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PRESS RELEASE

DAVID SANDS LAUNCHES NEW LICENSING INITIATIVE

Convenience store chain staff guide customers through new licensing legislation with leaflets and friendly, in-store advice

INDEPENDENT convenience store group, **David Sands Ltd**, based in Kinross, is helping its customers understand Scotland's new licensing legislation – due to come into force on 1st September – by handing out specially prepared leaflets and offering advice in-store.

David Sands, recently voted the Best Retailer for Customer Service in a prestigious UK-wide trade awards scheme, hopes that the initiative – implemented across its 27 stores in Fife, Kinross and Perthshire – will guide customers through the changes in a clear, concise and easy-to-understand manner.

All store staff will be wearing red David Sands-branded T-shirts emblazoned with 1st September – the new legislation's implementation date – and a strapline inviting customers to ask for help and advice.

Ewen Chisholm, chief operating officer, said: "As a business, we are obviously up-to-speed with the changes to Scotland's licensing laws. The vast majority of our customers also know that new licensing legislation is imminent. However, the changes are significant and far-reaching and the implications for us and our customers – if we get things wrong – are potentially very damaging.

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“By explaining the changes and new rules to our customers as clearly as we possibly can, there will be no room for error. Our store staff have all undergone extensive training so no-one is better placed than they are to help their own customers understand that purchasing alcohol in their local David Sands store will be slightly different from 1st September.”

In many stores, staff will notice a number of changes in terms of the layout of the licensed section and merchandising of alcohol. “As we have historically placed considerable emphasis on cross-merchandising in our stores, some customers will want to know why we are no longer doing this,” said Chisholm.

“The other main change, of course, is to the hours during which we are legally permitted to sell alcohol – 10am to 10pm. We hope that customers will take this opportunity to ask staff questions and clarify in their own minds what the changes the changes are.”

The initiative has been warmly welcomed by both Tayside Police and Perth & Kinross Council, whose representatives attended its official launch in David Sands’ recently extended and refurbished store in Jeanfield Road, Perth.

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As David Sands forges ahead with ambitious growth plans which include a number of new store openings in 2009, the role of store staff will become increasingly important. “We pride ourselves on providing the highest possible levels of customer service at a very local level,” Chisholm added. “This is one of our many points of difference over our competitors and what we are known for.

“As a responsible retailer, particularly when it comes to selling alcohol and age-related products in our stores, our committed and hard-working staff are very much at the front line. They are the face of the company and we rely on them to ensure that customers have a good shopping experience with us and leave our stores satisfied.”

The company has opened three stores in Fife this year – in Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline and, most recently, Markinch.

All David Sands convenience stores are licensed, sell newspapers and magazines, have a strong fresh food offer, in-store bakery and services including PayPoint, an ATM and the National Lottery.

New initiatives also continue to be developed, including 'Food to Go' – the sale of hot and cold food, drinks and snacks to take away – and innovations in fresh produce, both of which are viewed by the company as key growth areas.

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For further information, contact on 01577 865141 or **Karen Peattie**
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www.david-sands.co.uk

NOTE FOR EDITORS

- David Sands Ltd was founded in Kinross in 1812 and currently operates 27 stores in Fife, Kinross and Perthshire
- Most David Sands stores sell newspapers and magazines and many outlets offer a Post Office, in-store bakery, ATM, PayPoint and the National Lottery. All stores have a very strong fresh foods offer
- Stores open from 6am to 10pm, seven days a week
- All stores are licensed to sell alcohol and operate a 'Challenge 25' policy
- David Sands is a former president of the Scottish Grocers' Federation
- David Sands Ltd is a member of the Nisa-Today's group, the member-owned organisation that supports independent retailers and wholesalers in food and drink sector with a range of buying, marketing and distribution services. David Sands is chairman of the Nisa Retail Committee