



ShelfLife

Spring 2008

David Sands triumphs at Scottish Grocer Awards

COULD there be a bit of rivalry in the family? David Sands, our managing director, has won the prestigious Industry Achievement Award at the 2008 Scottish Grocer Awards - hot on the heels of his dad, Lindsay winning the Wiseman Career Recognition Award.

It was a great night for David Sands Ltd as we scooped four awards at the Scottish Grocer Awards - Industry Achievement; the new Collaborating for Success Award, which was developed by Scotland Food & Drink, the public/private partnership for the food and drink industry; Neighbourhood Store of the Year Award for Cardenden; and Milk Retailer of the Year for Tulloch Square, Perth.

The awards were presented during an evening of star-studded entertainment at the Glasgow Hilton on Thursday 13th March. The celebrity host was TV presenter Julia Bradbury, who presents the BBC1 consumer affairs programme, Watchdog.

The Industry Achievement Award was presented to David in recognition of his leadership in building up the David Sands Ltd business as well as his dedication to the wider grocery industry. For those of you who need reminding, David was president of the Scottish Grocers' Federation from 1996-1998, taking on the role at the tender age of 30. Since then, he has developed a high profile in the industry, speaking at many industry events and frequently being quoted in the press and broadcast media on retail issues.

David credited his family and especially Lindsay for his success, as well as taking inspiration from others in the retail industry. In an acceptance speech worthy of an Oscar, he told the audience that independent retailers often lacked belief in their ability to compete in today's marketplace.

"Many in our trade read constantly of the demise of the independent sector," he said. "I feel many lack confidence in their abilities, but I do believe that we all have the ability to compete. Such is this belief that we have invested over £4m in the last few years developing our business. That's putting your money where your mouth is."

Other awards picked up on the night were:

- Cardenden: Health Initiative of the Year (Highly Commended); Food to Go Retailer of the Year (Highly Commended); Margaret Drummond, Employee of the Year (Highly Commended)
- Kelty: Chilled Store of the Year (Highly Commended)
- Social Responsibility Award (Highly Commended)



A proud moment for David Sands as he receives the Scottish Grocer Industry Achievement Award from Andrew Helm of British American Tobacco and Julia Bradbury

Lorraine Ritchie, manager of Tulloch Square, Perth receives the Milk Retailer of the Year Award from Julia Bradbury and Sandy Wilkie of Robert Wiseman Dairies

Margaret Drummond, Cardenden manager receives the Neighbourhood Store of the Year Award from Jonathan Warburton, chairman of warburtons and Julia Bradbury

Kinross store manager Wullie Collison receives the Collaborating Success Award from Allan Burns, chairman of Scotland Food & Drink and Julia Bradbury

Develop your career with David Sands

HERE at David Sands Ltd, we are extremely proud of our staff and want you to be part of our success. Many of you have been with us for a number of years and have progressed within the company, building a great career in the retail industry.

As you know, the company continues to grow. We have 24 stores at the moment - 25 if you include the new seasonal shop at Pettycur Bay - and there are plans to open hopefully four new stores during 2008. This level of growth opens up opportunities for existing staff to pursue promotion and we hope that you will consider applying for these new managerial posts as and when they arise.

Isabel Barclay, training, development and personnel manager, said: "I would encourage store managers to discuss with staff you think have the potential to be a manager or supervisor to get in touch with me.

We know that if a member of your team is promoted, you are losing a key member of staff in your own store but look at it as being a reflection of your own abilities as a manager:

"Every one of our stores has people who have the potential to grow and develop their career with us. Perhaps you have a part-time assistant who is keen to take on more responsibilities or someone you feel is ready for a supervisor's position. As a manager, you can nurture your staff and help them progress up the career ladder.

"Use the intranet to find out about job opportunities or get in touch with me at head office, either directly or through your store manager. We provide excellent training and support for our staff so please give it some consideration. It is our policy, where possible, to promote from within the company."

A word from the Managing Director

"IF you think you can or you think you can't you are right." This quotation came from Alf Dunbar's book, Just Looking Thanks. You should have a copy and I do hope you have had a chance to read it. Better still, I hope you have participated in one of the training sessions.

Many companies talk about how important customer service is and how it is their priority. You often get this message when you are put on hold for 10 minutes attempting to talk to your bank and other service providers. Talking about it and actually doing something about it are different. At David Sands, we know our customers rate fast and friendly service and I think we can all recall instances in our own lives where poor customer service has really annoyed us.

We have looked for a long time for a provider of customer service training and I knew that the last thing we needed was for everyone to come along to a course and then quickly forget everything afterwards. We have all been to those courses! Alf's customer service training programme is simple and I think easily remembered. Equally important, Alf talks about the importance of selling and that's why we are all here - to sell.

Having received the training and read the book we are all at the stage of attempting to put this into practice and I know for many this will be difficult. Please keep trying - you could be amazed at the results you get. We will be encouraging the entire business to adopt Alf's techniques from head office, warehouse and right through to all those who serve customers directly. Monthly awards will highlight those who have achieved great things and should act as a source of encouragement to you all. Good luck!

Meanwhile, we have just signed off our annual accounts and I am happy to report a good year. Sales and profits were up and that's important if we want to expand. The banks will only lend money to businesses that have a proven track record. We have ambitious expansion plans and hope to open at least another four stores this year.

What will be particularly interesting will be the opening of our store at Pettycur Bay. This is a holiday resort near Kinghorn with over 600 static caravans and the store will be seasonal (March to October).

We have also completed a full refurbishment of our store in Kelty and the results are very impressive. Well done to Keith and his team for working through three weeks of refurbishment. The showpiece of the store is the relocated Food to Go counters. These are now at the front of the store and will be run as a 'store within a store'. If you get a chance to pop in to Kelty, please do - although I'm sure Keith will encourage you to buy something when you are there!

Finally, a word about our post offices. I'm afraid that we have neglected this area of our business over the last year. Our staff face an uncertain future with numerous reports about closures. We will hear whether any of our eight offices are to close by the end of April. If closure is a possibility, I can assure all those staff affected by this that we will do everything we can to offer alternative employment. Once we know the outcome of the review we have plans to improve a number of our offices, particularly North Muirton and Ralston Drive.



David Sands
Managing Director

Kelty gets a makeover

KELTY is the latest David Sands store to undergo refurbishment as part of our ongoing store improvement programme.

The showpiece of the store is the relocated Food to Go counters, now at the front of the store and run as a 'store within a store' concept. Staff are looking forward to developing our very own hot food offering in Kelty based along the lines of a Subway-style outlet with the Italian Job, Meat Feast, Chicken Club, Farmhouse and Tuna Melt just some of the exciting creations that will be available.

Stephen Brown, operations director, said: "If successful these will be rolled out - excuse the pun - across other stores. The operation is based around a fast oven that can toast a baguette in 20 seconds. This has been a major refurbishment so many thanks to manager Keith Fernie and his team for all their patience and ability to work around the various tradesmen coming in and out of the store.



High hopes for Food to Go at Kelty

A poem by David Fernie (Keith's Uncle)

For three weeks come the rising of the moon
There have been strange goings on in Kelty too
Vertex guys have descended in hoards, with lorries and vans
Like worker ants to do their magic in-store at David Sands

They tore out the old, then fitted the new
It's said some old fittings went to museums to go on show
To say these were old isn't really enough
Hieroglyphic pricing was found under the fluff

Joiners, plumbers and sparks to name but a few
The gallant Vertex crew didn't once get in a stew
During many nights of blood, sweat and tears
They stuck to their task without any beers

Sands' team it's said 'have given their all'
Nightshifts, early starts and late finishes, they did it all
Not one complaint, (well none that was said aloud)
For their dedication, ALL should be very proud

But in the main it all went really well
To pay for it all, the staff now need to sell, sell and sell
Was staff rehab costs budgeted for as well?
Including Marjorie in frustration beating up the poor bell

Not only will customers more enjoy their shopping,
Sands' Super Staff have a good environment to work in

Local shops are any small towns Life Blood, without them our
community would die
For their commitment to Kelty, David Sands Supermarkets should be
applauded.

Seasonal Sands

THE new seasonal outlet at Pettycur Bay holiday resort near Kinghorn is certainly a new direction for David Sands. We were actually approached by the operators of the site to take on this store, which is located within a complex that houses a restaurant and bar.

We will see how things go this season then take a decision on whether to

return in 2009 and further develop the store. This year, the non-licensed outlet will remain open until the end of October and as there are 600 static caravans on the site we anticipate business being quite brisk, particularly during the key summer months. We'll keep you updated.

The store is being run by Kim Fyfe who no doubt will be hoping to catch some sun on the beach during break time!

New approach to training



Alf Dunbar brings a new approach to customer service training

MANY of you will already have met Alf Dunbar, whose Aberdeen-based company Your Are The Difference has been appointed to provide customer service training for the David Sands group.

Alf's approach is different to anything we've come across before and that is because he keeps it first and foremost simple, and secondly, interesting and entertaining with a strong focus on selling. The first coaching sessions have already taken place and been well received by staff. Everyone has also been given a copy of Alf's book, Just Looking Thanks.

"I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you who attended the coaching sessions for your positive feedback and comments," said Alf. "Everyone really did make me feel so welcome during my week there and it was a real pleasure to be given the opportunity to share 'You Are The Difference' with you all. I hope you all found the time to read the book and remember to take action to go after that commitment you made to yourself at the end of the session.

"Take one step at a time with the programme, stay on top of your spiral and you will make it happen. I look forward to catching up on all your successes. And to all the managers who will be running the DVD coaching sessions, if you have a wee practice with the techniques first, plan your session, make it fun and lead from the front you and your team WILL make the difference."



If anyone has any queries or suggestions, please contact Isabel Barclay.

Company Store of the Year Awards

THE great thing about awards - and we do seem to win a lot of them these days! - is that they're great for staff morale. Winning an award makes all our hard work worthwhile - and it's a great talking point for our customers.

So if you were at our annual awards and staff dance in January at Keavil House Hotel near Dunfermline, you'll know just how much excitement there is surrounding our own competition. Willie Allan was our guest speaker and MC for the evening.

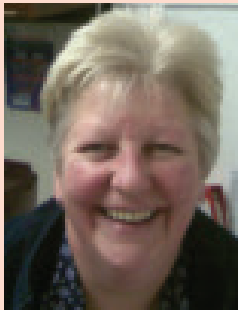


Susan Quinn of Cardenden, our Employee of the Year

Employee of the Year went to Susan Quinn, a retail assistant at our Cardenden store. She won £1,000 to put towards a holiday plus two weeks' additional holiday on top of her annual entitlement - that's seven weeks' paid holiday. Susan, who has lived in Cardenden all her life, is married with two daughters. She's a great team player who loves working with great colleagues and enjoys a bit of banter.

First and second runners-up were Grace Smith, a part-time retail assistant at Kennoway Store and Jackie Clark, a part-time assistant at St Andrew Street, Dunfermline - both won £200.

Maureen Hutcheson won Supervisor of the Year and picked up £250 while the first and second runners-up - Isla Watson of Kinross and Racheal King of Burmtisland - each won a bottle of champagne.



Maureen Hutcheson is our Supervisor of the Year

Store of the Year went to St Andrews Street and manager Diane Greenhoff will be taking all the staff out for a night of their choice.

Isabel Barclay, our training, development and personnel manager, said: "Congratulations to everyone who won on the night. It's really important for everyone to participate and get as much out of our company awards as possible - taking part and working with your colleagues creates great camaraderie in-store and a little competition within the company is good for all of us.

News in Brief

David Sands was invited to speak at the IGD's Annual Convenience Retailing Conference in London last November, his subject being 'Delivering A Successful Consumer Proposition'. Our esteemed MD outlined the history of David Sands and spoke about recent growth and developments but pointed out that much of the success of the business - in the past, now and in the future - can be attributed to the staff and our strong emphasis on providing an efficient, friendly and local service.

Nancy Wilson, a part-time sales assistant in the Kinross Store, celebrated her Golden Wedding anniversary on Saturday, 15th March. Many congratulations to Nancy and her husband, Mick, from everyone at David Sands.

Many thanks and a very well done to Paul Dowds and Kevin Seath and their team in the warehouse. Everyone has been working extra hard in recent weeks to cope with increased volumes at a time when we've experienced staff shortages - you've had a lot to contend with and deserve our thanks and praise for rolling up your sleeves and getting on with it.

You will have noticed that our lorries have been given an extreme makeover. Andy Muir and Jimmy Simpson wanted 'Pimp my Ride' as the new livery but we've stuck to David Sands, thank you very much! Seriously though, we reckon that the shiny new image will be a fantastic moving advertisement for the business all over Fife, Perthshire and Kinross. Just make sure you keep them clean, lads!

Most of you will be aware of the controversy surrounding the use of Mosquito sonic devices to disperse gangs of teenagers, particularly if your store has the device. The Mosquito sends out a high-pitched tone that only those under the age of 20 can hear and it is proving effective in some areas. However, in many areas we also work closely with community partnerships to resolve crowd and youth disorder and look after our No. 1 priority - our staff and customers.

Vicky Hawkins, our manager in Kennoway, has been attending a local forum on binge drinking with representatives from local agencies in an attempt to deal with the underage drinking problem in the area. Needless to say, we have been ambassadors for the trade with regards to how a good off-sales policy should work - Challenge 25, everyone!

Wullie Collison is already looking out his cooler CDs and wellies in anticipation of T in the Park. The campsite for the event in July will be open from the Thursday this year so people will be in town for longer and that means an even bigger sales opportunity for us. But remember, it's not just sales of beer that get a lift from events like this - now is a good time to remind all stores that a good beer display will encourage extra sales throughout the summer.

A new recycling initiative, the result of a partnership between David Sands and Perth & Kinross Council, was launched in six stores in the council area. The idea was to encourage shoppers to recycle their cans and glass. We used shelf wobblers/talkers and bottle neck ties to promote recycling while staff handed out leaflets.

The Tulloch store's Linda Alexander has every reason to be proud. Her grandson, Ryan Brechin, has been selected to play for Scotland under 15s football team and has already played in several games. The next James McFadden, perhaps?

Career Recognition Award for our Chairman

OUR chairman, Lindsay Sands, was honoured at the 2008 Robert Wiseman Dairies Neighbourhood Shop of the Year Awards when he was presented with the Career Recognition Award.

Wiseman wanted to mark Lindsay's contribution to the David Sands business but also his influence in the wider convenience retailing marketplace. What's more, our store at Ralston Drive, competing against convenience stores and local shops from all over the UK, won awards for Commitment to Local Sourcing and Excellence in Milk Marketing as well as a HealthyLiving Initiative Award and a Fresh Produce Quality Award.

Lindsay said: "I am absolutely delighted to have been presented with the Career Recognition Award but point to the fact that it is the people who work so hard for David Sands Ltd that are the real winners. Our store at Ralston Drive has done particularly well and I congratulate all the staff there for their sterling efforts."



Lindsay Sands, our chairman, makes his acceptance speech at the Robert Wiseman Awards

The David Sands Wine Club

OUR new Wine Club, launched last autumn, appears to have struck a chord with local residents and we are now close to our initial target of 500 members.

The club is aimed at residents of Fife, Perthshire and Kinross-shire who enjoy a glass of wine and want to broaden their knowledge, experience different tastes and share their findings with like-minded people. They can join by filling in a form on our website.

Members order online and can arrange to collect their wine from any David Sands store so there is no need to wait in all day for a delivery. Membership is free and while stocks last every new member will be given a voucher for a free bottle of wine. There is no commitment to buy.

However, there are lots of special offers for members, plus wine tastings and a regular newsletter giving details of current offers, our Wine of the Month and information on popular wines. The next stage will be to offer online case deals.

If you spot a customer in your store who is buying wine regularly, why not tell them about the David Sands Wine Club? It's another unique service that gives us a point of difference over our competitors.



Perth staff help convict escaped prisoner

WELL done to Eddie Harrison and Kate McMillan at North Muirton whose quick-witted actions saw convicted murderer George McGeoch, who had escaped from prison guards during a hospital visit in Perth in February, recaptured.

Stephen Brown, operations director, said: "He came into the shop early in the morning. Kate rightly refused to sell him a bottle of vodka then he identified himself by pointing to a picture of himself on the front of a newspaper on the counter and demanded to be served alcohol. He was told to leave the premises and ran out of the store.

"Eddie then followed company procedure by hitting the panic button that we have installed in the store. Tayside Police arrived soon after and the store was closed for around two hours while they analysed our in-store CCTV footage."

GOT any news you want to share with us? Any funny stories from your store, involving staff or customers? Has your store - or a member of staff - been raising money for a local charity or celebrating a special birthday, anniversary or other occasion? Let us know so we can share it with the rest of the David Sands staff. Call Karen Peattie on 0141 773 1801/07947 075 937 or contact her at k.peattie@btopenworld.com

David Sands Ltd, Alligin House, 2 Clashburn Close, Bridgend Industrial Estate, Kinross KY13 8GD

Tel: 01577 865141 Fax: 01577 865104

Email: enquiries@david-sands.co.uk

Visit David Sands at www.david-sands.co.uk