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Energy savvy

How energy efficiency & sustainability go hand-in-hand

Delight your Customers
The wonder of pictures & symbols

Retail automation & payment solutions

Improving efficiencies, enhancing customer experience, driving business growth

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FEATURES

Energy savvy

Efficiency, sustainability, profitability – we discuss how energy efficiency & sustainability go hand-in-hand, and why retailers & wholesalers need to embrace both for survival. FMCG retail and wholesale stores use a staggering amount of electricity – which means that energy efficiency is a vital component of any store’s success. Small yet impactful changes combined with big-ticket investments to provide long-term solutions and significant cost savings, as well as efficiency gains.

Retail automation & payment solutions

Improving efficiencies, enhancing customer experience, driving business growth ... Retail automation is a suite of powerful tools designed to streamline operations at the shopfront and back-end, making it easier for supermarkets to focus their efforts on the business of selling. It has many different touchpoints, from

hardware to software, and relies on modern communication links and digital technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) to function optimally.



Image by YaniDwi, www.canva.com



Art Dreamer Studio, www.canva.com

<https://logos-world.net/>

COLUMNS

Delight your customers

Aki Kalliatakis talks about the wonder of pictures and symbols. As we navigate our way through different rules every day, it becomes overwhelming to try and sort through all of the information we have to absorb. Instead of using words, our minds respond better to little pictures that represent something familiar: a telephone, a notebook, a map, a cloud with some sun peeking out.



NEWS

Retail management

Al Raya, a supermarket chain in Saudi Arabia, contracted Arch to implement the suite of Arch solutions in the Group (51 stores, a DC & three bakery production centres).

NIQ-Gfk analysis of SA's liquor sector

The R144-billion local liquor sector experienced a remarkable 19.4% increase in annual sales as it successfully adapted to evolving consumer palates and preferences. There is a significant shift in consumer tastes towards variety and flavour innovation in alcoholic beverages.

NIQ Consumer Outlook 2024

South African consumers feel the big squeeze. 99% have changed their FMCG shopping habits to save money.



Image by DNY59, www.canva.com

Hostex 2024

Hostex has a triumphant return after two years, breaking attendance records and cementing its legacy as Africa’s food, drink & hospitality expo, attracting a record-breaking 6 816 visitors. The vibrant atmosphere, coupled with the quality of innovative exhibits and insightful seminars, showcased the dynamism that defines the hospitality industry.



Serves: 6
Preparation time: 20 minutes
Cooking time: 30 minutes

GOLDI, COUNTY FAIR, FESTIVE or MOUNTAIN VALLEY Braai Pack

INGREDIENTS

Chicken:

1 cup (250ml) beer
1 cup (250ml) tomato sauce
½ cup (125ml) honey
¼ cup (60ml) sriracha/other chilli sauce
1 Tbsp (15ml) smoked paprika
1 ½ Tbsp (20ml) garlic powder
1 x Chicken Braai Pack
1 lime

INGREDIENTS

For the salad:

4 corn cobs
3 pickled/jarred jalapenos + 2 Tbsp liquid
¼ cup (60ml) lime juice
3 Tbsp (45ml) honey
5g coriander, roughly chopped
5g basil, roughly chopped
10g rocket
½ cucumber, diced
¾ cup (180ml) feta cheese



Ideal for a family meal

Tasty & Delicious

SPICY BEER CHICKEN WITH A JALAPENO, CORN & FETA SALAD

Save one beer from the 6-pack for a delicious twist to this roast.

Method:

Prepare the chicken: For the marinade, place the beer, tomato sauce, honey, sriracha, smoked paprika and garlic powder into a pot and bring to a simmer over low heat and allow to reduce until thickened about 20 minutes. Set aside to cool completely.

Once cool, remove ¼ of the marinade and set aside for cooking.

Add the chicken to the remaining beer marinade, and toss to coat well. Allow to marinate for at least 2 hours. Heat the grill to a medium heat. Grill the chicken pieces until slightly charred and cooked through, basting with the remainder of the marinade as you go. While the chicken is cooking, you can also char the four corn cobs for the salad.

Once the chicken is cooked place it onto a dish and squeeze over the juice of a lime.
Prepare the salad: For the dressing, finely chop one of the jalapenos and place in a small bowl with the lime juice, pickled jalapeno liquid and honey. Stir well and set aside. Slice the charred kernels off the corn cobs and add to a large bowl. Thinly slice the remaining jalapenos and add to the corn.

Add the coriander, basil, rocket and cucumber. Tip in the dressing and stir through. Place the salad on a platter and crumble over the feta cheese. Serve the warm chicken with spicy salad on the side.

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Serves: 4
Preparation time: 30 minutes
Cooking time: 75 minutes

GOLDI, COUNTY FAIR, FESTIVE or MOUNTAIN VALLEY Braai Pack

INGREDIENTS

Chicken:

30ml canola oil
1 x Chicken Braai Pack
1 onion, sliced
Salt and pepper
10ml smoked paprika
10ml dried thyme
2 x 400g tins chopped tomatoes
250ml chicken stock
2 x 400g tins brown lentils
10g parsley, chopped

INGREDIENTS

Braai broodjies:

30g butter, softened
8 slices white bread
250g cheddar cheese, grated
1 tomato, thinly sliced
1 onion, thinly sliced
Salt and Pepper

CHICKEN, LENTIL AND TOMATO POT WITH BRAAIBROODJIES

Few things are more South African than potjiekos and braaibroodjies.
This recipe adds a modern twist.

Method:

Chicken

Heat 15ml oil in a braai pot over medium-high heat.
Add the chicken and brown on all sides. Remove from the pan.
Add the remaining 15ml of oil. Add the onion and cook until softened.
Add a pinch of salt, pepper, paprika and dried thyme.
Cook for a further minute, and then add the tomatoes and chicken stock.
Place the chicken pieces back into the pot.
Cook the stew over low heat for about 45 minutes.
Add the drained lentils and cook for a further 15 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
Top with fresh, chopped parsley before serving.

Braai broodjies

Butter both sides of each piece of bread.
Divide the cheddar between four slices, and then top with tomato and onion. Season with salt and pepper and place another piece of plain, buttered bread on top.
Place the sandwiches between a closed grid. Grill over medium heat, taking care not to burn the broodjies. Turn occasionally and braai until golden and crispy.
Serve the braai pot with the cheesy braaibroodjies.



Ideal for a family meal

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Finding success in retail ... Uncovering profit potential



Helen Maister

Retail is undoubtedly a challenging industry, but amidst the trials, there are opportunities for growth. Spar, despite facing some tough predicaments over the past year, has managed to achieve sales gains of 7% in the last 24 weeks. This achievement is particularly noteworthy considering the setbacks

experienced in Poland and the contraction in Switzerland.

The growth experienced by Spar is largely attributed to the performance of Tops and Pharmacy, which have seen sales grow by 12.8% and 17.7%, respectively.

Meanwhile, the Shoprite Group's performance over the six-month period reflects consistent market share gains in our core South African supermarket business. The 14.6% increase in sales from our core business segment translates to an

additional R12.4 billion in customer spending compared to the same period last year. Notably, this growth outpaces the overall market growth in South Africa, as reported by NielsenIQ, which stood at 7.6% for the same period.

Shoprite and Usave have both contributed to this success, with sales increasing by 13.1%. Shoprite, bolstered by the acquisition of 51 stores from Massmart Holdings Ltd, achieved a sales increase of 13.2%, while Usave, our limited assortment discounter, saw sales rise by 12.3%.

Energy Savvy Efficiency, sustainability, profitability

How energy efficiency & sustainability go hand-in-hand, and why retailers & wholesalers need to embrace both for survival

The cost of electricity continues to rise. The production of that electricity and its use has an undeniable impact on the environment. And as we know, FMCG retail and wholesale stores use a staggering amount of electricity – which means that energy efficiency is a vital component of

any store's success. Small yet impactful changes combined with big-ticket investments to provide long-term solutions and significant cost savings, as well as efficiency gains.

Retail automation The future of retail, happening now

Improving efficiencies, enhancing customer experience, driving business growth

The South African supermarket landscape is undergoing a significant transformation. Driven by rising inflation, customer diversification, and ever-changing socio-political realities, increasing efficiency while reducing costs remains a top priority for most retailers, both physical and virtual.

Enter retail automation. More than just a buzzphrase, retail automation is a suite of powerful tools designed to streamline operations at the shopfront and back-end, making it easier for supermarkets to focus their efforts on the business of selling. Retail automation has many different touchpoints, from hardware to software, and relies on modern communication links and digital technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) to function optimally.

Helen Maister

Helen Maister



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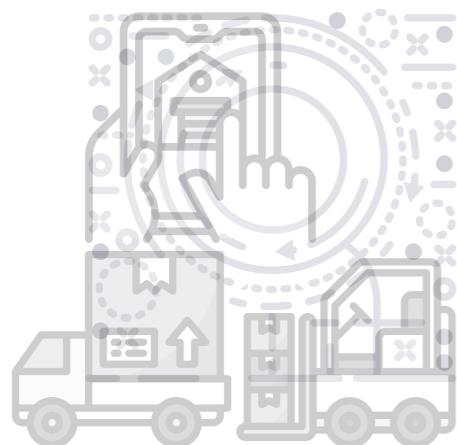
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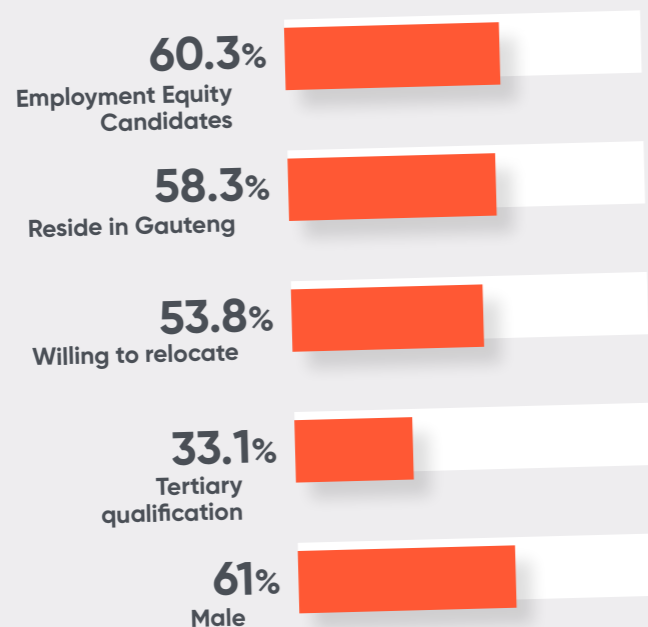
SNAPSHOT OF THE WAREHOUSING & LOGISTICS SECTOR



The role of data in recruitment has emerged as a crucial factor in staying competitive and relevant. By understanding the challenges unique to the Warehousing & Logistics sector, businesses can leverage data-driven recruitment to ensure a steady pipeline of qualified candidates and reinforce their position in a competitive market.

Pnet, South Africa's leading online recruitment platform, provides **data-driven and sector-specific insights into recruitment and employment trends** to give local businesses a comprehensive summary of the trends shaping the local recruitment market.

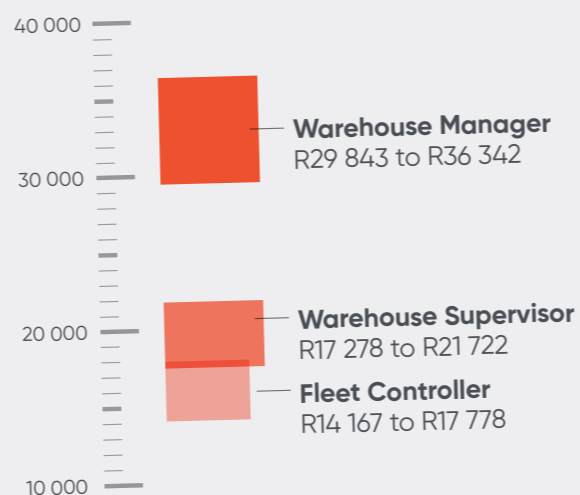
CANDIDATE TRENDS FOR WAREHOUSING & LOGISTICS



AVERAGE STAY BY CANDIDATES IN THEIR JOBS **3** YEARS

WHAT'S BEEN OFFERED?

Market-related monthly salaries (CTC)
for top in-demand skills



At Pnet, our purpose is "The Right Job for Everyone". By partnering with Pnet, businesses can find the right person for the job, at the right time, and at the right cost – enabling them to attract quality talent that drives their business growth and success.

The wonder of pictures and symbols

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

Aki Kalliatakis

aki@leadershiplaunchpad.co.za

You'd be tempted to think that your customers are all pretty stupid, but you'd be dead wrong. Sure, there may be a tiny percentage of consumers who seem clueless, who may not always be nice, or who may even try to manipulate or steal from you.

But around 99% of people aren't like that at all. What they are is overwhelmed and confused by all the demands made on them by different companies and organisations that want things done their way.

This bank wants things done this way, while their competitor wants it done the other way. This takeaway restaurant allows you to make changes to your order with the greatest pleasure, while the other puts up signs in huge letters saying, "No substitutions or changes allowed!"

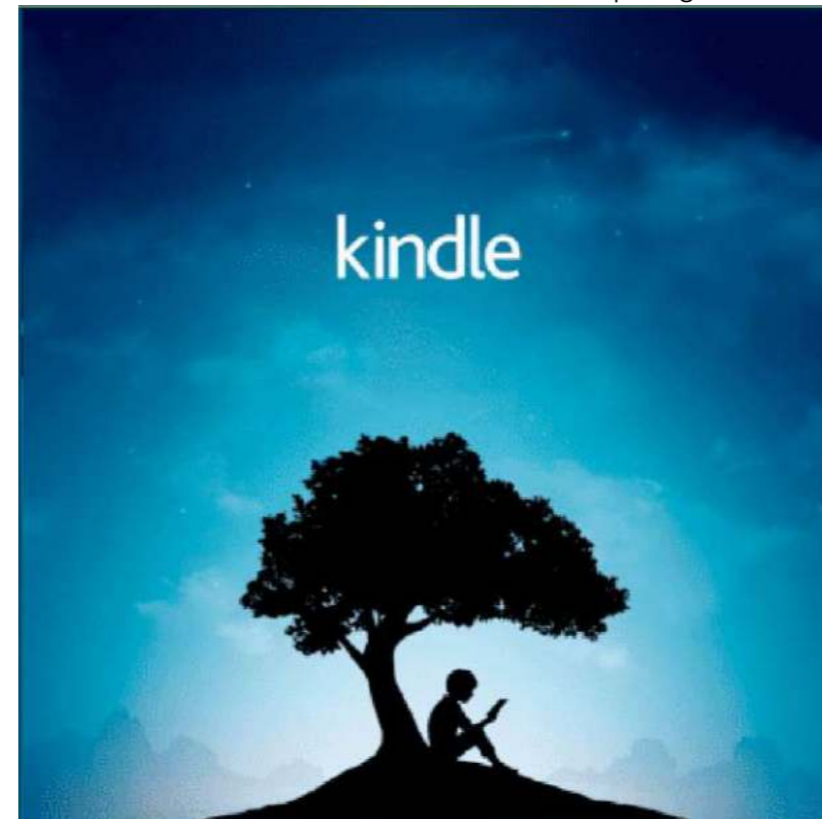
As we navigate or even fight our way through different rules every day, it becomes overwhelming to try and sort through all of the information we have to absorb just to survive.

I've often written that a confused mind takes no action, and a confused customer just won't buy. And that's where this month's column can help.

In particular, there's a simple idea that simplifying things for customers and making it easy for them to make instant and instinctive decisions, can benefit your store enormously. In fact, you may already be doing a little of it.

The idea is called 'skeuomorphism' (pronounced skew-oh-morphism) ... a huge word that, ironically, describes a simple concept.

<https://logos-world.net/>



Skeuomorphism

In its original digital design context, it describes that when a company designs digital interfaces that imitate physical elements, they reduce the learning curve for unfamiliar interactions. The idea is to bring in real-world elements into screens to create a sense of familiarity for customers.



If you look at your screen, you will see little pictures that represent something familiar: a telephone, a notebook, a map, a cloud with some sun peeking out. All of these could use words, but our minds respond better to pictures.



<https://appleinsider.com/>

But skeuomorphism shouldn't be limited to the design of websites, cell phone screens, and the way in which we interact with technology. It should also be applied to the real physical world. You already see it with some signs in your business. Perhaps you have a picture of a man running with an arrow pointing to an emergency exit. Or a picture of a man and a woman representing where the toilets are. Or even a picture of a bag or a bucket of ice to show where the cold things are. These mimic their physical counterparts.

Why don't we use them much more than we should? Because when you work with something all day, it becomes familiar to you and you don't think you need to explain it to others. After all, it should be obvious, shouldn't it?

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Apple also used a picture of a physical notebook, complete with a tear at the top, to identify its 'Notes' app.

So where do you start to simplify things for your customers using these ideas? A good place may be to look at lessons from the companies that supply your products, particularly with instructions on how to use the products. They may show a small cup and a big bucket of water with the numbers '10:1' to show that their product must be diluted. Some medicines have the day of the week printed on the pack, so you know whether you took the pill or not this morning.

Food companies that require a little bit of work at home, such as how to mix a bowl of noodles for best results, usually take a lot of trouble to design their packets so that it's foolproof.

But the best thing you can do is to go out into your store, putting yourself in the shoes of your customers and look at all the written signs that are too hard for your customers to understand (or the audio announcements that inform) and identify where they may be confusing, or what you can do to make them more simple.

Even more importantly, look at potential places where in their confusion they may avoid buying, or places where there could be frustration.

One example could be where customers are faced with too many choices: "Toppings available for this pizza," but all with different prices. Or, maybe there is a process that they need to follow, but aren't quite sure how to proceed. For example, how easy is it for them to redeem their rewards?

If your business has a shopping app, how easy and effortless is it to use that app, and especially for them to check out at the end?



We know that in today's world customers may find it hard to just do the simplest things, so the more effortless you can make it, the more likely it is that they will support your business. It's not a hard thing to understand. **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

A solutions-driven legacy

Leaders in retail and commercial refrigeration solutions, FRICON has certainly made their mark in Africa. The Portugal-based refrigeration giant has been steadily gaining ground in the African market, thanks to decades of experience, innovative curated solutions, and those steadfast values that set a family-run business apart.

The cold legacy that has driven business for half a century



Artur Martins de Azevedo, visionary and founder of FRICON, began his career in Zimbabwe. It was there that he began accumulating his wealth of refrigeration knowledge and expertise.

He excelled in his chosen field and eventually relocated to Portugal, where he settled and set down the roots that would see FRICON become a European powerhouse.

Established in 1976 and guided by the maxim that “Growth is the product of the future that we are able to predict,” FRICON has achieved global recognition in 120 markets over the past 47 years by offering innovative and value-added solutions to our business partners.

In the early days, facing challenges with the resilience and expanding skills of a vibrant new company, we directed efforts towards producing tailored domestic refrigeration solutions aimed specifically at the Portuguese market. Thanks to some astute market vision and the ability

to anticipate our customers’ needs, pioneering production and operational adjustments were made, which resulted in a diversified portfolio. These changes introduced plug-in solutions for food retail, refrigeration equipment for beverages, ice cream solutions, and eutectic* innovations.

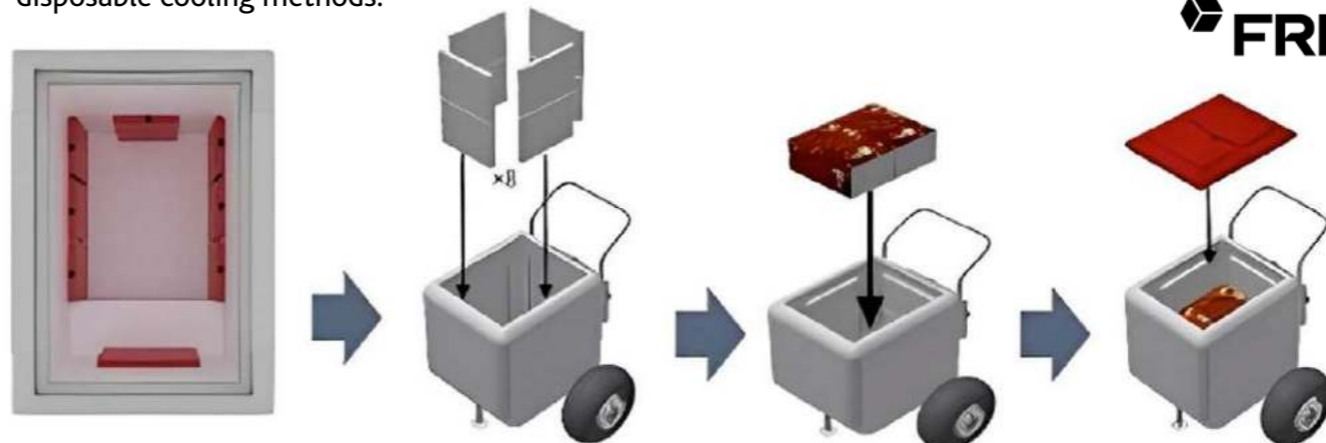
In 2023, with a team of more than 1 000 employees spread across production units in Portugal and Brazil, as well as a branch in Spain, the FRICON brand achieved a historic turnover of over €100 million (over R2 billion) and demonstrated a strong presence in international markets.



Eutectic packs for cost effective and sustainable cooling

*An eutectic pack, also known as a gel pack or cold pack, consists of water and a substance such as salt, and is used to maintain low temperatures for several hours in various applications, such as food storage and transport.

The eutectic packs used in some of FRICON’s solutions are reusable, as they can be refrozen several times without significant loss of performance, making them cost-effective and environmentally friendly compared to disposable cooling methods.



Growing presence in Africa

Already present in the majority of African markets, FRICON recorded a 14% growth in the area in 2023, compared with the same period in 2022. South Africa stands out as the main driver of this growth, accounting for more than two-thirds of total turnover on the African continent.

We believe this growth is the result of the careful selection of local partners with comprehensive insights into the refrigeration and retail sectors in their specific markets. It's a level of understanding that ensures a high-quality, attractive and innovative product, complemented by a specialised service tailored to the retailer or wholesaler.

Other growth drivers include the local market's adaptation to plug-in refrigeration systems, as well as solutions that stand out for their versatility, high energy efficiency and durability – and provide an essential competitive edge.

FRICON's innovative solutions, geared towards the end consumer, also provide an engaging shopping experience, boosting sales through a large total display area (TDA) and minimalist, contemporary design. We produce horizontal, inclined, vertical, and display equipment for a wide and versatile range of retail refrigeration needs.

Customised solutions ... Loadshedding, Sustainability, Performance

FRICON's growth reflects both our potential within the African market and the company's awareness of and adaptation to the specific challenges of the South African landscape. In order to meet the challenges of loadshedding, FRICON invests in the technical and structural adaptation of its cold solutions, ensuring that customers receive reliability and durability – characteristics that are intrinsic to the entire FRICON range. This agility is accompanied by the surety that all products are certified according to international standards and the respective South African national variations.

Performance is aligned with sustainability and forms an essential pillar of the business, from the selection of raw materials through to the design of the final product.

This approach is backed by the distinction of having 12 models that meet sustainability criteria in terms of high energy efficiency, the exclusive use of natural gases (R290 and R600), the recycling of 99% of production waste, and the use of more than 500 photovoltaic panels to reduce environmental impact. It's this type of forward-thinking that gives retailers and wholesalers a workable, scalable solution that meets not only their own energy needs, but also those legislative measures and social responsibility benchmarks that are essential for continued success, both locally and at a global level.

Additionally, FRICON has expanded its range of sustainable and efficient solutions with the Waterloop system, which is aimed at optimising energy consumption. Our goal is to make sure the energy efficiency of our solutions enables retailers to keep their operational costs low while also minimising the environmental impact.

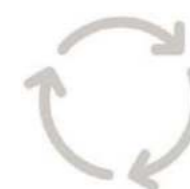
The Waterloop System



What are the main advantages of the Waterloop System?



Lower heat emissions for the store



Reusing heat to warm up sanitation waters



Reduced energy consumption



Ready for the future

Fully aware of current challenges and looking to the future, we at FRICON persist in our quest for excellence, continually adapting to market needs and presenting resourceful and state-of-the-art cooling solutions.

A notable example is the launch of the UPD FV Vertical Display Cabinet at the largest international retail trade fair, EuroShop, in Germany in 2023. This new model, already available in three versions (140, 210 and 250), demonstrates FRICON's commitment to technological progress and customer satisfaction.

Global expertise ... Local insights

Equipped with optimised production capacity and processes, we are confident in our commitment to offer high quality services to our customers all over the world, with special emphasis on the South African market. Driven by the motto "The purity of being sustainable," FRICON remains a preeminent force on the global refrigeration scene, providing an unrivalled experience in line with the principles of sustainability, efficiency, and effectiveness.

A respected and trusted brand

FRICON's commitment to dedicated leadership and continuous innovation solidifies our position as a respected and trusted brand, and a leader at the forefront of global refrigeration industry.



Biography: Isabel Coutinho de Azevedo

Isabel Coutinho de Azevedo, daughter of founder Artur Martins de Azevedo and President of the Board, has led the company for over a decade. She has over 40 years of experience in the refrigeration sector accumulating both knowledge and an in-depth understanding of refrigeration. Her success and determination were recognised internationally when she was presented with the BPI International Women Entrepreneur Award in 2022. This event was organised by the IWEF (International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge) Foundation in collaboration with BPI and CaixaBank. She continues to promote a culture of fairness and proximity, essential values that are shared by the entire FRICON team and are reflected in their relationships with clients.





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The FRICON journey

FRICON head office is situated on the Ave River estuary in Vila do Conde, one of the oldest settlements in northern Portugal. FRICON was conceived over almost half a century ago. These walls are full of memories of the past.



A carrack in the harbour of Vila do Conde. Many mariners from the village were involved in the epic voyages during the Age of Discovery. <https://en.wikipedia.org/>



The Forte de São João guards the Ave river estuary. <https://porto-north-portugal.com/>

FRICON's style is simple and minimalist. Its high energy efficiency range achieves excellent results and it is the only manufacturer with Inverter Bivolt commercial refrigeration equipment! The R-290 gas used is non-toxic and also does not harm nature, since it does not contain chlorine. It, therefore, does not affect the ozone layer.



FRICON welcomed students from the Cold and Air Conditioning and Electronics and Automation courses to their facilities. on World Refrigeration Day. Their experts had the pleasure of sharing their experiences and expertise with the youngsters.



FRICON ... from Portugal to 120 countries and 5 continents



Family Day saw FRICON employees in a good mood and provided lots of coolness!



FRICON cooled the champions to victory, at the Canoeing World Championships.



FRICON keeping ice cream cold under the heat of an Italian summer.



Our solidarity walk, in partnership with @colegiodoforte, was an opportunity to exercise the body, promote health and, at the same time, make a difference in the lives of many people through social institutions in the Municipality of Vila do Conde.



Every member of the family deserves to cool off and enjoy the delights of summer!



At Euroshop'23, the world's no.1 retail trade fair, with the launch of FRICON's new UPD FV, vertical display cabinet.



Children line up to keep cool at their sports day in Egypt.



Elevate your commercial space.

FRICON mobile solutions are the ideal vehicle for promoting your brand, providing a unique and differentiating consumer experience.



France ... Personalisation done right adds value!

SR



Efficiency, sustainability, profitability

How energy efficiency & sustainability go hand-in-hand, and why retailers & wholesalers need to embrace both for survival

The cost of electricity continues to rise. The production of that electricity and its use has an undeniable impact on the environment. And as we know, FMCG retail and wholesale stores use a staggering amount of electricity – which means that energy efficiency is a vital component of any store's success.

Small yet impactful changes combined with big-ticket investments to provide long-term solutions and significant cost savings, as well as efficiency gains.

Lighting, heating, cooling, and ventilation.

Simple changes include switching to LED lighting, labelling light switches, making use of natural light and ventilation sources, and ensuring competing systems such as heating and cooling are not running simultaneously.

Preventative and predictive maintenance.

More time-intensive interventions include preventative and predictive maintenance, replacing all outdated fittings, and creating temperature zones in-store to make the most of operating hours versus shutdown times.

Image courtesy of Deiso.co.jp. www.canva.com



High-tech and smart or automated solutions

are some of the best ways to manage efficiency. Look at installing light timers and light sensors, as well as smart heating controls and heating timers.

Data collection and data analysis are essential weapons in your efficiency arsenal. You can't know where to save energy if you don't know where it's going and what's using it. Understanding when and where you need the most HVAC input is important for optimum management of this system.

Equipment monitoring and real-time electricity usage monitoring, data capture and analysis, and a clear understanding of the energy requirements and operational outputs of your store are necessary for developing a sustainable and energy efficient programme.

Alternative energy sources. Solar is a viable option in sunny South Africa, and the increase in demand globally has had a positive effect on both supply and cost. Retrofitting existing systems to tie in with a new

solar solution requires a good understanding of both installations, what is and required in terms of equipment and power demand. It isn't the return on investment makes this a worthwhile and logical step.

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South African retailers are futureproofing their business

Some of South Africa's biggest retailers have committed serious investment to renewable energy and energy efficient solutions and practices, according to an article by Mark Freeman in Bizcommunity.

Freeman says, "Massmart is one such group, installing Schneider Electric's EcoStruxure Building Operation (EBO) Building Management System (BMS) at retail chains Makro, Game, Builders Warehouse, as well as Massmart Distribution Centres situated throughout the country."

He adds, "In 2022 alone, Massmart achieved annualised energy savings of at least R15 million, recouping its entire investment within 12 months."

BusinessTech reports that, "The Shoprite Group has almost doubled the amount of renewable energy used in its operations to 103,234MWh (FY 2022: 54,138 MWh) over the past year."

This feat was achieved by increasing the amount of renewable energy bought from landlords and other suppliers by 91%.

"We have also reduced electricity consumption by 161 million kWh through our LED lamp replacement project, and our network of solar-panel installations now covers the equivalent of more than 26 soccer fields," notes the Shoprite Group's CSI & Sustainability Manager, Sanjeev Raghubir. The group also acknowledged the importance of increased efficiency, and with this in mind, embarked on a refrigeration project at the end of 2023.



Retail giant SPAR was investing in sustainability in 2022. The group announced they would be moving their KZN Distribution Centre (DC) away from sole reliance on Eskom and shifted to a combination of energy-saving initiatives and solar to "lighten the load."

SPAR reports that the installation of solar panels at both their Perishables and Dry Goods Warehouses resulted in an 80% reduction in energy usage from Eskom.

In addition, they invested in LED lights throughout both DCs for further energy consumption reduction, while in the Perishables DC, the LEDs were linked to an intelligent lighting system. The resulting oscillation resulted in a 60% energy reduction. An article on South African Business shares



Solly Engelbrecht

meaningful insights from Solly Engelbrecht, National Logistics Executive at The SPAR Group, about "the future of distribution in the retail sector."

In the article, Engelbrecht says, "Considering we service SPAR stores nationwide and across borders, our goal of transitioning all six [SPAR] DCs to operate entirely off the grid will require continuous innovation to find ways to supplement our current solar rollout."

Engelbrecht says solar energy alone cannot sufficiently sustain the uninterrupted, 24-hour operation that is essential for [SPARs] refrigeration units, storage centres and other critical equipment.



Glacier

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Since 1994, Glacier has been the cornerstone of innovation in the South African refrigeration market, setting the bar high with its premium offerings designed to elevate your business. Our industry leading energy efficient products include top-tier refrigeration

***Glass Doors,
Polyurethane (injected) modular
panel solutions,
display and back-up shelving,
bespoke glass products.***



Our Products

Step into the world of innovation with Glacier, where we unveil a product range that not only elevates your business but also redefines refrigeration excellence

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- ✓ Backup and display shelving systems
- ✓ Injected modular Polyurethane Panels
- ✓ Bespoke Glass products

key benefits

Retailers thrive with Glacier's energy saving solutions, enjoying amplified product visibility whilst enhancing the shopping experience and preserving product quality

Energy Efficiency | Condensation Control | Aesthetic Appeal

Temperature Control | Visibility | Customization | Durability

Ease of Installation | Product Preservation | Lighting Efficiency



011 613 8120 sales@glacierdoors.co.za

Glacierdoors.co.za





Images, above & left: www.bcg.com/

The environmental cost of retail

Retailers and wholesalers need to be concerned about energy consumption. Research shared in a report by Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and the World Retail Congress (WRC) suggests that retailers are responsible for more than 25% of global emissions.

That's a vast amount, and despite international pledges to reach net zero, government incentives, and new legislation, many retail groups admit that they are falling far short of their objectives and, concerningly, are unsure how to get back on track.

Sustainability and energy efficiency are strongly associated, as one invariably impacts the other. A more sustainable approach is less energy-intensive. Less energy consumption equals less waste and fewer emissions, and a good sustainability programme will include measures to reduce energy consumption, boost efficiency, and implement energy saving measures in all aspects of the store, from refrigeration and lighting to HVAC and transport.

How retailers can achieve a comprehensive sustainability programme



Image: www.hussmann.com/en



Taylor Thompson

Emissions reduction. In an article called How retailers can reduce carbon emissions, Normative (<https://normative.io/>) says, "After calculating their full carbon footprints – including their value chain emissions – retailers can drive impactful decarbonisation by swapping high-emission products with more sustainable alternatives, by engaging suppliers in emissions reduction initiatives, and influencing their customers to make more environmentally conscious choices."

Energy management. Taylor Thompson, a Digital PR Specialist representing MicroTouch, wrote a blog titled 3 Ways to Be More Energy Efficient with Retail Equipment. In it, she states that "Energy management has become an essential part of operating a successful retail business. Retailers are increasingly looking for ways to reduce their energy costs and improve their sustainability efforts, and energy management is a critical tool in achieving these goals. Effective energy management can help retailers identify areas of energy waste and inefficiency and implement solutions to reduce energy consumption and costs. In addition to cost savings, energy management can also improve a retailer's brand image by demonstrating a commitment to sustainability and reducing the environmental impact of their operations."

Creating a successful sustainability programme is central to this. In addition to senior management buy-in and clear objectives, retailers and wholesalers need to ensure that the values and tenets of sustainability and sustainable operations are embedded in day-to-day processes throughout the organisation.



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- Reduced refrigeration capital cost
- Improves product quality

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For those retailers still struggling to put these processes in place, consider the advantages of artificial intelligence, and engage the services of experts in energy monitoring, energy audits, and efficient solutions. The Artificial Intelligence of Things (aiot) can be used to improve efficiency, reduce waste, and provide innovative solutions. AI can also be used to build a clean energy infrastructure.

Leading the way with innovation and determination

Meeting sustainability goals and maximising energy efficiency in the retail and wholesale space will require innovative solutions across the board, upstream and down. Plan A is an international leader in sustainability solutions, as well as corporate carbon accounting, decarbonisation, and ESG (environmental, social and governance) reporting. Plan A content writer Tara Bernoville says ...



Tara Bernoville

“ Global initiatives such as IKEA’s ambition for zero-carbon container shipping by 2040 exemplify the sector’s commitment to decarbonisation, emphasising the potential for significant industry-wide impacts through innovative solutions like ‘power-to-x’ for green liquid fuel production. ”



Whether your incoming order rate is putting a strain on your in-store picking model or you want the most optimised picking process to grow your online business, consider moving to an automated solution. www.husmann.com/en.

Pioneering carbon accounting software is just one of the ways in which retailers can begin to understand and reduce their environmental impact.

An international leader in display merchandisers, refrigeration systems, installation and services to food retailers, Hussmann has long been a champion of sustainability and energy efficiency. The company has spent considerable time and talent in developing energy efficient solutions and investing in innovations that safeguard the planet as well as business. Hussmann’s new microDS refrigeration system is charged with propane R290, a natural, non-toxic fuel, and uses 90-95% less refrigerant than other refrigeration systems that are charged by hydrofluorocarbons.

Positioned as a “major scientific and technological achievement,” Hussmann says microDS is capable of providing excellent refrigeration in full-sized grocery merchandisers, even open multi-deck, with

a small propane charge. It can be used to sustainably refrigerate perishable foods, such as meat, produce and dairy products, and because it has an ozone depletion potential of zero, it has the potential for long-term sustainability, despite changing regulations and legislation.

www.sollatek.com/



Sustainability as an advantage

Setting goals that are compliant with legislation or that just meet the expectations of shareholders and customers is a good place to start. Goals and objectives are necessary when it comes to putting new processes in place. However, Boston Consulting Group suggests that the ultimate goal should be understanding how sustainability can be more than a business basic or even an integral part of your company culture – it can create tangible and lasting value.

The BCG report states, “The respondents are nearly unanimous in the belief that sustainability initiatives will drive value in the next five to 10 years (and about half believe their companies will invest ‘whatever it takes’ to reach their stated goals).



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The retailers that align with that belief know that harnessing sustainability as a competitive advantage can unlock sources of value, reduce costs, grant access to new revenue pools, and reduce the cost of capital.”

Protecting your assets: The reality of an unstable power supply

Energy efficiency and sustainability are necessary objectives given South Africa’s ongoing energy crisis. But in addition, local retailers and wholesalers also need to invest in solutions that protect their assets from the potential dangers of an unreliable and unstable national power grid.

Nick Allen, General Manager at Sollatek South Africa, explains why we need to look at the immediate effects of loadshedding and the state of the local power supply in order to avoid the potentially catastrophic pitfalls that go hand-in-hand with the current landscape. Sollatek is an international leader in voltage protection, power control and energy saving, focusing primarily on protecting electrical and electronic equipment against unstable and unreliable voltages.

Allen says, “As necessary as loadshedding is, given the discrepancy between energy supply and demand, it has not solved our problems. Instead, it has presented us with a new set of challenges – those associated with an unreliable power supply.”

Certain power events can cause equipment powered by an electrical source, such as a store’s refrigeration system and HVAC, to have a shortened operational life, suffer serious damage, or even

be destroyed beyond repair. This can happen gradually over time, or in one catastrophic event. The power events include spikes and surges, over or high voltage, low voltage (under voltage or ‘brownouts’), and loss of neutral (LoN).

Allen explains ...

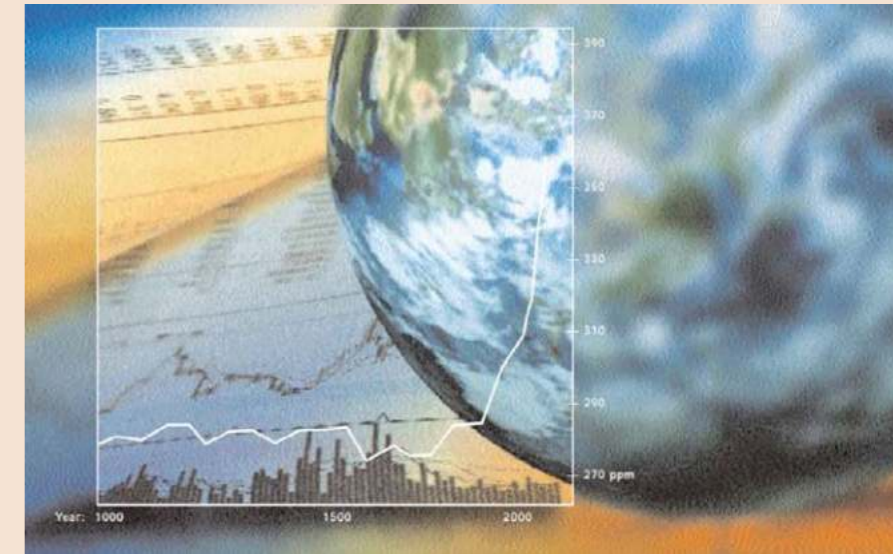
<https://blog.constellation.com/>



Nick Allen

“Spikes and surges are abnormally high waves of voltage lasting for a short duration of up to one cycle. Due to the potentially devastating impact surges can have, protecting systems from voltage surges should be considered extremely important.”

Surge protector devices work by monitoring the electrical charge entering the system. In cases where surges or spikes are experienced, the excess voltage is removed by being earthed, for example, preventing it from reaching the equipment. Allen advises that when choosing a surge suppressor, several points need to be taken into consideration. Look for an option that offers protection against



<https://ghgprotocol.org/>

Understanding emission scopes

The Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Standard classifies a company’s GHG emissions into three scopes:

- **Scope 1 emissions:** direct emissions from owned or controlled sources.
- **Scope 2 emissions:** indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy.
- **Scope 3 emissions:** all indirect emissions (not included in Scope 2) that occur in the value chain of the reporting company, including both upstream and downstream emissions.

Scope 3 emissions usually account for between 70% and 90% of a retailer’s total environmental impact. This includes emissions generated from the purchase of electricity, as well as upstream and downstream business activities such as procurement, transportation and distribution, and end-of-life processing.

a broad range of voltages around the anticipated mean. Find out how quickly the surge protector can eliminate unwanted excess current, and as a result, how long the system will experience a sub-optimal load. The quicker the elimination, the lower the risk of burnout.

Over or high voltage conditions are typically caused by higher-than-normal voltage but lower than a surge or spike, and for a longer duration. Allen explains, "These conditions can last for seconds or hours, and if voltages are high enough or of long duration, damage can result immediately or over time. Anything exceeding 230V can have a long-term effect on the ongoing maintenance of that equipment. Sensitive electronic components such as transistors, capacitors, and integrated circuits are mostly affected, and over time, this degrades the components, leading to premature failure of the device."

Loss of neutral occurs when the neutral connection in the circuit becomes disconnected or broken, resulting in an unbalanced voltage and current distribution in the system. This often leads to voltage fluctuations and extremely high voltage, which can result in damage to electrical equipment and electrical fires. Typically, loss of neutral is caused by bad weather, accidents such as a tree falling onto power lines, and theft of copper wires.

Low voltage or brownouts happen when the average voltage of a power system drops below the nominal voltage of 230V. These are caused by an increased demand on the system, often during peak consumption times, and usually because of a lack of grid power causes a shortage in network capacity.

"When equipment is forced to operate on reduced power levels, it draws higher currents," explains Allen. "This means the components inside the appliance will be forced to work harder



The Shoprite Group addresses climate change through various avenues, notably by employing renewable energy through the use of solar power. The Group is South Africa's top-rated retailer for corporate disclosure, transparency and performance on climate change and water security. Africa's largest retailer achieved 'A-' Leadership Level Ratings by the global environmental non-profit, CDP (formerly Carbon Disclosure Project), for its environmental leadership and best practice in strategy and action. This double A-score marks the Group's second inclusion on the climate change A-list and fourth consecutive year on the water security A-list since 2020.

and this, over time, damages the equipment. For example, the wiring inside equipment that has motors, such as fridges, suffer substantial wear and tear. Forcing equipment to work in these conditions for a prolonged period reduces their lifespan drastically and can lead to permanent failure."

Protection from these power events plays a pivotal role in safeguarding electrical components and equipment. Voltage switches are designed to disconnect loads when voltages drop below a safe operating level, actively monitor the voltage, and automatically reconnect the loads when the voltage returns to a safe operating level. If adverse conditions last for extended periods, the situation may call for more substantial solutions, including voltage stabilisers or regulators, and potentially backup power solutions.

The goal?

Reduce your energy consumption

Wholesalers, hypers and super-market-format stores operate in an energy-intensive environment due to the need for large storage spaces, refrigeration, lighting, and other operational requirements. Making your electricity consumption more sustainable not only contributes positively to the environment but can also lead to significant cost savings.

Energy efficiency, smart energy management, renewable energy sources, demand response programmes, employee training, regular maintenance and audits, sustainable building design, and supply chain collaboration with like-minded suppliers and partners will reduce your energy consumption, lower your operational costs and contribute to a more sustainable future. **SR**

Sources:

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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 | www.wilkinsrossglobal.com





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.
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- Optional skin finish in Stainless Steel – Grades AISI 304 AIS 403.

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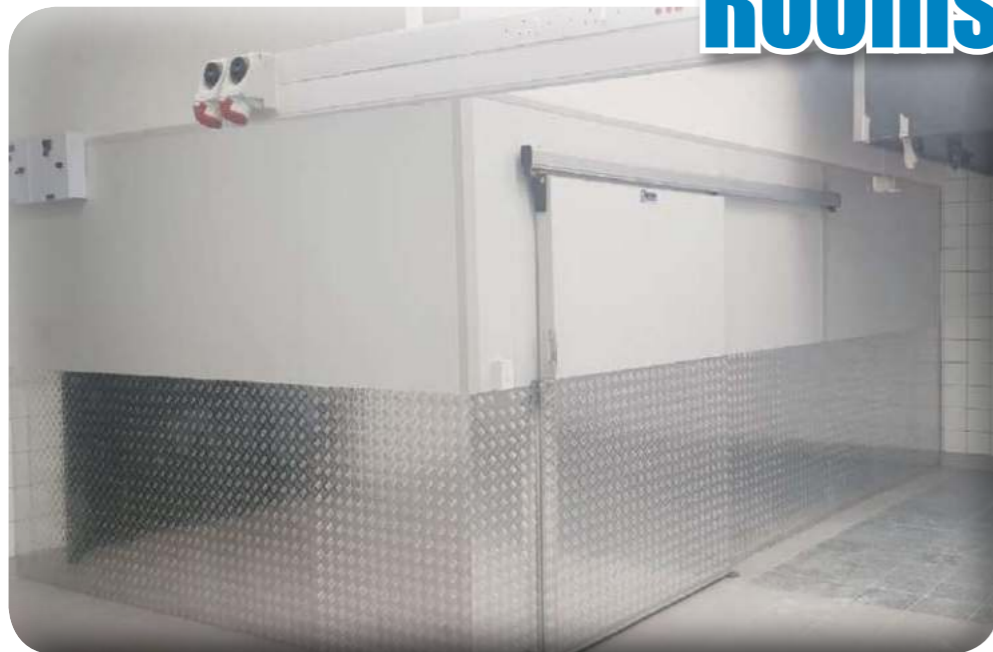
Floors – Fabricated and Concrete

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.



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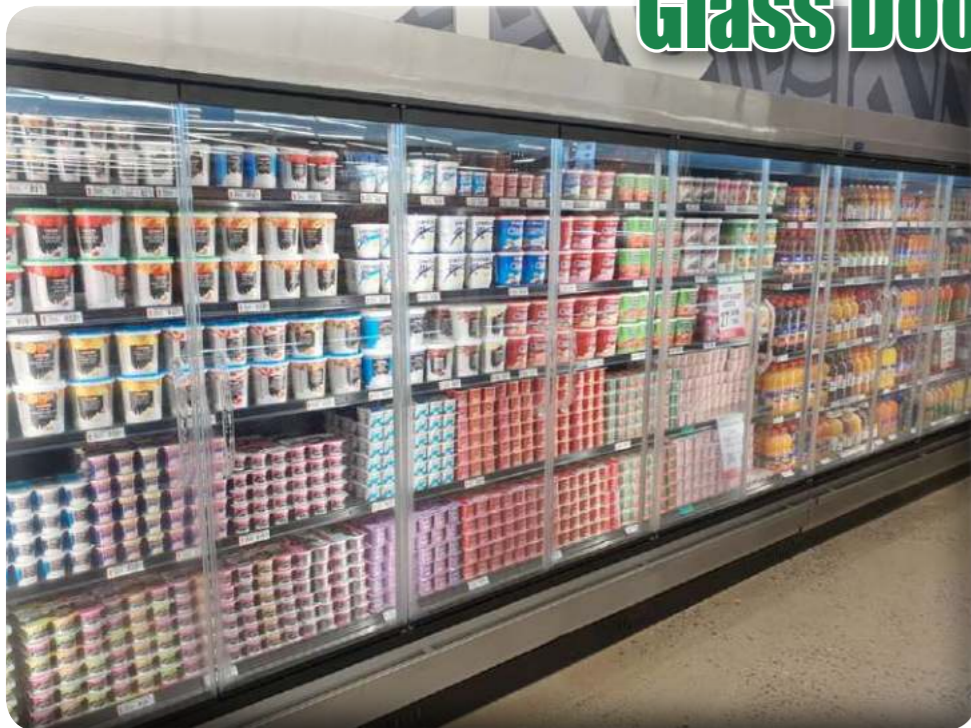


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Benefits of Airshield Glass Doors

- 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.
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Retail automation

The future of retail, happening now

Improving efficiencies, enhancing customer experience, driving business growth

Visual by SimonKadula, www.canva.com

The South African supermarket landscape is undergoing a significant transformation. Driven by rising inflation, customer diversification, and ever-changing socio-political realities, increasing efficiency while reducing costs remains a top priority for most retailers, both physical and virtual.

Enter retail automation. More than just a buzzphrase, retail automation is actually a suite of powerful tools designed to streamline operations at the shopfront and back-end, making it easier for supermarkets to focus their efforts on the business of selling.

Retail automation has many different touchpoints, from hardware to software, and relies on modern communication links and digital technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) to function optimally. Some of its core components include ...

- **Point-of-Sale (POS) systems:** Modern POS systems are the workhorses of retail automation. They manage not just transactions, but offer features like barcode scanning, inventory management, and integrated payment processing, minimising errors and streamlining checkout processes.



- **Inventory management software:** Keeping track of stock levels has never been easier. Inventory management software predicts demand, automatically generates purchase orders, and optimises stock allocation across stores. This reduces out-of-stocks, minimises waste, and ensures shelves are always stocked with the right products.

- **RFID technology:** Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) tags embedded in products allow for real-time tracking and data collection. This simplifies stocktaking, prevents shrinkage, and enables targeted promotions based on product location and customer behaviour.

Retail automation is a suite of powerful tools designed to streamline operations at the shopfront and back-end, making it easier for supermarkets to focus their efforts on the business of selling.

Is Load Shedding impacting your bottom line?

Have you considered satellite broadband to keep you trading during power outages?

Retailers and Restaurant Chains have opted to install **Twoobii's Smart Satellite Services**.

This **easy-to-install, low-cost, and highly reliable** satellite internet service ensures **continuous connectivity** and **uninterrupted transactions**.

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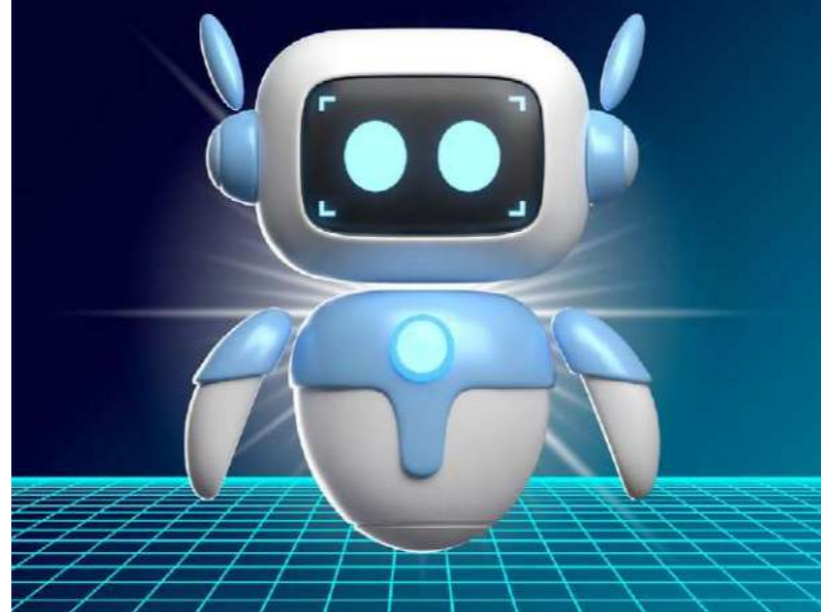


- **Automated replenishment systems:** Gone are the days of manual stock checks. Automated replenishment systems analyse sales data and automatically trigger orders to replenish stock, ensuring a seamless flow of products and preventing disruptions.
- **Robotic Process Automation (RPA):** Repetitive tasks like invoice processing, data entry, and customer support can be automated with RPA. This frees up valuable human resources for more complex tasks, improving overall productivity.

- **Data-driven personalisation:** Customer data analysis allows retailers to understand preferences and shopping habits. This enables personalised product recommendations, targeted promotions, and customised marketing campaigns, fostering customer loyalty and boosting sales.

Illustration by Vir Leguizamón, www.canva.com

- **AI-powered chatbots:** Chatbots are virtual assistants that can handle routine customer inquiries, offer product information, and even provide basic troubleshooting assistance. This frees up staff for more complex customer interactions while offering 24/7 support.



- **Frictionless payment options:** Contactless and cashless payments are rapidly gaining traction. Tap-to-pay solutions like Snapscan, wearable payments and mobile wallets like Apple Pay and Google Pay are becoming the norm, offering a faster and more convenient checkout experience.

Albert Fayard, regional sales manager for sub-Saharan Africa for POS manufacturer Posiflex, says that AI and ML are going to be the main drivers in personalising the customer experience through retail automation in the coming year.

“Hardware [in the context of a computer’s delivery system] manufacturers are gearing up to provide AI and ML-powered solutions for the POS environment in the form of self-checkout and personalised self-service functions,” says Fayard.

“Software developers are also using AI to automate enhancements in customer experience, with functionality like identifying customers and automatically recognising their buying preferences, thus enabling retailers to merchandise more effectively.”

Fayard adds. “AI and ML are also integral for interrogating Big Data for improved stock control procurement and management.”

We are already seeing these and other technologies creating exciting and innovative retail concepts like Checkers Rush, a concept store that automates the entire shopping-to-checkout journey for consumers with little to no interaction with retail staff. It’s all part of the Shoprite group’s Shopritex division, which has already launched the successful Sixty60 and Xtra Savings concepts for consumers nationwide.

ShopriteX is the Shoprite Group’s tech and innovation hub “aimed at reimagining grocery retail for a customer-inspired future. Marrying the best of data science and technology in the



Illustration by elenakalinicheva, www.canva.com

Beyond efficiency: Personalising the customer experience

Retail automation isn’t just about streamlining processes – it’s about enhancing the customer experience. Getting there, however, takes many different forms. This includes ...

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Pieter Engelbrecht

Shoprite Group ecosystem, ShopriteX aims to save customers time and money through innovation and creating more personalised shopping experiences.” Pieter Engelbrecht, CEO of the Shoprite Group, was recently quoted as saying that Shopritex “represents [the group’s] investment in fit-for-the-future precision retail, which is increasingly digital and data-led,” and that the next era of growth for the Shoprite Group is about ‘precision retailing’.

Retail automation: Challenges and opportunities

While South African customers revel in the birth and expansion of new ‘seamless’ services like Woolworths Dash and Checkers Sixty60, retailers are scrambling behind the scenes to make sure all the different gears and levers required to make these systems work are actually functioning.

When it comes to retail automation, those gears and levers typically involve some sort of advanced technology – or more likely a combination of different technologies interfaced into each other. It’s all part of the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), an amalgamation of different convergent technologies currently underway across numerous industries, each with their own challenges and opportunities.

In South Africa, one of the main challenges in the way of seamless retail automation is, at a macro

level, the slowness of pace in embracing 4IR across the retail supply chain. According to a recent study by the Wholesale and Retail Seta, almost half of retailers in South Africa are yet to seriously invest in 4IR technologies and embark on meaningful digital transformation journeys. *Source:wrseta.org.za*

There are several factors we can use to explain the slower uptake.

- **Load shedding:** South Africa’s ongoing struggle with load shedding disrupts power supply and can cripple automation systems reliant on constant electricity. Retailers are investing in backup power solutions like generators and solar panels to ensure uninterrupted operation during blackouts.
- **Limited internet connectivity:** Related to load shedding but also a serious challenge in its own right, areas with unreliable internet connectivity can hinder the smooth operation of cloud-based

automation solutions. Exploring alternative technologies like satellite communications or prioritising local servers may be necessary in some regions.

- **High upfront costs:** Implementing automation solutions can be expensive, and smaller retailers may struggle with the initial financial investment. Exploring leasing options or phased implementation plans can help mitigate this challenge.
- **Skills shortages:** Upskilling the workforce is crucial for successful automation adoption. Training programmes need to equip staff with the skills to operate, troubleshoot, and maintain automation systems. Since automating of certain tasks can lead to job losses in the sector, retailers also need to develop clear communication strategies and explore reskilling opportunities for impacted employees.

Training programmes need to equip staff with the skills to operate, troubleshoot, and maintain automation systems.



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FR1000 UHF RFID Fixed Reader



- Powered by Octa-core 1.6 GHz high-performance CPU.
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FR2000 Desktop RFID Reader



Support short RFID read range within 50cm. Widely applied in retail store checkout, digital plate checkout, books management, pharmaceutical management, jewellery management, and more.

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- Supports USB power supply, with optional PoE supply.
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DT50D Portable UHF RFID Reader



- 50 RFID tags are captured per second in batch mode, & long reading distance of up to 1.5 meters.
- Built-in high-performance Octa-core CPU & Android 11.0 operating system.
- 4GB RAM+64GB ROM/Extended memory of 256GB.
- Support DSDS & full network in 4G/3G/2G.
- Built-in professional scan engine (1D/2D/distorted/defaced/screen codes).
- 5.7" UHD color screen.

DT50P UHF RFID Handheld Terminal



- Powered by Impinj E710 for 10% faster and smoother tag reading.
- 5dBi high-sensitivity RFID antenna.
- Read tags 20m away, & the maximum speed can reach 1000 tags/sec.
- Equipped with Self-jammer Cancellation
- Embedded with a 9,000 mAh high-capacity battery.

RFDT50 UHF Gun Grip

Professional removable UHF gun grip, pairing with UROVO DT50S. Flexible and portable RFID solution.

- RFID tag capture, 1000+ tags/sec at fastest read rate, up to 8 meters read range under the open sky.
- Built-in 3000mAh battery, cooperating with the 5000mAh battery of DT50, delivers long-lasting battery life.



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- **Integration complexities:** Integrating various automation technologies with existing systems can be complex and require specialised expertise. Partnering with experienced technology providers is crucial for smooth integration and system compatibility.

Illustration by Kavitaaws, www.canva.com

- **Compliance with POPIA:**

Retailers need to ensure their data collection practices for automation purposes comply with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) to avoid hefty fines and reputational damage.

- **Limited tech savvy:**

not all customers are comfortable with online shopping or virtual cards. Offering alternative

payment options is an absolute necessity, and consideration of a store's customer base is essential when making decisions about automating and payment options.

- **Privacy concerns:** Some customers may be apprehensive about data collection practices associated with automation. Ensuring data privacy and transparency in how customer data is used is crucial to build trust and customer buy-in.

By acknowledging these challenges and developing proactive solutions, South African retailers can navigate the path towards successful retail automation. Investing in the right infrastructure, upskilling the workforce, prioritising security, and ensuring customer acceptance will pave the way for a future of efficient, personalised, and customer-centric retail experiences with appropriate and relevant payment options.

- **Cybersecurity threats:**

Increased reliance on technology makes retailers vulnerable to cyberattacks. Investing in robust cybersecurity measures and data encryption protocols is essential to protect customer information and financial data.



SUPPLY CHAIN METAMORPHOSIS

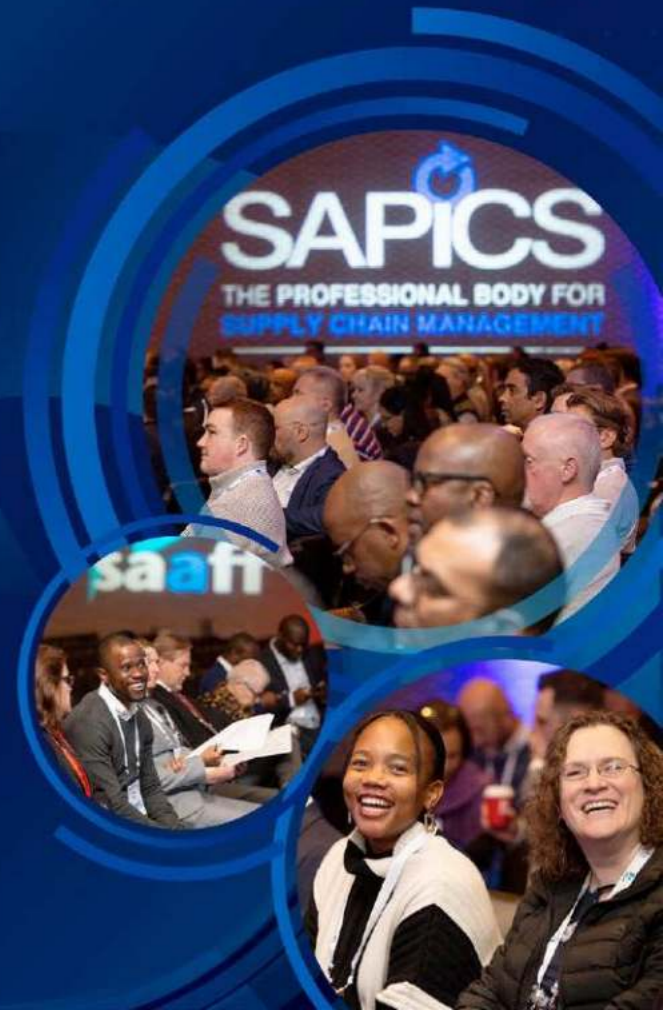
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The Wholesale & Retail Sector Education and Training Authority (W&RSETA) is one of the 21 SETAs that facilitate skills development in various sectors of the economy. SETAs are responsible for developing qualifications, facilitating learning programmes, disbursing grants for education and training programmes and quality assurance of learning. The W&RSETA is required to allocate grants to levy-paying companies with over R500 000 annual wage bill that submit compliant skills plans for the year and training reports from previous year (where applicable) by **30 April** annually.

How to participate?

Why participate in the W&RSETA skills development programmes?

- **Claim 20%** of Skills Development levies paid to SARS.
- **Apply for** programmes such as graduate placements, learnerships, management development and bursaries.
- **Develop skilled employees** to contribute to a company's profitability and economic growth of the country.
- **Tax rebates** for learnerships.

W&RSETA SMME Support Programmes

- Skills development grants of up to R9500 to implement training to address skills gaps.
- Capacitation of informal traders in rural and township areas to compete with foreign counterparts and become sustainable.
- Entrepreneurship Development Programme for young business owners through mentorship, coaching and support grants.
- Rural and cooperatives development.

Qualifying companies

- Companies employing 0 – 49 employees
- Companies with a total annual salary bill of over R500 000 and paying a Skills Development Levy for grants.

Companies must make an application to the W&RSETA by **30 April annually** to participate in the SETA's programmes for the year.

The submission includes the following:

- Skills requirements the company plans to address.
- List of academic programmes that lead to full or part qualifications.

Reports on these plans must be submitted the following year.

The W&RSETA assists small and medium companies to submit these document at **NO COST!**

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Payment solutions: Changing as we speak

While the immediate challenges to unlocking retail automation in South Africa seem daunting, they're far from insurmountable.

- **Investing in backup power solutions** like generators and solar panels can mitigate checkout disruptions caused by load shedding. Retailers like Woolworths are already exploring renewable energy sources to power their stores and warehouses, and they're not the first major retailer to do so.
- **Prioritising automation systems** with offline functionality can also ensure some level of operation during blackouts. For example, retailers can explore hybrid cloud solutions or implement local servers to minimise reliance on constant internet connectivity.
- **Mobile payment solutions** and digital wallets are enhanced by AI-enabled features such as face recognition and fingerprint scanning for authentication.
- **Virtual cards** are digital bank cards that can be used to shop online. This is a more secure way to pay for online purchases and banks are encouraging their customers to adopt this payment method.
- **AI integrates different payment systems** to ensure compatibility across platforms, especially critical for supermarkets that operate both physical and online stores.

Payment solutions at Pick n Pay

Pick n Pay has introduced a number of new payment solutions in 2023 and 2024, including ...

- **Pick n Pay Crypto Payments.** According to an article on MoneyWeb, Pick n Pay customers can pay using cryptocurrency on their smartphones from their preferred Bitcoin Lightning wallet, or directly from their Binance, Luno or VALR accounts. The payment option is available to customers at all PnP stores countrywide, including PnP Clothing and Express shops. The advantage for Luno and VALR customers is that they don't have to withdraw crypto and convert it before making purchases.

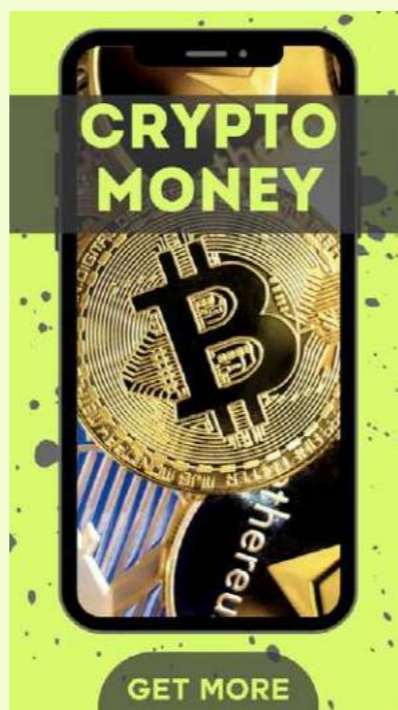


Illustration by Dustick,
www.canva.com

- **Pick n Pay Store Card.** Customers can apply for Pick n Pay credit telephonically or online. The account is linked with the Smart Shopper rewards programme. The facility is run by RCS and the card can be used at Pick n Pay stores for groceries, pharmacy, clothing and big-ticket items. The credit ranges from R1 000 to R40 000 depending on the limit for which the customer qualifies. Customers can access their account or profile online or via a mobile app. They can also query their account in-store. Monthly statements are issued and cardholders can contact the RCS Contact Centre for support and queries.

- **PayJustNow.** Pick n Pay has partnered with PayJustNow, one of the fastest growing buy now pay later providers in South Africa. PayJustNow enables customers to split payments for purchases at Pick n Pay Hypermarkets into affordable payment terms over three instalments. Customers pay 34% upfront and the remaining payments of 33% each aligned with their salary dates. It is designed to assist customers afford high-ticket items such as electronics, home appliances and mobile devices. PayJustNow is a digital application process with no fees or interest and customers can purchase online through <https://payjustnow.com/stores> or identify items in-store, including general merchandise, mobile and clothing that have the distinctive PayJustNow logo. They then scan a QR code, adding the desired item to their in-app transaction basket. The application process takes less than 10 minutes to approve. Qualifying customers will receive a unique WiCode generated by the PayJustNow app, enabling them to purchase the item(s) at the Pick n Pay checkout within 15 minutes.
- **MoreTyme.** In addition to PayJustNow, Pick n Pay offers TymeBank's MoreTyme, an interest-free payment method that allows customers to pay for items over three instalments. There is no activation fee and no monthly fee. Customers can make purchases online or in-store.
- **RCS Finance.** To cater for customers seeking to finance various large-ticket items, such as high-end TVs and refrigerators, the retailer has also recently introduced RCS Finance. This offers a loan of up to R250 000 with up to 60-month repayment terms for purchases on a large, single transaction.



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Dr Dawie de Wet

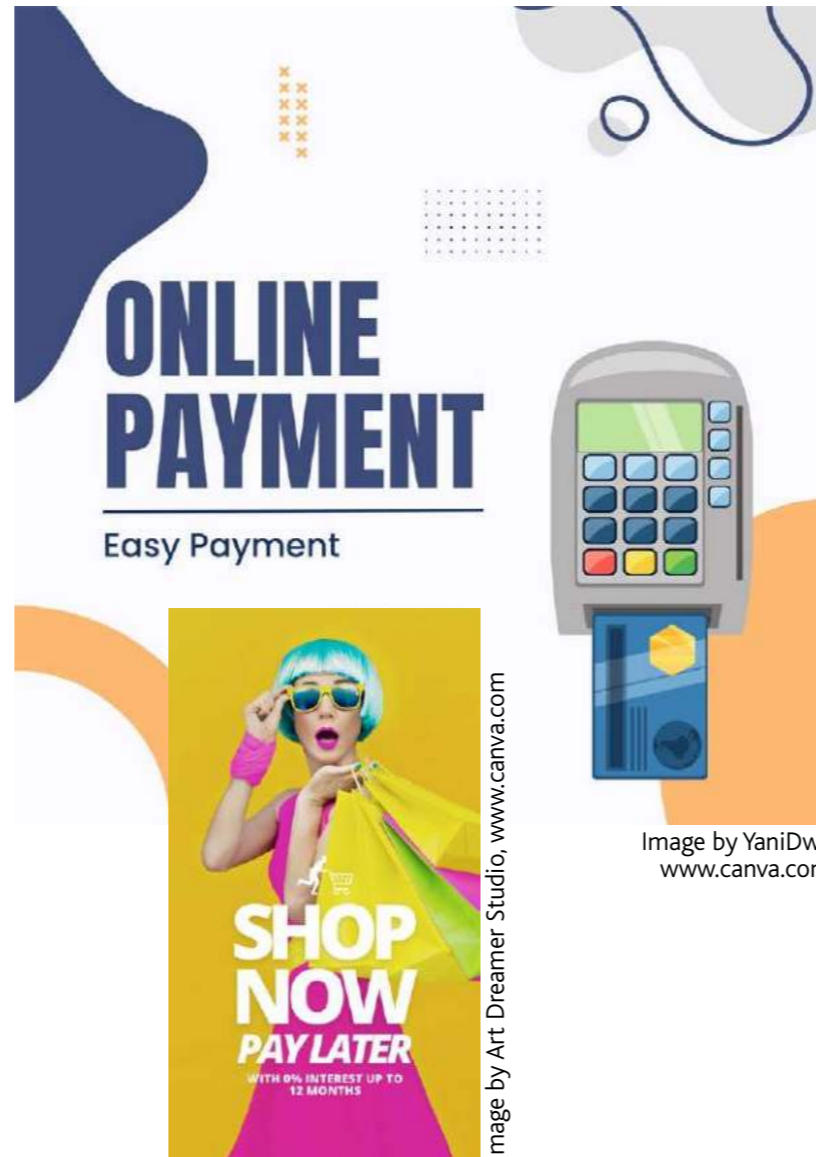
Dr Dawie de Wet, group CEO of off-grid telecommunications service provider Q-KON, says that the most difficult challenges for local retailers to resolve are issues in the external environment that they can't control and also can't really change, and yet must work around if they want to keep trading.

"In the context of the retail industry, I would expect that macro issues such as load shedding and water supply could seriously affect trading," says Dr De Wet.

“In the case of load shedding, it also disrupts connectivity networks, which directly impacts trading and transactions, and so I believe the main technology challenge is to always be online, and to do so within budget limitations.”

Q-KON's Twoobii Smart Satellite service is already certified by most major banks in southern Africa, and seamlessly integrates with on-site retail PoS Systems via a local network cable or using Wi-Fi.

"Satellite networks are the most reliable way of keeping communications up in times of local

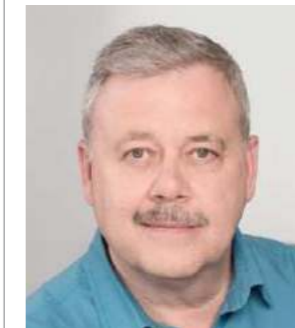


disruptions, be it from load shedding or other factors," says Dr De Wet. "As long as you can provide power (mains, generator or solar), your satellite terminal will remain connected to the internet and will keep you online," he says. "Satellite has zero dependency on local mobile towers, cables or any other network elements – all of which can be impacted by load shedding and vandalism, for example."

While the IT systems that retailers use to drive automation depend on the availability of electricity, the good news is that they consume

less power than refrigeration or air conditioning. Adequately sized alternative and backup power systems, such as diesel generators, battery power (possibly with solar panels) and UPS systems, have therefore become a must.

Cash Connect operations director Mark Templemore-Walters says ...



Mark Templemore-Walters

“Investing in backup power has increased operating costs for most retailers, so they have to find smarter way to cut costs while implementing automation technologies that keep their businesses running efficiently and attract new customers.”

From a payments perspective, retailers can look at using fintech solutions to automate the trading environment, from card acceptance and cash enablement to cash access to instant capital.

"Smart, robust cash vaults and automated cash handling can return tangible cost savings to the retailer's balance sheet," he says. "Automated cash handling can deliver a saving of up to 40% in time and money by enabling retailers to protect their cash, increase business efficiency and reduce risks."

Finally, leasing automation equipment or implementing solutions such as cashless payment systems in phases can make them more financially accessible for smaller retailers. This allows for a more controlled financial outlay and avoids overwhelming upfront costs.



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Automation best practices

All of these solutions combine to ensure that customers and staff with varying levels of tech-savviness have a positive experience and give South African retailers the tools they need to drive their automation strategies forward despite the current fiscal and operational challenges they face.

While retailers that have already demonstrated a willingness to invest in automation technologies have a head start for attracting new customers and growing their footprints in the years ahead, it's never too late to understand and implement best-practice solution to embarking on your own automation journey.

- **Identify your pain points.** Invest in automation to address specific pain points where manual processes are time-consuming, error-prone, high-risk, or inefficient.
- **Set clear objectives.** Outline measurable goals, whether it's reducing costs, improving accuracy, enhancing customer experience, or increasing productivity.
- **Screen suppliers and service providers carefully.** Assess their scalability, ease of integration with existing systems, costs, support services, and long-term viability. Ask for customer references.
- **Invest in employee training and change management.** Ensure that your staff are adequately trained to use and support automated processes.
- **Be customer-centric.** Efficiency is important, but don't automate at the expense of the customer experience. Prioritise investments that support customer choice, improve service quality and personalisation, reduce wait times, and contribute to a safer trading environment.

The benefits of automation are clearly evident

The benefits of automation are evident for those who are adopting the technologies. Faster checkout times improve customer loyalty. Multiple payment options mean you can cater for different customer segments. Manual tasks are reduced. Automated data collection and data analytics optimise massive amounts of data (within privacy parameters, of course). AI recommendations allow for product suggestions to suit individual preferences. Automated inventory management results in more accurate stock levels and pricing.

Automation also makes it easier for retailers to scale up their operations, either when opening physical stores in new locations, or expanding their online presence.

By adopting automated and digital solutions and fostering a culture of continuous improvement, FMCG retailers can turn challenges into opportunities. This will enable you to create a future of efficient operations, a skilled and adaptable workforce, and a seamless and secure customer experience that will keep you competitive in the ever-evolving retail landscape. **SR**



Image by Peach Studio's Images, www.canva.com

Sources:

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Guy Lerner, writer and photographer, writes across diverse topics in business, technology, and retail, including consumer technology, telecommunications software, user experience technology, security, and power systems. He has worked with multinational companies in South Africa and Australia and is currently based in Cape Town. Guy holds a B.Sc. Honours degree from the University of Witwatersrand. Contact Wilkins Ross Communications (www.wilkinsrossglobal.com) or guy@wilkinsross.co.za.





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Arch roll-out in Al Raya completed

Arch Retail Solutions has embarked upon a global expansion strategy, beyond its traditional Southern African footprint. As part of this, Al Raya, a supermarket chain in Saudi Arabia, contracted Arch to implement the suite of Arch solutions in the Group (51 stores, a DC & three bakery production centres).

Al Raya Supermarkets was founded in 1991 in Jeddah as a pioneer in the supermarket business. Al Raya Supermarkets has grown to become a robust network of supermarkets across the Western part of the Arabian Peninsula, establishing itself as a household brand from the border with Jordan to the border with Yemen. The head office of the group is in Jeddah.

A multi-disciplinary team, consisting of a core of Arch personnel, working closely with the Al Raya team, did all the planning and pre-work from July to October 2023. The early part of the project involved custom development to address the operational needs of Al Raya. Great care was taken to ensure all eventualities are covered before implementation commenced.

The first store, Al Raya Sari went live in November 2023 and the roll-out was completed in February 2024.

The full suite of Arch retail management solutions is now deployed in Al Raya ...



Al Raya Sari Road, the first store to go live on Arch.



Arch in operation at Point-of-sale.



Comprehensive frozen food department in Sari Road store in Jeddah.

- Arch Enterprise, as ERP solution centrally controlling the operation
- Arch Retail, in-store solution driving operational efficiency and ultimately profitability
- Arch Mobile, management capability for quick on-the-floor management intervention
- Financial Integration – seamless flow of operational data from Arch Retail to SAGE Evolution
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Far left: The Bakery department in Sari Road store in Jeddah.
Left: Spices selection in Sari Road store in Jeddah.



The completion of all 51 stores was celebrated at Head Office with a cake sporting both the logos of Al Raya and Arch.

Says Paul Glead, Project Lead from Arch ...

“ The project’s success can largely be attributed to the excellent collaboration between the Arch and Al Raya teams working around the clock to ensure success. ”

Arch Retail Solutions is proud to be the solution of choice at Al Raya and trust the business partnership will go from strength to strength. **SR**

Who are we?

A trusted source of retail information for over 65 years, our magazine informs and empowers retail business owners to grow whilst tackling current industry topics.

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We connect FMCG brands, and Equipment and Service suppliers to retail decision makers around South Africa. Elevate your brand with our wide variety of digital offerings.

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SA's R144-billion liquor industry quenches consumers' thirst for change

- Growth across all alcohol product groups
- Flavoured Alcoholic Beverages increase their share of the liquor basket, outpacing whisky, beer & vodka
- GenZ favours the flavours of cocktails over beer

South Africa's resilient R144-billion liquor sector, which weathered the storm of unprecedented global liquor bans during the Covid-19 lockdowns of 2020 and 2021 has come back fighting.

According to the latest in-depth analysis by NIQ South Africa, the local liquor sector experienced a remarkable 19.4% increase in annual sales as it successfully adapted to evolving consumer palates and preferences.

The standout performer in 2023?

Flavoured Alcoholic Beverages (FABs) like ciders and coolers. NIQ-GfK South Africa Client Strategy Lead Gareth Paterson notes ...



Gareth Paterson

“While beer and spirits faced challenges in returning to pre-Covid-19 sales levels, FAB's upward trajectory saw them capturing a larger share of the liquor basket. This reflects a significant shift in consumer tastes towards variety and flavour innovation in alcoholic beverages. ”



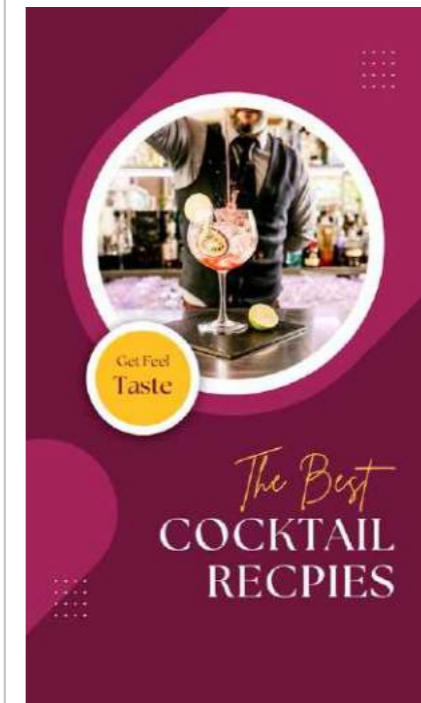
By israelDavid76 from Pixabay, www.canva.com

FABs have notably increased their share of the liquor basket, surpassing whisky, beer, and vodka. This surge drove their market share to 22%, up from 20% the previous year. In this evolving landscape of alcohol consumption, wine, and spirits both saw an increase in volume sales, led by gin, brandy, and liqueurs.

Despite these positive signs, on-site consumption at bars and restaurants has yet to reach pre-Covid-19 levels. Conversely, more South Africans are opting to purchase their alcohol from supermarkets, hypermarkets, spazas, and non-branded superettes.

Paterson observes, “The robust performance of grocery chains and the resilience of traditional trade channels underscore a shift in consumer liquor purchasing behaviour.”

Cocktail hour for GenZ



By Cosmic Latte, www.canva.com

Further analysis conducted by CGA powered by NIQ delved into the liquor consumption patterns of Generation Z and uncovered fascinating insights from the ever-changing world of younger consumers. Amongst them, 52% frequent hotspots like restaurants and bars every week. Unlike other consumer groups, this highlights their affinity for out of home leisure experiences.



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Once they've taken their seats, variety reigns supreme and Generation Z boasts an impressive on-premise repertoire, averaging five different alcohol categories. Notably, these consumers display a strong penchant for cocktails, outpacing the average consumption rate, while beer has experienced a decline in popularity among the younger generation.

This trend presents a significant opportunity for spirits manufacturers, as Gen Z consumers lean towards spirits and international brands, showing less inclination towards beer, which poses a potential threat to traditional brews.

In the era of social media, influencers also wield considerable influence over Gen Z consumer choices, with 70% citing social

media as a key influencer for dining and drinking decisions, and 57% influenced by celebrity endorsements or ownership when selecting beverages. The research also revealed the highly developed social conscience of younger consumers with 81% prioritising supporting sustainable, ethical businesses when it comes to food and drink choices.

A taste of what's to come

Looking ahead, it's clear that the South African liquor market is successfully navigating a new era in post-prohibition consumption patterns and that traditional preferences are giving way to new trends. Younger generations are seeking out new alcoholic beverages, while well-established brands continue to hold strong.

Premium products face pressure due to inflationary forces, although pockets of premium, such as in the cognac and tequila segments, persist and often exceed normal growth rates.

Paterson therefore emphasises the importance of focusing on consumer needs, innovative offerings, sustainability, and incorporating local ingredients to meet evolving consumer demands.

"As conscientious consumption becomes increasingly influential, it will shape product innovation and market strategies in the year ahead," he concludes. **SR**

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South African consumers feel the big squeeze

99% have changed their FMCG shopping habits to save money

- 44% of South African consumers say they are worse off financially now than a year ago
- 65% say they would purchase a product that has innovated to make it as affordable as possible

According to NIQ, 44% of South African consumers feel they are in a worse financial position this year compared to a year ago. Of those respondents, 82% say that increased costs of living are to blame for their recent financial struggles, up from 76% a year ago. Nearly two-thirds (62%) state they are worse off due to the economic slowdown, up from 57% a year ago.

Half (50%) of respondents report concerns about job security, up from 43% a year. Some 27% blame ongoing Covid-19 disruptions and setbacks for their financial situation, down from 45% a year back. These findings appeared in 'Consumer Outlook 2024', the latest NIQ Thought Leadership report capturing the mindset and sentiment of consumers around the world.

The report shows that South African consumers across the board are tightening their belts.

“Nearly all (99%) have changed their FMCG shopping habits. Downgrading from premium to mainstream or value products is one of the most widely adopted strategies. Nearly half (48%) have switched to lower priced options.”



“South African consumers have lived through several years of load shedding, rising costs and slow economic growth. Our data shows that they are becoming increasingly proactive and creative in their strategies to reduce costs – creating

opportunities for innovative FMCG brands and retailers to expand their market share even in difficult times,” says Zak Haeri, MD for NIQ in South Africa. “In addition to value shopping, South African consumers are using mobile channels to find better deals and shopping at stores that offer loyalty points.”



Zak Haeri

“While promotions and value product options are important strategies in today’s economic climate, it’s clear that retailers can also achieve breakthrough growth by focusing on their omnichannel presence and customer relationship management programmes.”

Other key findings from the report

- South African consumers are optimistic that their finances will improve: 65% of South Africa consumers believe their financial situation will be better by the end of 2024, 20% state it will be worse.

- Increasing food prices is South African consumers' biggest concern over the next six months. More than half (55%) say they have only enough money to cover food, shelter and the basics.
- Close to half (46%) of South African consumers are closely monitoring the overall cost of their basket of goods. Buying whatever brand is on promotion is a preferred saving strategy for 39%, while 45% have stopped buying certain products to focus on just the essentials.
- Bulk buys are a key saving strategy. Nearly half (48%) stock up or buy in bulk when their preferred products are on sale or promotion; 31% are buying larger package sizes.
- Where and how South Africans shop is evolving. Some 46% are shopping more often at discount or value stores, 31% are shopping online to get better deals and save transport money, and 59% shop at stores where they can use loyalty points to manage spend.
- Healthy living is the top life priority influencing consumers: 38% of South Africa consumers want to build, maintain or improve their health and wellness. 57% of South Africa consumers would choose a new product because it is better for their health.
- Seven in ten South African consumers only buy what they know they can use to avoid waste, much higher than the global average of 56%. 52% are eating leftovers more often and 25% are skipping more meals.



Lauren Fernandes, Global Director of Thought Leadership, NIQ, says: "Companies that continuously innovate benefit the most during times of market slowdown. But it's crucial to remember that innovation isn't only for premium positioning – today's environment also

calls for a dynamic and creative approach to value-driven consumers and segments. Brands should be constantly remapping where consumers discover, try and buy and who holds the cross-channel power. A nuanced channel strategy and differentiated product lines with a varied and expanded price-tiered assortment are critical success factors for FMCG brands and retailers in South Africa." **SR**

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Hostex 2024 shatters 10-year visitor attendance record

Hostex, the leading showcase for the food, drink and hospitality industry, has marked a triumphant return after two years, breaking attendance records and cementing its legacy as Africa's food, drink & hospitality expo.

Held at Sandton Convention Centre, Hostex was a resounding success, attracting a record-breaking 6 816 visitors – the highest in the last decade. These included a diverse mix of decision-makers and industry professionals, with nearly 200 visitors hailing from various countries across the globe.

Says Mark Anderson, Portfolio Director for Specialised Exhibitions Montgomery, "This year's edition saw a remarkable surge in attendance, signalling not only a resurgence of the hospitality industry but also the unwavering spirit of resilience and adaptability within the sector. The vibrant atmosphere, coupled with the quality of innovative exhibits and insightful seminars, showcased the dynamism that defines the hospitality industry."

Hostex 2024 highlights

Sold-out hall: The event witnessed a sold-out hall, with exhibitors pulling out all the stops to create visually engaging and interactive stands.

Themed days and districts: Three theme days and six dedicated districts, including Equipment Africa, Food & Drink Africa, Tea & Coffee Africa, Contract Furnishings Africa, Technology Africa,



Niels Verspui, Hostex 2024 Ambassador and Market Head of RoomRaccoon, giving his presentation in the Industry Hub at Hostex 2024.

and Sustainability Africa, provided a comprehensive showcase of the latest trends and innovations in the industry.

Seminar topics and ambassadors: Seventeen curated seminar topics, featuring five industry leaders as Hostex Ambassadors, offered valuable insights into the trends shaping the future of the hospitality sector under the themes of Taste Tomorrow, Hospitality Horizons and Design & Deliver.

Culinary interactions: SA Chefs brought another jam-packed programme of interactive demonstrations designed to inspire and showcase the talents of chefs to Hostex visitors, along with a selection of products and service-providers in The Skillery and Chefs Village.

Diverse offerings: From culinary trends to sustainable products and services, Hostex 2024 delivered solutions for decision-makers, allowing them to connect, source solutions, and stay ahead of industry trends.



SCAN ME



Enjoy Cake Anywhere

AT OFFICE



AT WORK



AT PARTY



AT SCHOOL



WITH FAMILY



MADE IN





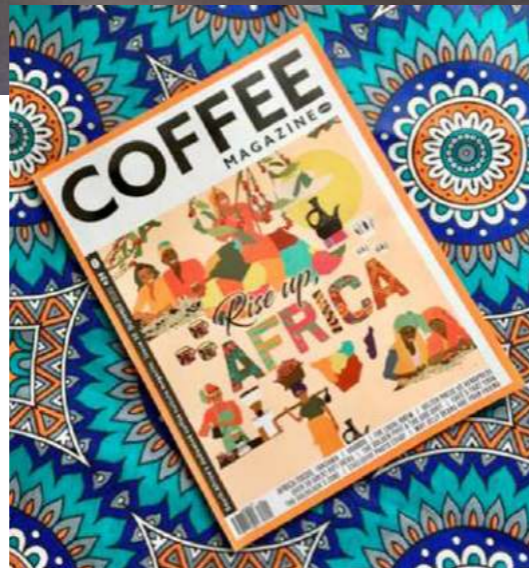
Coffee Championship at Hostex 2024.

National Coffee Championships:

Hostex 2024 was a stage for excellence in the South African coffee scene, as the Speciality Coffee Association of Southern Africa (SCASA) proudly announced the winners of three National Coffee Championship competitions.

These outstanding champions – Andre Blignaut (Cup Tasters Champion), Luke Letts (Barista Champion), Jeff Stopforth (Latte Art Champion) – will be representing South Africa on the global stage, showcasing the country’s prowess in the world of coffee.

Their remarkable skills and dedication were on full display at Hostex, adding an extra layer of excitement and celebration. “As South Africa’s ambassadors in global coffee competitions, these champions embody the innovation and talent that the local coffee industry has to offer, reinforcing the nation’s position as a force to be reckoned with in the international coffee community,” says Iain Evans, Hostex ambassador and publisher of The Coffee Magazine.



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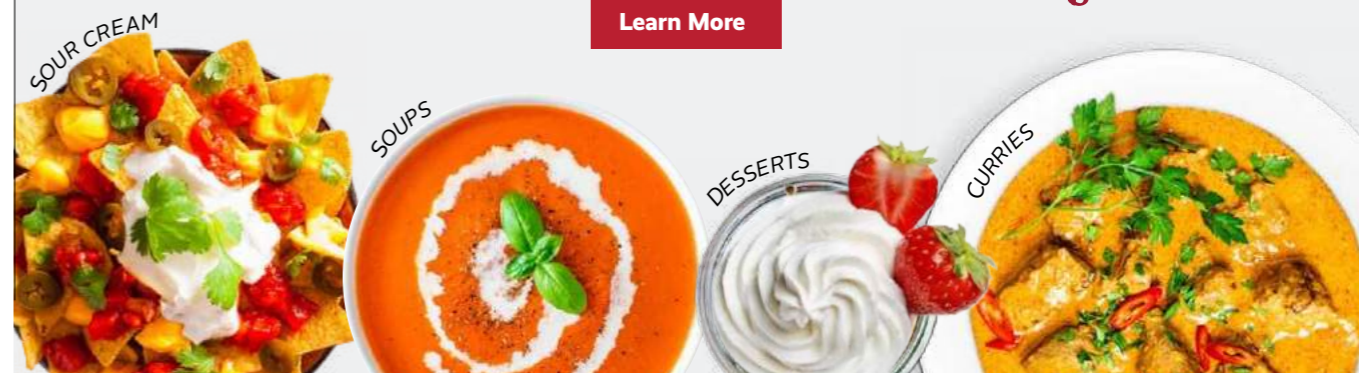
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Bon appétit!



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The FoodServ Solutions stand at Hostex 2024.

Exhibitor feedback

Overwhelmingly positive feedback from visitors highlighted the quality of the visiting audience and the number of leads generated from the show.

Maryke Polley, Sales Manager, The Local Farmer: "It was a great show and we saw a lot of chefs and restaurant people that we were hoping to see. We were extremely busy and we've got hundreds of leads so I'm really excited to follow up on them. Everyone gave their contact details so it's really been worth it. We've got the right type of people here."

Mario van der Walt, Managing Director, FoodServ Solutions: "The show has been great. It exceeded the expectations from the previous shows we've participated in. Our last exhibition was in 2020 just before Covid and that was a phenomenal show. We had such a great response from our customers and then Covid happened so we didn't come back in 2022 show because we didn't feel the industry was in the right space. This year has definitely been well worth it."

“ The quality of leads was phenomenal, and most of our key accounts also came through, which is unusual because they don't come to all the shows. ”



Specialised Exhibitions team with Hostex Ambassadors James Khoza and Moses Mgwaza celebrating the first day of Hostex 2024.

Carmel Rubinstein, Sales Division Manager, Hospitality Suite Hotel Supplies: "This year's Hostex has been very good. We've had a lot of our customers come by, especially high-level people from the African regions. It's been absolutely amazing because Africa is the main focus for us. And then from South Africa we've had a really good mix of lodges and hotels and larger guest houses, giving us their details, wanting us to contact them."

Visitor feedback

Visitors commented on the vibrant atmosphere and Hostex's ability to connect the industry under one roof.

Yonela Motloun (Marketing Lead for Unilever Food Solutions SA): "It is so awesome to see the hospitality industry get back to life after the trauma of Covid. It's my first time visiting Hostex and I loved the vibe."

I want to give a shout out to Hostex for organising this amazing event. We cannot wait for 2026 when Hostex turns 40 – that's 40 years of impact, 40 years of creating the greatest hospitality industry that we want see, 40 years of preparing for the future. Unilever Food Solutions will be on that journey with Hostex."



Visitors at Ambiance's stand.

Cleo Johnson, Founder and Curator of Nucleo & Hostex Ambassador: "Walking into the exhibition, there was so much electricity. There was really quite an atmosphere. I absolutely loved it. People were eating and drinking and having conversations, which speaks to hospitality as a whole – and I feel like they really captured it at Hostex. I really think that this is the place for hospitality professionals, not only one to come and source products, but to be able to network and just find more innovative solutions for your companies or your clients."

Craig Elliott, Head Chef, Unilever Food Solutions SA ...

“ I’m blown away. I’ve been walking around having a look, catching up with old colleagues and contacts. That’s what keeps this industry going. It’s all about people. And it’s been valuable to keep in touch with our competitors and what they’re doing. It’s about being real and keeping in touch with the reality of what’s happening in the industry. ”

“And there couldn’t be a better show to do that.”



Hostex 2026 – opening doors for 40 years and beyond

As Hostex 2024 concluded on a high note, the industry now eagerly anticipates Hostex 2026 – the 40th-anniversary edition – taking place from 8 to 10 March 2026. Hostex will continue its legacy of unlocking opportunities, fostering innovation, and shaping the future of the hospitality industry.

So Niche stall with their premium baked products.



GAAP's stand.



Fresh Press showcasing their products.



Cape Cup's stand.



Core Catering's stand.



Chefs in action at The Skillery.



SA Chefs Association presents The Skillery.



Golden Spices' stand.



Liquid Concepts preparing drinks for the Hostex 2024 visitors.



M2Bio Sciences's stand.



Wine exhibitors in The Wine Bar.



Clearworld's stand.



Kobus Wiese at his Wiesenhof Roastery stand.



IceTeam's stand.

Follow Hostex on social media for updates and information on the full programme of activities in the Skillery, Industry Hub seminar theatre and Coffee Championship ...



ABOUT HOSTEX

Since its inception in 1986, HOSTEX has become a leading expo for food, drink, and hospitality professionals across Africa. The show provides an unmatched platform for industry leaders, innovators, and decision-makers to gather, share insights, and do business. For more information, please visit www.hostex.co.za.

