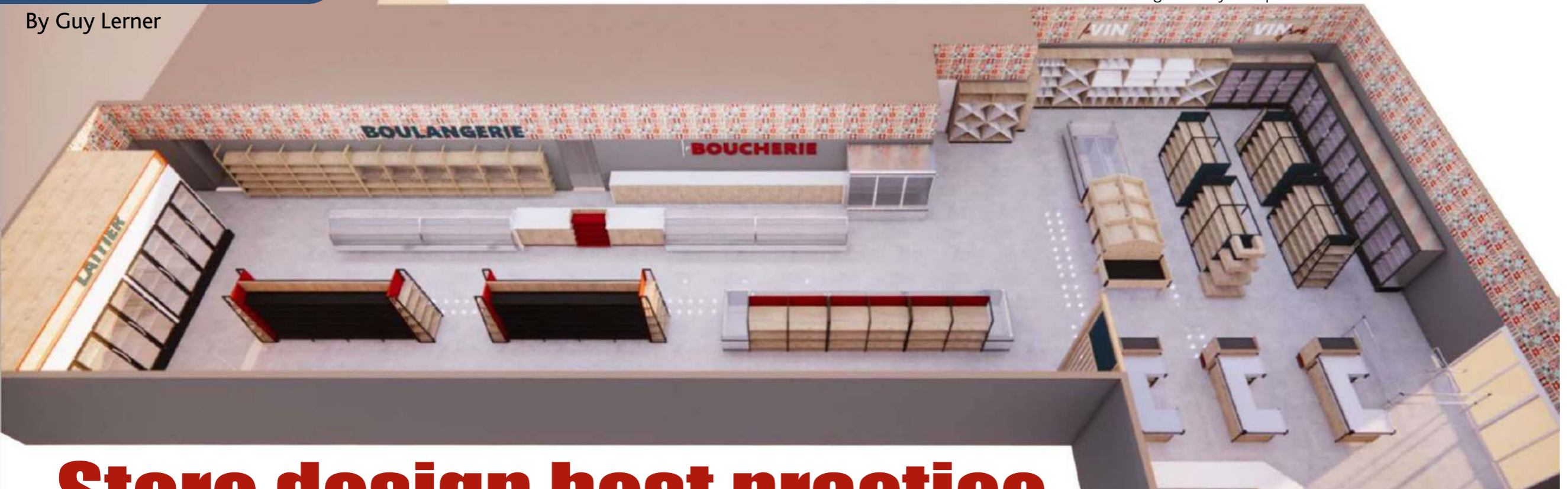


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By Guy Lerner



# Store design best practice

The South African retail landscape has undergone significant transformation in the past year, driven by the post-pandemic race to recover profitability, encourage growth, and most importantly, get more feet through their doors.

This has prompted retailers and supermarkets to, among other things, reimagine their store designs to cater to the evolving needs and expectations of their customers.

According to a recent survey conducted by statistics firm Eighty20 across seven major shopping malls in South Africa, pandemic-era foot traffic decreased by 90%, with Johannesburg's Sandton City hardest hit. Malls that saw average traffic of 1.5 million visitors a month pre-Covid saw foot traffic decreased by 1.2 million.

The same survey shows that all seven malls have now recovered, if not quite to pre-pandemic levels, then almost. Cape Town's Canal Walk has come closest to reaching pre-pandemic levels at the beginning of the year, with a 99% recovery.

“One of the foremost priorities for post-pandemic store design is implementing robust health and safety measures. Customers want reassurance that their well-being is prioritised, and retailers must address these concerns.”

Lockdown measures, like signage that encourages social distancing and the proper use of face masks, are now a thing of the past in most stores, so retailers need to find different elements that continue to convey a sense of calm and cleanliness without overt messaging.

“Covid has made us hyper aware of how easily germs are spread, and it's something customers are still wary of today,” says Chriselda Kistnasamy, Marketing Manager at store, design, manufacturing and installation company TCK Retail Solutions. “Supermarkets and retailers can't stop thinking about health and safety and should actively keep certain measures in place.” These include visible sanitation stations, frequent cleaning protocols, and the integration of touchless technologies, such as automatic doors and contactless payment options.

## Store design and unique experiential spaces

Health and safety aside, to attract customers back to physical stores, retailers are creating unique and memorable experiences that go beyond traditional shopping.





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“ Curated experiential spaces allow customers to engage with products in an immersive and interactive manner. ”

Curated experiential spaces allow customers to engage with products in an immersive and interactive manner. For example, hosting recipe workshops, live demonstrations, and VIP events can create a sense of community and provide customers with valuable insights. “Working in partnership with suppliers is an extremely cost-efficient way for retailers to create curated experiences instore,” says Kistnasamy. “For example, stores can use upcoming holidays or special occasions as a monthly theme. We find that suppliers are more than willing to come out for demonstrations and to show shoppers useful ways to use their products.” Just don’t overcrowd your store with different experiences – rather spread them out over different days and weeks, which has the added effect of attracting a diverse audience and keeps shoppers coming back.

Using focused and/or natural design elements, products that may not be receiving the attention they deserve can be highlighted with clever and attractive merchandising units strategically placed throughout the store.

#### Maximising your space

One of the key advantages of larger retail spaces is the freedom to explore a wider variety of layout options. These spaces can accommodate multiple departments, distinct product displays, and spacious aisles.

The design can focus on creating immersive experiences through thematic zones, brand areas, and interactive elements. Wholesale stores whose job it is to carry bulk and massive ranges also benefit from good layout and design. All customers want a great shopping experience.

Smaller stores with limited space need a more strategic approach to their design and layout. Maximising every square metre becomes crucial. Smaller spaces can employ compact shelving, carefully planned product placement, and creative use of vertical space to optimise the customer journey.

Effective signage and wayfinding systems aid in navigation, ensuring customers can easily locate products, especially when merchandise is moved around and shelves are repacked.

#### Store design brings the personal touch

In a post-pandemic world, customers value personalised experiences more than ever before. Millennials, who are emerging as the biggest spenders, want personalisation and convenience above all else when shopping.

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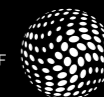
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the trip for millennials, such as Woolworths' new recycling machines for plastic bottles," says Kitnasamy.

"Millennials love green initiatives, and the convenience of getting their recycling done in-store is a boon for attracting foot traffic. In larger stores, including smaller service kiosks creates a convenient shopping destination that allows customers to drop off their recycling and shop for groceries."

Images courtesy of <https://tckrs.co.za/>



### Sustainability sells in store design

As sustainability and ethical practices gain prominence in consumer consciousness, integrating these values into store design can be a powerful attraction for customers. Using eco-friendly materials, implementing energy-efficient lighting, and embracing sustainable practices in construction and operations demonstrate a commitment to environmental responsibility. Moreover, highlighting ethical sourcing and production processes through transparent displays or information sharing helps customers make informed choices and feel good about their purchases.

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## Boutique-style experiential store design

Jumbo Goodmans is a good example of a butchery that offers a different experience to the norm. For example, customers have the option of selecting their own meat, then housing it in the store's dry aging cabinet. Other features of this store are indoor nature displays that have resulted in increased foot traffic,



and just as importantly, more time spent in the store. TCK's designers and factory collaborated to create the various shopfitting elements to showcase these features.

"Smaller stores should be offering this type of boutique interactive experience," says Kitnasamy. "Take one product the store does well and create an experience around it. It could be roasting and grinding artisanal coffee beans, or having a daily dinner inspiration station that supplies recipes and a shopping list. Then use clever shopfitting to merchandise these experiences."

Images courtesy of <https://www.facebook.com/Jumbogoodmans>



Image courtesy of Jack Moreh  
<https://freerangestock.com/>

## Online shopping design as an extension of your brand

Online shopping is growing, and retailers are looking for new and innovative ways to seamlessly integrate their digital and physical channels and embrace online extensions of their physical stores.

- Online shopping should carry the same trust and confidence as its physical counterparts for shoppers. Safety and security are paramount.
- An ecommerce site must be mobile responsive. Many consumers access online shopping from their mobile devices. As there are a multitude of screen sizes, with different operating systems, it is important to ensure that your site is accessible from as many of these as possible.
- Just as in a physical store, promotions and special offers should be clearly visible to online shoppers.
- Use predictive text and multiple filters to assist shoppers in their product selection.
- SEO (search engine optimisation) means setting up a site and content to generate better online search results. SEO utilises relevant keywords, phrases and built-in tools that push your platform further to the top of a search engine such as Google.
- Like your physical store, online store design should be simple and easy to navigate, with clearly marked categories and departments.
- It goes without saying that visuals and pricing should be kept updated at all times.

A successful supermarket, hyper or wholesaler online store incorporates design elements that bridge the gap between the online and offline worlds. This could include, for instance, interactive in-store digital displays that allow customers to browse and order products online, in-store pickup options for online orders, and online or instore-only specials and promotions that encourage shoppers to shop both channels.

## Store layout and product placement

In the highly competitive world of retail, effective product placement makes all the difference in attracting customers, influencing purchasing decisions, and maximising sales. Because of this, supermarkets and wholesale stores constantly strive to optimise the layout and positioning of products to create the best shopping experience for their shoppers.

Successful product placement is a multifaceted discipline that combines an understanding of shopper behavior, strategic placement techniques, and the use of technology. As consumer preferences continue to evolve, staying attuned to market trends and adapting product placement strategies will remain essential for retailers and wholesalers to thrive in the competitive retail landscape.



Images courtesy of <https://euroconcepts.co.za/>



## The science of store design Mastering product placement

**#1: Understand shopper behaviour.** This involves analysing customer flow patterns, identifying popular aisles, and demarcating high-traffic areas. Use data analytics and conduct observational studies to gain valuable insights into these shopper preferences, then strategically position products in the most favourable locations.

**#2: Optimise shelf placement.** The 'eye-level is buy-level' principle says best-selling and high-profit items should be positioned at eye level, making them easily noticeable and accessible.

**#3: Cross-merchandising.** Strategically placing complementary products together encourages cross-category purchasing. For example, placing crisps next to the salsa section or displaying batteries near electronic devices can prompt customers to buy multiple items. Cross-merchandising creates convenience for shoppers, increases basket size, and encourages exploration of different product categories. It also allows new products to be introduced to shoppers.

**#4: Create impulse purchase zones.** Impulse purchase zones typically feature low-priced, high-margin items



like snacks, beverages, and magazines. However impulse buys can extend to homeware, cereals, baked goods, beverages..just ensure the products are visually appealing, well-stocked, and accompanied by persuasive signage or displays that highlight their value.

**#5: Monitor and adapt.** Effective product placement requires continuous monitoring and adaptation. Retailers should regularly analyse sales data, conduct shopper surveys and seek feedback from their teams to evaluate the effectiveness of their product placement strategies. By identifying areas for improvement and adjusting their tactics accordingly, retailers can stay ahead of evolving consumer preferences and maintain a competitive edge.





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Set the mood

# How lighting plays a key role in store design

Lighting plays a vital role in shaping the ambiance and enhancing the shopping experience in supermarkets and wholesale stores. When designed thoughtfully, lighting fixtures and the light produced can transform average into extraordinary. Lighting done well attracts customers, showcases merchandise and creates a welcoming atmosphere. In recent years, there have been significant advancements in lighting technology and design strategies that are revolutionising the way these spaces are illuminated.

For large-format hypers and wholesalers, lighting is more than ambiance and highlighting – it brings life to a massive space. Flickering, uneven distribution of light, poor contrast and glare will impact shoppers and staff alike.

Image courtesy of <https://retail-focus.co.uk/>

Image courtesy of <https://retail-focus.co.uk/>



Image courtesy of <https://retail-focus.co.uk/>



Effective lighting design in supermarkets and retail stores also goes beyond mere illumination. It is a powerful tool that enhances the overall in-store shopping journey and contributes to energy efficiency.



Advances in LED technology layered lighting techniques, colour rendering, and lighting controls give retailers more

Image courtesy of [www.speedydecor.com/](http://www.speedydecor.com/)

options to create visually enticing spaces that attract customers into the store and keep them lingering longer.

Klaus Ritschewald, Managing Director of specialist lighting supplier EuroConcepts, says customised lighting solutions are an integral aspect of any well-designed store. "The interplay between ambient and accent lighting showcases the entire store, while highlighting specific areas and food freshness, while atmospheric lighting creates a desired atmosphere and the look and feel of the store."



Image courtesy of <https://tckrs.co.za/>



Image courtesy of <https://tckrs.co.za/>

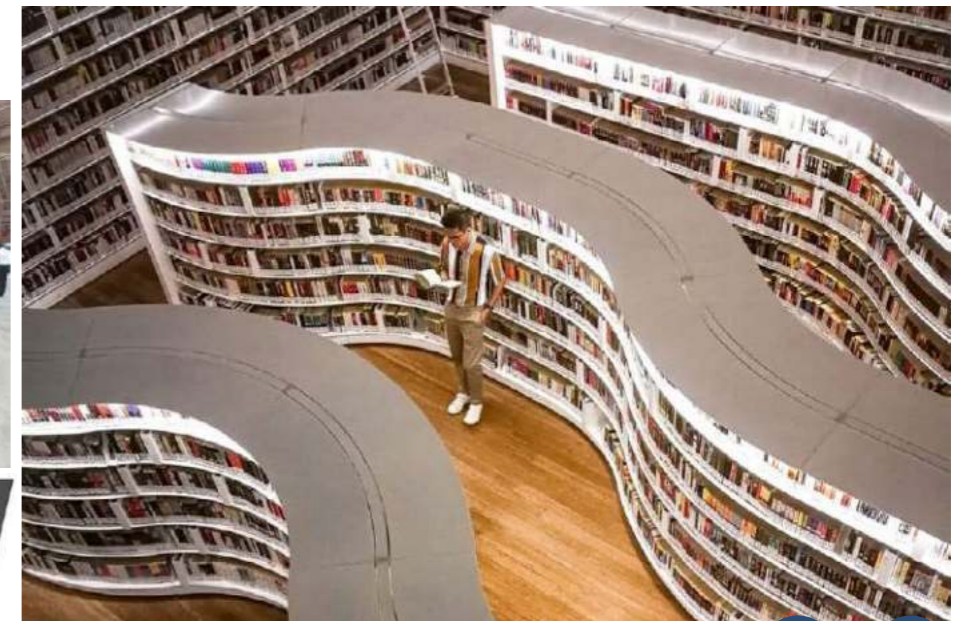


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## Partner with store design professionals

Working with qualified professional and experienced store designers and shopfitters is a must. Professional store designers have expertise in creating an efficient and logical store layout. They understand how to arrange aisles, displays, and product placements in a way that maximises traffic flow, encourages customer exploration, and minimises congestion.

Store designers understand the importance of aesthetics and visual appeal in attracting customers. They can create an inviting and appealing environment that enhances the overall shopping experience. They can also incorporate branding elements into the store design, such as logos, colours, and signage, to create a cohesive and recognisable brand image. This helps to reinforce brand identity and create a memorable shopping experience that differentiates a store from its competitors.

Ultimately the value of professional store designers lies in creating a positive and convenient shopping experience for customers. They take into account factors such as ease of navigation, accessibility for different customer demographics, placement of amenities like shopping carts and baskets, and the overall atmosphere of the store.

## Award-winning store design



Shoprite-owned Checkers was the overall category winner of the latest South African Council of Shopping Centres (SASC) Retail Design & Development Awards. Checkers Foods' flagship store in Franschhoek won the overall Spectrum Award for 2022, which recognises innovation as well as outstanding economic and creative achievements. The retailer also won in the New Developments category, with Checkers Drakenstein Sentrum, Paarl being the overall winner in this category. Checkers Foods Franschhoek was also the joint winner in the Retail Design – National Retailer category.

Visual provided by EuroConcepts



## Tell your story through store design

Tell your story, make your store a place people come to again and again. Create opportunities for people to talk about your store on social media. Store design sets the tone, sends a message, enhances the shopping experience and helps you make the most of your space. It's well worth doing it right. **SR**



**Guy Lerner**, a highly experienced writer and photographer, writes across diverse topics in business, technology, and retail – working with multinational companies in South Africa and Australia. Guy holds a B.Sc. Honours degree from the University of Witwatersrand. Contact Wilkins Ross Communications ([www.wilkinsrossglobal.com](http://www.wilkinsrossglobal.com)) or email [communications@wilkinsross.co.za](mailto:communications@wilkinsross.co.za).





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money market, kiosk and checkout counters | timber fruit and vegetable boats | wooden base boxes and gondola ends | flower and magazine stands | timber cladding for kitchen and wine departments | timber bakery display tables

Our industrial storage range includes several light and heavy duty racking and mezzanine floor systems.

## OUR STORY

Registration as a company

1964

Foundation of KK Engineering

1968

Registration as a company

1981

Change of name to KK Display

Creation of Storequip ground and factory in City Deep.  
Change of name to KK Shelving

2008

Aquisition of StoreWorks, Storeworks becomes part of the Storequip Group

2018





## OUR MARKETS

Storequip Group is collaborating with customers from 18 countries and two continents. We aim to provide services in more marketplaces to enhance the environment of our customers.



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WEBSITE: [www.storeworksc.co.za](http://www.storeworksc.co.za)

Oh, to be a child, standing in the sweets aisle, a world of choice before you. With so many brands and products to choose from, the South African Sweets and Chocolates category offers a cornucopia of treats for local consumers. In fact, the category can sometimes feel over-full, to the point of saturation. And yet new products continue to launch, new players enter the market, and old-favourites (for the most part – we miss you, Chocolate Log) hold firm against a tide of newcomers.

### **Sweets & Chocolates:** South Africa's favourites have stood the test of time

Hard candies and other sweets and sugar confectionery remains integral to this category. Sweet treats such as Wilsons Toffees, Fizz Pops, Chappies, Fizzers, mmmMallows, Sugus, Nut Puffs, Sourballs, Mint Imperials, Jawbreakers, Marshmallow Fish, Liquorice Allsorts, Milk Bottles, Chomp, Sparkles... South Africans love their old favourites, but are also willing to try new brands, flavours and variants. Beacon, producer of some of South Africa's most loved sweets and candies, has been in business for over 100 years.



And who doesn't remember Chappies, one of the most iconic sweets in South Africa. Part of the Cadbury/Mondelez International stable of brands, the bubble gum best known for its "Did You Know?" wrappers (and excellent bubble-blowing) turns 75 this year. Chappies initially came in five flavours: lemon, orange, strawberry, cherry, and pineapple and like many other much-loved South African brands has become part of this country's culture.

# Sweet dreams are made of these

### **Sugar confectionery sees slower growth**

According to Marketresearch.com, the sugar confectionery market in South Africa is forecast to reach \$507.97m (in retail prices) by 2025, increasing at a CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) of 3.25% per annum for the period 2020-2024.

Highly sensitive to changing consumer preferences, this category has been impacted by rising sugar costs and taxes, as well as emerging consumer preferences for low-sugar products and those that offer added health benefits. That said, South Africans have kept certain brands close to their hearts. One of the factors that makes many of these sweets so enduring is that as individually wrapped candies, they are ideal for lunchboxes, party packs, and desktop treat jars. They are also hugely popular with the informal retail sector.



Dark chocolate truffles  
courtesy of [www.freepik.com/](http://www.freepik.com/)



Ghee sweets and  
namkeen combo  
courtesy of <https://jiosweet.com/>





Established 2016. Based on the boundary of the Johannesburg CBD, management and staff have over 50 years' of experience in the baking industry. Mighty Sofft produce a range of buns, rolls, muffins and cakes – whilst using the most flavourful ingredients and in-house developed recipes. Our large variety of products are of the highest quality, as we are powered with our automatic muffin production line (4 000 every hour) and our high capacity bun facility (5 000 every hour), putting us in a strong position to contract, pack and manufacture according to our customers specific requirements and needs.

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**Chocolate – one of life’s little luxuries**

Chocolate has seen a slowing in growth, according to Marketresearch.com. Until 2025, the chocolate confectionery market in South Africa is forecast to

reach \$1.03b (in retail prices), thus increasing at a CAGR of 5.98% per annum for the period 2020-2024. This is a decrease, compared to growth of about 10.84% per year registered in 2015-2019.

SweetSailing oval boxes courtesy of <https://www.harborsweets.com/>



**Chocolate trends**

**Premiumisation.** It seems premiumisation of chocolate is here to stay. One of South Africa’s most-loved luxury chocolate brands, Lindt chocolate remains a robust player in the local market.

In addition to this, locally produced Paarl-based De Villiers Chocolate offers a gourmet bean-to-bar product that found a national home at Woolworths back in 2018 and has remained a faithful staple ever since. And what good dinner guest could contemplate arriving without a gift of Ferrero Rocher for the hostess? As boutique chocolatiers and gourmet chocolate experiences continue to thrive, so do does the South African love of some great-quality chocolate. This is despite the increasing cost of chocolate, as climate change causes cocoa production to drop, and other environmental and socio-economic factors

cause raw material and production costs to soar. Sustainably, responsibly sourced cocoa is now a question of survival rather than any form of green washing. The Lindt website states, “Our own sustainability program, the Lindt & Sprüngli Farming Program, is in place in all countries we source cocoa beans from. We achieved a 100% traceable and externally verified cocoa bean supply chain.”



**Interesting chocolate milestones in South Africa**

1870	The first Nestlé products arrive in South Africa.
1897	Cadbury Milk Chocolate is launched in the UK.
1903	The Cadbury brothers bring their milk chocolate products to the South African market.
1905	Cadbury Dairy Milk is launched.
1928	Cadbury Flake is launched In South Africa.
1931	Beacon begins as Durban Confectionery and Spice Works, producing handmade boiled sweets, toffees, cordials and coffee.
1935	Nestlé Aero, the first ever bubbly chocolate is launched.
1936	Durban Confectionery and Spice Works officially becomes Beacon.
1936	Nestlé’s famous Quality Street tin has held a special place in people’s hearts since it was first launched.
1937	Nestlé Smarties are launched.
1938	The original South African Cadbury factory is completed In Port Elizabeth and the first moulded Cadbury chocolate slabs started to roll off the production lines.
1938	Beacon begins producing Beacon chocolate.
1960	Cadbury Crunchie is launched in South Africa.
1960	Cadbury Lunch Bar is launched in South Africa. The iconic Lunch Bar ‘Makhathini’ TV ad was later launched in 1990.
1970	Cadbury Chomp is launched in South Africa.
1990	Beacon becomes part of the Jungle family and is now 100% owned by Tiger Brands.
2012	Cadbury becomes a subsidiary of Mondelez International.



**Good for you – good for the environment.**

Premium brands have also moved into the low- or no sugar, dairy-free, responsibly sourced arena in order to cater to the growing number of chocolate lovers who are demanding healthier products that are also better for the environment.

Craft chocolate maker Pieter De Villiers was inspired by a range of nut butter chocolates that he discovered during a journey to Italy in 2014. During the Covid lockdown, De Villiers crafted his own delicious nut butter addition to the De Villiers Chocolate stable. These chocolates are dairy-free, contain no artificial preservatives or colourants, and do not contain any palm oil. De Villiers' range of sugar-free chocolate bars are also suitable for lactose and gluten intolerant consumers.

**Vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free.** Many craft chocolate makers offer dairy-free, sugar-free, and gluten-free options that match traditional chocolate in terms of quality, taste, and mouth feel – important characteristics for these niche chocolate offerings .

While Lindt doesn't offer a specific dairy- or sugar-free option, they say, "For a reduced sugar content, you may try the Excellence 85% Cocoa chocolate bar which has 5g of sugar per serving, or the Excellence 90% Cocoa chocolate bar which has 1.3g of sugar per serving. We also have an Excellence 99% Cocoa chocolate bar." The Excellence bars from 70% Coca upwards are also considered suitable for vegans, so are free of any dairy.



Low calorie candy  
courtesy of [www.confectionerynews.com/](http://www.confectionerynews.com/)

## Sugar confectionery trends

As early adopters of vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, and low- or no sugar products, the move of sweets towards this trend has also been steadily gaining traction for quite some time. Beacon Fizzers and certain flavours of Beacon Sparkles, for instance, have been noted by the Vegan SA website as being vegan-friendly for years. Gelatine-free soft chewing sweets are becoming popular and making their way into own-brand sweets ranges, as well as those of leading brands. Globally these formerly niche ranges are expanding at a rapid rate, and we can expect at least some of these products to reach South African shores. The advent of online shopping has really impacted this category, as retailers can cater for a niche market through their online offering while keeping a small but appealing range in-store. Ensuring that online shopping offers perks and products is a great way to attract consumers who prefer to do their sweet confectionery and chocolate buying online, as well as those looking to satisfy specific dietary needs. **SR**



## Thinking outside the (chocolate) box

Although this is an enduringly popular category dominated by global brands, newcomers are arriving on the scene thick and fast. Confectionery producers need to remain relevant and front of mind in order to maintain their standing, and a way to achieve that is to sponsor one of South Africa's most famous sports teams.

Cadbury recently announced a brand partnership with the Springbok rugby team and SA Rugby as the Official Confectionery Supplier to the Springboks. Rian Oberholzer, CEO of SA Rugby, says, "We are delighted to be partnering with such an iconic brand as Cadbury – a name that resonates around the world."

"... Cadbury continuously looks for opportunities to bring fans closer to the action and experiences they crave," explains Lara Sidersky, Mondelez SA Category Lead for Chocolate. "What better way to do this than by uniting two iconic brands such as Cadbury chocolate and local rugby heroes, the Springboks – two fabric-of-the-nation brands." She adds, "We look forward to the excitement this partnership will bring to fans, unlocking more opportunities and experiences that we hope will continue to surprise and delight our audience."

**Sources:**

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<https://www.beacon.co.za/>  
<https://www.beacon.co.za/>



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# Ensuring food health and safety compliance in South Africa

**F**ood safety and quality are paramount concerns for both consumers and businesses in the FMCG retail and wholesale industry. In South Africa, stringent regulations and legislations are in place to guarantee the safety and quality of food products. These include:

- **The Occupational Health and Safety Act** (Act No. 85 of 1993) provides for the health and safety of employees at work. This Act includes provisions for food safety in the workplace.
- **The Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act** (Act No. 54 of 1972) regulates the production, sale, and import of foodstuffs in South Africa, and includes provisions for food safety and hygiene.
- **The National Health Act** (Act No. 61 of 2003) provides for the regulation of health services in South Africa and includes provisions for the control of foodborne illnesses and diseases.
- **The Hazardous Chemical Substances Regulations** (Regulation No. R.1179 of 25 August 1995) provides for the management and control of hazardous chemical substances in the workplace, including those used in food production.
- **The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations** (Regulation No. R.847 of 25 May 2018) provides for the general health and safety of employees in the workplace, including provisions for food safety and hygiene.
- **The Food Hygiene Regulations** (Regulation No. R.962 of 23 July 2012) provides for the hygienic production, handling and disposal of food items.



Image courtesy of <https://www.aces.edu/>

## Protecting the health and well-being of customers and employees

Supermarkets play a critical role in upholding these standards, not only to protect the health of their customers, but also to ensure the well-being of their staff and employees. Rob De Vos, Executive for SPAR's South Rand Corporate Stores, says the company works closely with Government to ensure its regulatory requirements are always met.

"During and after the Covid-19 pandemic we made special efforts to build better relationships with the Departments of Health and Labour, inviting representatives to staff meetings

discussing health issues, and letting them walk the stores with our managers to give their opinions," says De Vos.

"In some instances where we had a rare Covid outbreak, we got great support from those representatives because they were part of our planning, and we continue to maintain those relationships even now."

## Maintaining health & safety compliance in retail and wholesale stores

Supermarkets and wholesalers must adhere to the legislation and regulations, which include proper food handling, storage, labelling, and hygiene practices.

First and foremost, staff training and education are crucial to maintaining compliance. Retailers and wholesalers should be investing in comprehensive training programmes to ensure that employees understand and follow food safety protocols.





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This training includes topics such as personal hygiene, cross-contamination prevention, safe food handling, and the importance of maintaining a clean and sanitary environment. Regular training sessions, refreshers, and assessments are conducted to reinforce these practices and keep employees informed about the latest developments in food safety.

Image courtesy of <https://progressivegrocer.com/>



## Quality control and health and safety compliance

To guarantee the food safety and quality of every department and on every shelf, all retailers and wholesalers must implement robust quality control systems, otherwise they risk not being compliant. This involves conducting regular inspections and audits to identify potential hazards and ensure adherence to hygiene standards.

Regular monitoring of temperatures in refrigeration units and storage areas is essential to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria. Additionally, supermarkets and wholesalers need to enforce strict stock rotation practices to minimise the risk

Image courtesy of <https://www.desmoinesregister.com/>



of expired or spoiled products reaching the shelves.

Moreover, stores should have well-established and effective cleaning and sanitation procedures to maintain a hygienic environment. Regular cleaning schedules covering all areas of the store, including floors, shelves, equipment, and restrooms are essential. These schedules outline the frequency of cleaning, the type of cleaning agents to be used, and the proper disposal of waste. By adhering to these procedures, stores can eliminate potential sources of contamination and create a safe environment for customers and employees alike.

## Beyond compliance: remembering the lessons of Covid

In recent times, the world has faced unprecedented challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In response to this crisis, supermarkets and

wholesalers took additional measures to enhance health and safety protocols.

The use of hand sanitisers and sanitising became commonplace in stores across South Africa. These measures provided an added layer of confidence for consumers and employees, significantly reducing the risk of virus and bacterial transmission.

Now that the pandemic is over, it's important that the lessons we learned aren't forgotten, and that at least some level of in-store personal sanitation is maintained.



Image courtesy of <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/>



Image courtesy of [www.who.int/](http://www.who.int/)

### The importance of hand hygiene

“The biggest threat to maintaining customer-facing sanitation services is cost prioritising, especially with franchise stores,” says Annette Devenish, Marketing Executive for hand and surface wipe manufacturer Sani-touch.

“Hygiene is one of the easiest things to cut back on, especially where there’s no return on investment for stores,” says Devenish. “Prior to Covid, sanitisers and wipes were not that common. Now there are so many, that consumers expect them for free. Money has to come from somewhere

because customers are not willing to pay.”

Devenish suggests hand sanitisers containing at least 60% alcohol should be strategically placed at entrances, near shopping carts, and throughout the store to encourage regular hand hygiene. Through visual reminders, customers are encouraged to sanitise their hands upon entry and exit, as well as before and after handling products.

Similarly, store employees should be required to frequently sanitise their hands, especially when handling cash, interacting with customers, or engaging in other high-contact activities. Hand hygiene in a store that sells food and grocery products cannot be over-emphasised.

At SPAR, sanitising wipes are provided to customers in certain sections, such as the fresh produce area or self-service counters. These wipes allow customers to sanitise surfaces, such as shopping cart handles or touchscreens before use.

“We can’t tell customers how to behave, but the way we behave in our stores sets the tone,” says

De Vos. “If we have sanitising habits entrenched in our operations, then our customers will follow suit, and I can already see that happening in the stores.”

The introduction of hand sanitisers and sanitising wipes serves not only as a preventive measure against the spread of viruses and bacteria, but also as a visible demonstration of a store’s commitment to customer health and safety. By implementing these additional measures, supermarkets and wholesalers communicate their dedication to upholding the highest health and safety standards, fostering trust and loyalty among consumers. **SR**



Image courtesy of <https://www.dakotanevsnw.com/>

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# Sole 365, Italy

In the Italian region of Campania, a new trend is emerging and shifting convenience from temporary to permanent.

# Enough temporary offers ... ... Always low prices!

We interviewed the CEO of AP Commerciale, owner of the brand Sole 365.

## Tell us about the company structure and where Sole 365 fits in?

Sole365, is a partner of the Megamark group (Famila Superstore, Dok Supermercati, A&O convenience shops, Joe Zampetti by L'isola dei Tesori petstores) and a member of Selex.

## What is different about Sole 365?

We offer the concept of Every Day Low Price in Campania, i.e., an attractive offer that focuses on the lowest prices on the market with a year-round commitment. Unlike a discounter, we offer excellent prices but they are delivered to the hard-pressed consumer by offering a quality service experience as well.

## Apparently, your team of management and staff are guided by your Seven Principles. What are they?

- We care about people.
- We select the best products to make your journey better and offer three things ... savings, quality and safety.
- Promotions have an expiry date. Our low prices last for 365 days of the year.



Exterior of the new Sole 365 supermarket, in Nola, where the pay-off line stands out: "La Spesa. Tranquilla," the sentence means ... "Shopping. Don't worry."

This institutional message underlines the intention of offering complete and a serene shopping experience, free from intermittent promotional pressures and reassured by always convenient prices.



The location of Campania within Italy.

- We simplify your choices – no need to collect any points to get a gift (for which you would pay, anyway!).
- We work every day to make your shopping trips more convenient, simplest, safest and most serene.
- Our 'no leaflet' policy results in the annual saving of 3 500 trees, 100 million litres of water, 200 tons of harmful emissions.
- You buy only what you want – no need to buy excessive quantities on 'special offer'.



The opening of the Nola store took place on the occasion of 'International Women's Day' on 8 March, an event that celebrates the economic, political and cultural progress achieved by women all over the world. The eloquent poster celebrates "Women 365 days a year".



# Tired of missing your grocery delivery?

Grocery e-lockers have increased in demand as an innovative solution in the e-commerce industry, revolutionizing the way customers collect their grocery orders. These secure storage units are specifically designed to accommodate the unique needs of the grocery sector, providing a tempered convenient and contactless pickup experience.

## Saved costs:

**2 hrs**

Saved every day with Grocery Lockers compared to previous solution.

**23 min**

Average order fulfillment time when using the grocery lockers.

**7-8 %**

Profit on e-commerce orders by some stores using StrongPoint's grocery lockers.

## Key Features:



### 3 temp. zones

Our grocery lockers come with up to 3 temperature zones to manage all groceries (frozen, chilled and ambient – both controlled ambient and passive ambient). Suitable for your full range of products.



### Age verification

Our lockers come with Yoti's age verification software built-in to create a safe and efficient way of confirming your customers' age in the areas that allow for this technology.



### Built to last

Designed in Scandinavia, our lockers are built to withstand even the toughest weather conditions. The lockers are built with galvanized, stainless steel.



### Customer interaction

Our lockers can come with software to handle all parts of the customer communication. One less problem to worry about.

## Potential Challenges of **Not** using grocery e-lockers:



- Limited Delivery Options
- Time Constraints
- Inconvenience of Store Visits and long queues
- Lack of Contactless Options
- Limited Freshness Assurance



**There are no flyers or loyalty schemes with rewards system?**

We save the consumer money without the gimmicks and rather offer them quality service in an immaculate environment, and they receive excellent prices on a daily basis.

**So is this the end of promotional activity?**

Probably not, but it is the beginning of the end of promotional pressure where price, price, price is the only game in town.

**Is this perhaps an important statement on the lack of confidence by customers that only points or added purchases result in better pricing?**

Not really, but we now offer a valid and decisive alternative, based on the evidence from daily consumer feedback about their preference for convenience, quality and service.

Metaphorically, this commercial policy is identified in the same figurative traits of our sign ... a sun (the Italian word 'Sole') that shines on people's economic resources '365' days a year and thus helps them recover from the challenges caused by inflation, not having to let themselves be seduced by the Spartan flattery of the discounters.

The formula is sustainable, it proves to work, so much so that new supermarket openings are taking place to confirm its validity. It also raises the question whether exporting this same strategy to the areas with a highest per capita income could give even better results, following the different macro-economic conditions and inflationary pressures.



Michele Apuzzo, CEO of AP Commerciale, owner of the Sole 365 brand.

**Is the development focused only in Campania?**

Since the beginning of 2023, three supermarkets have been inaugurated (Nola, Sant'Anastasia and Siano) but several new openings are already planned.

Sant'Anastasia and Nola are two municipalities in the province of Naples (respectively with populations of about 26 000 and 34 000 inhabitants), Siano is instead located in the province of Salerno and has approximately 9 500 people.



Sole 365-Nola ... the starting team, enthusiastic and ready to work.



*Above left:* The fruit and vegetable department located at the start of the shopping trip is backed up by friendly customer service.

*Above right:* CX Store Award (established in 2019 by Promotion, a marketing and communication magazine) is an award given to the brand that boasts the largest number of satisfied customers based on the quality-price ratio: 'Sole 365 fruit and vegetables department' won the 2022-23 edition.

*Below left:* With the principle of "Putting the customer at the centre of everything" as a living policy, all Sole 365 staff are renowned for their friendly service, smiling faces and expert assistance to answer all questions from the shopping public.

*Below right:* The service counter of the butcher's shop enhances the quality of the meats, with a showcase of cuts and special digital signage for persuasive communication.

Michele Apuzzo, CEO of AP Commerciale (owner of the Sole 365 brand) comments on some issues of a strategic nature, shedding more light on this dynamic and enterprising distribution reality that is starting to stand out in southern Italy.

"To select retail sites, we identify areas that strategically respond to three factors – coverage of the territory, convenience of the shopping experience and accessibility.

"In general, we favour the needs of the local public, considering that most of our customers want to do their shopping close to home, at least after work (near the office), but must be able to experience a moment of pleasant tranquility having everything in our assortment available and accessible parking spaces".

It is undeniable that the success of the shops depends on the position in which they are physically located, but the range of products that are usually offered is no less important ...



“ For us, the choice of local products is central because it responds to very precise purchasing habits of customers, linked to traditions that are rooted in our food culture, in family recipes and in consumer habits that are still the driving force behind the choices of most of the customers themselves. ”

“For each outlet, we identify specific products and producers, known in their local area, to meet the needs of that particular territory. Precisely by virtue of the characterisation we adopt, the percentages on the assortment will vary with respect to the area.

The assortment is guided by the needs of the final consumers: it is they who, with their daily choices, push us to select the most suitable products. “We devote a great deal of attention to the ‘very fresh’ products, which today have a share that is close to 40% of sales.

“In addition to knowing their habits and studying their needs, we know how fresh and very fresh they are crucial for a complete and healthy shopping, so we are very careful to favour local suppliers and to have laboratories in each store that can deal with due care, to prepare the product to put on the tables of our customers”.

What has been said, integrates organically with the rest of the commercial proposal, structured on a historical collaboration:

“Like Sole365, we do not have direct relationships with supplier companies, but we rely on our commercial partner, which is Megamark and the entire Selex buying group. We were born thanks to the partnership with Megamark, which has allowed us to structure ourselves in a streamlined way, focusing on sales and on the development of the model, providing us with its support and its ‘expertise’ in the sector for everything related to purchases and MDD products (private label, meaning over 2 000 Selex branded products)”.

In order to remain genuinely local, ‘localism’ must stand out and consolidate merchandise not too far from the place where it sprouts, in fact the CEO interprets its nature in this way also in relation to the company he has the task of administering ...



*Left:* In Southern Italy great attention is paid to fish. Almost everywhere it is displayed on counters with sales assistance and the origin is communicated to the shopper.

*Below:* Delicatessen and Bakery complement each other and the bright colours clearly identify each area for the customer.

their daily peace of mind and the freedom to choose without feeling the pressure of special offers (which inevitably leads to buying products even without actually needing them).

“For the moment, let’s continue looking to our region for the next openings. We are convinced there is still plenty of room for us in Campania and we intend to continue developing our network here, which has its most vital soul in the territory. After all, each opening creates an induced activity which is an important growth lever for the region, both in terms of recruitment and territorial network.”

**Continuity in convenience.**

“We had the intuition that the Every Day Low Price model could be a winning idea. And so it was! For us, it is not a mere commercial strategy, but a real philosophy: the belief is that at the heart of our work are the needs of the customers,



“Listening, but above all transparency and trust, come first and all of this translates into concrete actions that make it possible to always keep the sentiment of the customers high.



“Our model is based on total price transparency: the customer knows that he/she has no surprises at the checkout or when shopping even after hours; they will always find the lowest prices compared to the competitors and an assortment that covers all of their most important needs.

Building trust starts from the EDLP model and develops into a communication strategy which, by not offering promotions, discounted offers or collecting points, is entirely oriented towards raising awareness of food culture: it is a concrete commitment that also passes through high-value partnerships, which accompany us to the moment of shopping, the relationship with food and with the territory in a simple and effective way”.

In conclusion, Michele Apuzzo mentions three interesting points of reference, both Italian and foreign, which have provided precious sources of inspiration: “Our ‘muses’ have been the great operators of the EDLP, such as Mercadona in Spain, Colruyt in Belgium and Unes in Italy. We were inspired by them to study the model and then make ourselves independent in building our version.” **SR**



Wine merchandising of the wines, has been laid out by geographical origin and convenience formats.



**Hippo Zourides**, serial entrepreneur and corporate leader, has been involved in the food trade for over four decades and consults to corporates, large, medium and small enterprises on a variety of management and restructuring skills, including the latest ESG requirements.



**Antonello Vilardi**, professional in managing points of sale at numerous commercial signs, editorial collaborator for specialised magazines, consultant and lecturer in university masters. He has written books on large-scale retail trade.

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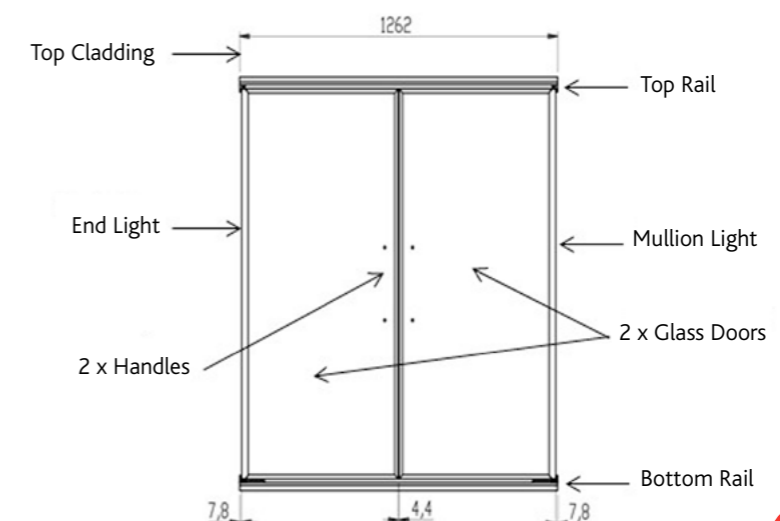
## Close The Case

Designed as a retrofit solution for existing Supermarket display cases, the Glacier Air Shield Glass Doors offer up to a 40% energy saving in an ever-increasing energy cost environment as well as improved cabinet temperatures and product benefits.



## Features and Benefits

- Reduced energy consumption.
- Extended product shelf life.
- Double glazed Argon Gas filled void for superior insulation.
- Optimal product temperatures.
- Spring loaded glass doors.
- Solutions for new cabinets or retrofitted on existing cabinets.
- Less cold air spillage – warmer aisles.
- Optional Mullion LED lights and door hold-open brackets.
- Heated option on our Standard Airshield Doors to suit coastal conditions.
- Integrated (full length) handle option.



## Infinity / Infinity Integrate Glass Doors

The new Infinity Glass Door is designed with edge-to-edge glass and screen print border. This door offers increased visibility and a more modernised look and feel. Glacier has also launched their new Integrated Glass Door which incorporates a full length profiled handle.

### Low Temp Eco Leaf (Energy Saving) Doors Aluminium Frames:

- Heated Door and Architrave
- Natural 15 micron anodized or black textured powder coating (Coating to SABS standards).

#### Glass

- Safety toughened 4mm glass inside and outside standard on all doors. (Toughened to SABS standards).
- All Glass Doors are Argon Gas filled for superior insulation.
- Low temperature doors are fitted with a heated front glass and a clear rear glass, both safety toughened.

### Normal Temp Doors Aluminium Frames:

- Door and heated Architrave
- Natural 15 micron anodized or black textured powder coating (Coating to SABS standards)
- There is a thermal break on the inside of the door frame.
- All architraves are fitted with anti-sweat heaters.

#### Glass

- Safety toughened 4mm glass inside and outside standard on all doors. (Toughened to SABS standards)
- All Glass Doors are Argon Gas filled for superior insulation.
- Normal temperature doors are fitted with Low emission front glass and a clear rear glass, both safety toughened.

#### Lights (LED)

Energy Saving LED 22W, 6000K, LED Light fitted on the inside of the architrave in a closed polycarbonate light diffuser.

#### Lights (LED)

Energy Saving LED 22W, 6000K, LED Light fitted on the inside of the architrave in a closed polycarbonate light diffuser.



# Aldi... An eco-friendly model built on low prices

**S**avings on spending, but also on the energy used to enable it: the German chain outlines a virtuous scheme with which to frame its interpretation of the discount format.

At an international level, Aldi is present with over 6 600 outlets in 11 countries and four different continents (Europe, America, Asia, Oceania), counting on the support of around 156 000 employees.

As an example, within the European context, in over 150 Italian stores (with an average surface area of 1 100m<sup>2</sup> per branch), within the two fundamental logistics hubs of Oppeano (near Verona) and Landriano (near Pavia), as well as in the Verona headquarters, it employs a total of around 3 000 collaborators (an increase of 49% as compared to 2020 and 23% more employees compared to 2021).

This means that only 2% of the global workforce is employed in Italy, from the moment in which (in March 2018) it chose to also engage the Italian market.

Its growth is proving to be healthy and continuous, with a progress that had already been predicted from the beginning, achieved at full speed together with the territories and communities it serves.



*Above:* Aerial view of store and car park

*Left:* Michael Gscheidlinger, Country Manager of ALDI Italy

*Right:* The photovoltaic system, located on the roof of the shop, is the main device for starting energy savings (image taken from Moniga del Garda)



Aldi has aroused concern in the competition, now it is admired for the organised and determined way in which it pursues universally shared principles such as eco-sustainability, energy saving and respect for the environment.

Obviously, every practice carried out to save energy and reduce waste is to be considered 'friendly' towards planet Earth and all those who inhabit it.

In recent years, this term is revealing itself as a sort of 'guarantee' for many distribution companies, but above all as the most candid descriptive trait to fully understand their style and strategies.

## The various store concepts

The National Buying Services of Aldi Italia indicates some unequivocal characteristics of the stores.

"With the aim of offering customers an always pleasant shopping experience, we have developed a welcoming 'store concept' for the Italian market that offers bright, service-oriented and quality-oriented sales outlets that respect the environment thanks to the high energy efficiency. The modern and well-organised set-up proposed in each department allows the consumer to easily find the products he needs, optimising the time dedicated to shopping.

In compliance with specific local conditions, current urban planning provisions and the peculiarities of the individual territory, a format suitable for each context is proposed. For Italy, the development of three types of store concepts have been envisaged: **Standard**, with a welcoming entrance and design conceived for stand-alone



Left: External view of the Pogliano Milanese branch in Lombardy

Below: External view of the Rho branch in Lombardy



Right: View of a checkout barrier.

At first glance, apart from the reusable shopping bags, there are ranges of impulse items on display to tempt the last minute purchase. The shelf display includes high value, high shrinkage items.



Display of loose dried fruit



large surfaces, **Urban**, inserted within an easily accessible CBD or city context and developed on small surfaces that favour flexible assortments and finally **Centre**, reserved for locations within shopping mall complexes that host other commercial competitors.



Left: Eco-compactor in the receiving area of the Moniga del Garda branch



Self-service meat counter, with a sign "A tutta griglia al prezzo ALDI, meaning "Full grill at ALDI prices"

be recognised in the daily application of the best features in use to the 'discount' channel, rather than to the aspiration of venturing into onerous campaigns based on prizes, loyalty cards and collection of points of various kinds.

### Freshness

The pride of any store is the area dedicated to fruit and vegetables, the first space for welcoming customers, inspired by traditional markets and usually visible from the outside thanks to large windows.

This department offers up to 130 fruit and vegetable products, of which 80% come from Italy and 15 are 'organic'; everywhere it is organised to support itself with daily supplies useful for minimising waste, essential for ensuring variety of choice in a broad and genuine spectrum.

The good discount model is in itself an element of loyalty.

The working group that participates in Aldi's successes on the Italian territory enters into the specific merits of the indispensable methods for retaining users and confesses the primacy that must

In Aldi the position is very clear: "We focus everything on the relationship of trust that we establish every day with our customers, through quality and convenience of price. Rather than focusing on retaining a part of our customers through traditional loyalty cards, we believe in the importance of satisfying all our consumers, listening to each one's needs. Our goal therefore remains to continue to be a point of reference for those who prefer us, especially in light of the current scenarios dictated by inflation.

Aldi's strong point has always been to offer consumers the guarantee of the highest quality at the best price, thanks to a compact but complete assortment, attentive to the peculiarities and territorial best practice."

The **Aldi Price** policy responds to the needs of customers, increasingly attracted



Refrigerated sales counter, with 'take away' fish. The opposite end is occupied by butcher's 'self-service' trays



View of an aisle with frozen counters, where the bin and door combination uses the available space at its best

by discount levers and the possibility of saving without sacrificing quality to cope with the price increases caused by the inflationary scenario of recent months. "The distinctive element of our brand's discount offer is the ability to focus on the essentials to propose a selected range of quality products at affordable prices. The meticulous qualitative selection of the products allows a virtuous rationalisation of the assortment, simplifying and motivating the consumer's choice".

With this in mind, the company is committed day by day to implementing the best management, procurement and customer service practices with the aim of making

valuable products accessible to consumers at the right price.

"The products displayed on the shelf are, in fact, the result of a daily work in the process of knowledge and care in the choice of suppliers, who for us represent the 'guardians of taste', and in the careful selection of raw materials, an expression of regional excellence and national".

The low prices, as indeed in every discount store, are low all year round but are part of a commercial regime that also contemplates promotional periods. "Our flyers are distributed weekly and offer a wide selection of offers designed to meet the needs of any family unit".

## Bakery product display



Display of bakery products, with scales for weighing and labelling



## Fruit & Vegetable displays



Above all in an international scenario transfigured by the growth of inflation, the absence of marketing charges which weigh on the final prices of branded industry products and the ability to rationally compact assortments in accordance with the principles of general simplification and efficiency of services represent added values, evident in Aldi, that consumers cannot afford to neglect.

“80% of the assortment offered in Italian stores is made up of 'Private Label' products from close collaboration with national suppliers”.

## In Europe, the Italian network.

In Italy, ALbrecht-Discount, under the guidance of its Country Manager Michael Gscheidlinger, is now located in Emilia Romagna, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Piedmont, Trentino Alto Adige, Veneto and Lombardy, a region in which over 30% of the branches are located.

The Italian point of sale that best represents the commercial physiognomy of the company is that of Moniga del Garda, in the province of Brescia.

Aldi is particularly proud of it: “In 2021 we inaugurated the first zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions store in Moniga del Garda, under the banner of the new high energy efficiency construction prototype which is part of the perspective of efficiency and continuous improvement adopted in the management of corporate energy consumption”.

Thanks to a series of devices that minimise the impact on the climate, such as photovoltaic panels, an eco-compactor for the internal management of paper and plastic, an air conditioning system



Dry groceries with displays of limited, and mostly exclusive, ALDI brands and the use of electronic labels



View of a long aisle, with a linear section dedicated to bakeries



Even processed meats follow the same outer principle for quick and efficient merchandising



View of a sales counter head dedicated to typical regional foods (the trademark is 'Regione che vai...')



Vertical entirely dedicated to organic products



'Sweet-savory' mix



integrated with the refrigeration system and insulating windows, this store has energy consumption that is more than 15% lower than the average of other stores.

On a general level, Aldi points of sale wink at the environment thanks to the insulation offered by special casings which allow to minimise consumption due to air conditioning and to the innovative LED lighting which reduces energy consumption by up to 50% compared to traditional lamps. Ample attention is also paid to the installation of refrigeration systems for the latest generation refrigerated counters. Equipped with only natural refrigerant, they allow a reduction in consumption of over 2.5% compared to traditional systems powered by synthetic and potentially more polluting refrigerants.



Part of the gondola dedicated to coffee



A line dedicated to 'fresh pasta'

So is this the future of the discount model store? If it is indeed as Aldi sees it, such a distribution channel will save both consumers and the environment! **SR**



Typical view of ALDI shelves. Note the 12- or 18- or 24- pack of items in their cardboard outer. A number of outers make up a case. Merchandisers wait for an outer to have only a few items before replacing the display with a new outer – very cost effective merchandising



Wine



Beer





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## Effective solutions to reduce the cost of in-store refrigeration

### Polyurethane Injected Panels

- Standard panels: Outer and inner skin of frost white Chromodek, also available in black finish.
- Polyurethane injected panels for superior insulation and adhesion.
- High-impact PVC interlock profiles on all edges provides totally sealed insulation and a perfect vapour barrier.
- Tongue and Groove panel options available.
- Easily erected.
- Optional skin finish in Stainless Steel – Grades AISI 304 AIS 403.

## Cold & Freezer Rooms



### Floors – Fabricated and Concrete

#### Fabricated Floors

- The inside floor finish is 1.5mm Aluminium tread plate glued and screwed to a marine ply base.
- Galvanised plate options available in lieu of the Aluminium Chequer Plate finish.

#### Concrete Floor

- Concrete floors are used for flush or step-up entry and in permanent structures. Usually a recess of 150–170mm is used to accommodate the foam slab insulation and the concrete screed.



### Meat Rails

- Hot Dipped Galvanised system.
- Support structure integrated into insulated panels.
- Optional free-standing continuous galvanised system with bends and switch gear.

### Aluminium Chequer Plate

- Installed as an option to protect panels from scratches and light impact damage.
- 1.5mm and 2.0mm thick options.
- Standard height 1 250mm AFFL.





# Insulated Structures

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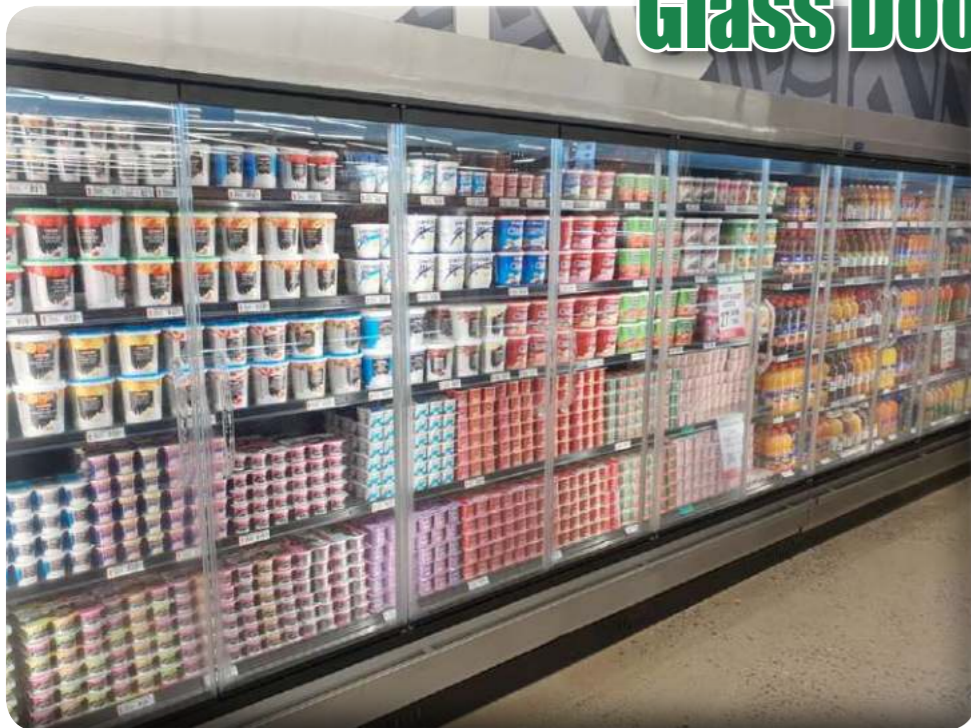


Environment  
Respect

## Benefits of Airshield Glass Doors

- Reduce Energy consumption.
- Extend Product shelf life.
- Double Glazed Argon filled void for better insulation.
- Optimal Product temperature.
- Glass doors have an option of Mullion lights. Quoted separate.
- Handles included.
- Up to 40% energy saving.
- Solution for new cabinets or retrofitted on existing cabinets.
- Doors are spring loaded.
- Less cold air spillage – warmer aisles.

## Airshield Glass Doors



## Ways to save

With energy cost rising and food retailers looking to improve the shopping experience environment for customers, Insulated Structures has developed an effective solution to reduce the cost of in-store refrigeration while enhancing the customer experience.

Insulated Structures doors are easy to retrofit on in-store cabinets to reduce the energy required to keep chilled foods at the correct temperature.

Meanwhile, customers are able to clearly see and access the products on offer. Reduced energy requirements means smaller refrigeration plant selection for new stores. These savings will off-set the initial cost of the doors. Up to 40% reduction in refrigeration requirement has been achieved.



Standard Airshield Glass Doors with a Black Frame.  
Heated Hybrid also available in this design.  
Heated Hybrid Glass Doors are fitted with a heater to reduce condensation on the doors in Coastal areas.  
Heated Hybrid is fitted with soft closers.

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# South African FMCG retail

## Undercovering the current state of play

A new report from Trade Intelligence reveals an FMCG retail trade that is under enormous pressure – but that continues to innovate, to serve shoppers, and even to turn a profit.

South Africa's economic landscape is challenging for any business, but particularly so for players in the consumer goods industry. The complexity in this sector is mind-blowing, with thousands of suppliers bringing brands to market in a competitive and rapidly evolving retail environment, dependent on a vast network of logistics providers across an increasingly globalised supply chain.

And this is before factoring in the particular challenges of the present – supply chains disrupted by a global pandemic or a stranded ship, the impact of an energy crisis on a developing country, persistent unemployment, rising inflation driven by geopolitics, the disruption both positive and negative of new technologies. It is possible to disentangle some major market dynamics from the clutter, however, and makes sense of the trading landscape.

"There's no doubt that we're looking at a confluence of variables like we've never seen before," says Andrea du Plessis, a senior retail analyst with Trade Intelligence. "But we've identified a number of key trends and dynamics within that, which give some shape to the apparent chaos."



Some of these trends seem to be countervailing. For example, most retailers are compelled in difficult economic times to stretch their target market, leading to channel blurring within trading brands. At the same time, to reach shoppers who are shopping across channels, they are becoming hyper-segmented across formats, from forecourt convenience to big-box discount. Retailers are also launching specialised spinoffs of the main brand –

in categories like pet supplies, baby essentials, liquor, even outdoor, to leverage their supply chains and brand identities, and hedge against the challenges of the day.

"Some of these market dynamics result from external factors that the retailers themselves are not driving, but have to respond to," explains du Plessis. For example, purchasing power is constrained across the economic spectrum as inflation, interest rate hikes and unemployment all put a squeeze on disposable household income. And load shedding has long passed the stage of being a personal or societal inconvenience and is now suppressing economic growth and the revenues of businesses both large and small – increasing input prices, reducing trading hours, and flattening consumer demand.

In this challenging environment, the businesses best able to navigate complexity are those positioned to win, and for this they need information in the form of data and insights. The new SA FMCG Landscape Now report from Trade Intelligence provides a top-down look at South Africa's FMCG trade, from the macro-economic environment to consumer behaviour to the trading strategies of the individual retailers over the first quarter of 2023. It includes a particular focus on the impacts of load shedding – looking at both how it is impacting the bottom line for South Africa's retailers, and what they are doing to adapt.

The report looks at the likely factors which will continue to press on the industry in the near term,

Image courtesy of <https://www.investec.com/>



providing an overall view of a sector which is both resilient and agile in the face of adversity.

“What we're seeing is that South Africa's retailers continue to innovate, even under enormous strain, and that most of them are still performing quite well,” says du Plessis.

“The important thing for any business is not to

put their heads in the sand. Our current challenges are not going to go away in a hurry. Every business needs to stay informed.” **SR**

**Trade Intelligence**, a leading source of South Africa's consumer goods retail research, insights and capability-building solutions, focusing on the industry's corporate and independent retailers and wholesalers.

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# Drinking it all in | Beverage trends in Africa



A glimpse into Africa's dynamic beverage consumption landscape ... the driving forces, and the cultural significance they hold.

By Warren Brett  
Cluster Executive  
SEA Region,  
Smollan Tanzania

**A**frican beverage trends are driven by innovation and culture. From the cherished rituals of traditional tea and coffee to the emerging popularity of carbonated soft drinks and fruit juices. Africa's beverage market is evolving rapidly, reflecting changing consumer preferences and the impact of various socio-economic factors. Warren Brett Cluster Executive, SEA Region, Smollan Tanzania gives a glimpse into Africa's dynamic beverage consumption landscape – the driving forces, and the cultural significance they hold.

Multiple factors shape the evolving beverage consumption patterns in Africa. Economic growth has led to an expanding middle class with increased purchasing power, allowing consumers to explore a wider range around choices. The influence of social media and exposure to global trends have also played a pivotal role as consumers are now more aware of new products and flavours. Furthermore, Africa's cultural diversity has resulted in a mosaic of preferences, with regional variations shaping beverage consumption trends.

Rich and robust teas from Kenyan purple to North African mint and Red Rooibos down south,



Ethiopian coffee ceremony, painting by Amlaku Aschalew/Buna. Image courtesy of <https://addiszeybe.com/>

capture a unique market with deep African roots steeped in ancient traditions and rituals. This market is projected to reach a CAGR of 5.5% between 2022 and 2027 according to a recent Mordor Intelligence report.

So too, coffee holds an entrenched space from the cultural significance of the Ethiopian coffee ceremony to the birth of café culture in countries

like Kenya, one of the world's most prolific producers, and Morocco with Arabic coffee their national drink. Africa is certainly holding its own – from gaining recognition for their superlative teas, to robust coffee production and rising consumption levels. These beverages go beyond mere flavours and act as social lubricants, fostering community bonds, embodying the spirit of hospitality.



Sorghum beer has been brewed by African tribes for much longer than is mentioned in most history books. It is produced in rural and commercial areas across the African continent. Tribes have continued to produce their own kinds, adding taste using locally available ingredients. Traditional African beer brewers were women. Traditional African beer customers were men. The beer sold in markets, and used at weddings, ceremonies, and other special occasions. Image and caption courtesy of <https://www.africansafaris.co.nz/>

Image of Rooibos tea courtesy of <https://draxe.com/>



The fusion of traditional and international beverages reflects the dynamic nature of African consumption, with a blend of a much-loved heritage on the one hand and innovation on the other. We are seeing large-scale growth across multiple markets, with Coca-Cola and Pepsi in the carbonated sector, and Diageo, Heineken and ABInbev driving alcoholic beverage growth.

Alcoholic beverages are prominent in African culture and are enjoyed during social gatherings

and celebrations. Traditional beverages like Nigerian palm wine, sorghum beer from Zambia, and tchapalo millet beer from Côte d'Ivoire have been cherished across the continent for ages. With globalisation and urbanisation at play Western alcoholic beverages, including beer and spirits, have entered

the market. Manufacturing is generally done locally, and while they have the strength of that and brand building on their side, we bring the expertise to deliver on execution through enabled technology. Ultimately creating a line of sight for the decision makers to be able to pivot the business around sustaining volumes and low margins. An evolving, dynamic landscape that is set to keep us on our toes with a long-term picture in mind, and that really drives us. **SR**

So too, with the global fruit juice market valued at US\$ 147.5 Billion in 2022 according the IMARC Group, Africa significantly contributes to this growing sector, with brands such as Nigeria's Chivita 100%, a "no added sugar, no preservatives and no artificial colours or flavours" – recently awarded brand of the decade at the 'West African Brand Awards'. While further south, Ceres Fruit Juices, are widely consumed in Africa and imported to over 80 countries with the U.S., their largest market.

Global beverage giants have keenly observed the continent's immense potential and invested in expanding their presence – for example, testament to the surge in consumption of carbonated soft drinks. Local bottling plants and efficient distribution networks have been established, making these beverages readily accessible to a larger population. Urbanisation, improved living standards, and growing disposable incomes have significantly driven African consumers' escalating demand for these types of drinks. So too, the rise of locally manufactured brands offering a quality taste at a fraction of the cost, has created a competitive environment for global brands.

# Supermarkets told to shut the door as it emerges open fridges use one per cent of Britain's electricity

By Helena Horton  
The UK Sunday Telegraph

Supermarket fridges should be closed, campaigners have said, as it emerges that the appliances use up one per cent of all UK electricity.

Most shops use open fridges, which use far more energy to stay cool than alternatives with doors. These are favoured by supermarkets because it means customers are able to grab products quickly. However, they have been criticised by campaigners and MPs as a “massive waste of energy and money” which are contributing to global warming.

A study carried out with the support of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs found that “retail food outlets are responsible for around three per cent of total electrical energy consumption”. It added that “refrigeration systems account for between 30 per cent and 60 per cent of energy used.”

Mary Creagh MP, who is the chair of the Environmental Audit Committee, told The Telegraph: “It’s a terrible waste of money and some stores have introduced closing doors.

“However, there is the same problem with the High Street when doors are left open in the middle of winter and the [central heating] escapes out. From next April all companies of a certain size have to declare their greenhouse gas footprint, so this



Gem Golding has asked people to sign a petition forcing supermarkets to put doors on their fridges.

should spur them into measuring their gas bills and trying to work out ways to reduce them.”

A Friends of the Earth spokesperson added: “With the world in the midst of a climate emergency our shops and stores should make it a top priority to save energy and slash the emissions that are roasting the planet. Supermarkets must ensure that their fridges and appliances operate to the highest

energy efficient standards – and if they won’t, the government should make them.”

Campaigners argue that supermarkets could cut their energy use by a quarter if they simply put doors on fridges. Many retailers have fitted their open fridges with energy-saving technology, but environmentalists say further savings could be made if doors were installed.



Instead of adding doors, many big supermarkets say they will try to make open fridges more efficient. Getty images, courtesy of <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales>





Now, almost 25 000 people in the UK have signed a Parliament petition urging MPs to force supermarkets to use fridge doors.

The petition states: "Retailers in the United Kingdom unnecessarily waste huge amounts of energy on open fridges and freezers. Climate change threatens our planet. If all supermarkets had doors on their fridges and freezers it would save energy the equivalent of the entire residential population of Poland". The campaign was started by brother and sister Jonathan and Gem Golding, from Brighton.

Gem Golding posted on Facebook: "Aside from the cost wasted in energy bills, the emissions this could save us is monumental. Putting doors on fridge/freezers could cut electricity usage by up to 40%.

"Apparently this could inhibit shoppers though? Dunno about you but think I'd still get my Ben and Jerry's. In France, supermarkets have signed up to a voluntary agreement to put doors on three-quarters of their 450 miles of fridge aisles by 2020. So why is no one else taking action?"

Her brother, 28, told the Mail on Sunday: "I happened to be in a restaurant and they had given me a plastic knife and fork, so I was in an environmentally conscious mood. In the corner of my eye I saw a fridge and it was open, and I just thought that couldn't be very environmentally friendly. I think people are very happy to sacrifice convenience for the environment and that is the same with plastic as well."

The UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy said in a statement: "The Government is taking action to improve product

Image courtesy of <https://freor.com/>



Most shops use open fridges, which use far more energy to stay cool than alternatives with doors. Image courtesy of <https://freor.com/>

energy efficiency. Our minimum performance standards remove inefficient products from the market, and labelling raises awareness of the best ones. Minimum energy performance standards, otherwise known as Ecodesign regulations, are technology neutral so do not prescribe that manufacturers should increase efficiency by putting doors on appliances.

"Rather they set a minimum energy efficiency limit that all manufacturers placing products on the market must meet. The legislation therefore leaves it up to the manufacturer as to how they meet the requirements, which could include but is not restricted to putting doors on fridges," the statement read. **SR**

