



Shelflife

Autumn/Winter 2007

Cardenden – a store for the future

STAFF at our new-look Cardenden store are getting terrific feedback from customers – new and old – since we finally completed what was a very challenging refit and extension of the premises over the summer.

Manager Margaret Drummond and her team have worked exceptionally hard with head office and the various contractors involved in this major £250,000 refit. Understandably, there were a few frustrations along the way but staff and customers alike took it all in their stride and we thank everyone for their patience!

Now, we have a fantastic 2,300 sq ft store – virtually double the size of the old store following the acquisition of the adjacent premises in Station Road. With 25 full and part-time staff, including two additional permanent part-time delicatessen counter assistants who have joined the team as a direct result of the refit, the store has never been closer to the heart of the Cardenden community.

Two entrances, including one direct from the car park, now make access much easier for customers and the Post Office has also been relocated as part of this major refit which brings to Cardenden a highly visible, modern and spacious convenience store.

Prior to the refit, we commissioned independent consultancy firm Harris International Marketing (him!) to hold focus groups with Cardenden shoppers. Two groups of regular customers provided valuable information and feedback that has been used to ensure that the store is giving customers the products and services they want in the correct shopping environment.

David Sands, managing director, said: "We have also invested in state-of-the-art refrigeration that allows us to stock more product lines and display them in a way that makes it easier for customers to find what they're looking for. Another exciting feature is our brand new Food to Go range of hot and cold snacks, sandwiches and filled baguettes, freshly made on the premises and available all day long!"

The store continued to trade throughout the refurbishment period. "This has been a dramatic transformation for our staff and customers and one of the biggest and most challenging refits ever undertaken by the company," he said.

The new store was officially opened by former Dunfermline Football Club manager, Jim Leishman.



Margaret Drummond and her happy team at Cardenden



Jim Leishman does the honours as the crowd gathers

Feedback from our customers will help us drive sales

OPENING up your business to scrutiny from your customers is, in our experience, one of the most effective ways of getting honest answers about where you need to make changes and improvements.



David Sands has been involved in the Harris International Marketing Convenience Tracking Programme (CTP) for a couple of years now and this year we have been working closely with Ewen Chisholm, client director of him!. Said Ewen: "It is all about promoting the David Sands brand and we aim to achieve this in different ways.

"We identified news as being a crucial product category, for example, and our research also showed a slippage in sales of milk with customers often having a higher intent to buy than they actually do. Through him! data, we can compare the performance of David Sands with other retailers who are part of CTP and this is very useful – with produce, there is a 9% intention to buy yet in Budgens, it is 40% so this tells us where there is scope for improvement."

In focus groups in Cardenden before the refit, the feedback on fresh food and produce was not hugely positive in terms of quality and price, explains Ewen. "Overall, we wanted to find out what was important to customers," he said. "We identified availability issues on promotions and some group members were disappointed that they couldn't find certain products – congestion at the tills a key times was another bone of contention."

But there were also high levels of very positive feedback. Overall, the groups felt that the Cardenden store offered good value for money and there was acceptance that they would generally "pay a price for convenience". The post office was well received and staff were deemed friendly.

Said Ewen: "Through CTP, we will be working with you on an ongoing basis to improve staff knowledge of various product categories and boost the company's image as a community-based retailer across the estate. There are so many opportunities to stand out from your competitors and it is hugely encouraging for the wider convenience marketplace that a chain like David Sands is willing to open itself up to such scrutiny."

A word from the Managing Director

SOME of you will be aware that the Scottish Government has passed a new piece of licensing legislation, The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005. This is the first piece of new licensing legislation in over 30 years.

Over the last few years there has been considerable public debate about the effects of alcohol-fuelled crime and disorder as well as the health problems associated with alcoholism. While the new Act does not fully come into effect until September 2009, our preparations and formal applications for licence renewals ensure that our preparations will begin early next year.

The Act sets out five high-level Licensing Objectives:

- Preventing crime and disorder.
- Securing public safety
- Preventing public nuisance
- Protecting and improving public health
- Protecting children from harm



David Sands
Managing Director

Each objective has equal weighting and every decision about licensing must be made with reference to these five objectives.

The key elements of the new Act are:

1. The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 is based on the five principles or objectives.
2. The decisions about new licences, renewals etc are made by the Licensing Board for each council.
3. There are two main types of licence: a premises licence for the place where alcohol will be sold and the personal licence for the person responsible for supervising the sale of alcohol.
4. Every licensed premises will need to have an operating plan, which describes in detail the type of business they can carry out in the premises, and a layout plan.
5. There are Licensing Standards Officers (LSOs) who will check whether licensed premises are operating in the correct manner. They will also be able to give advice.
6. Training will be required for everyone: Licensing Board members, Licensing Standards Officers, personal licence holders and staff. Different types of training are stipulated under the Act for each different role.

I cannot think of any piece of legislation that will have a greater impact on our business. Isabel Barclay is currently going through the training required to allow her to run the appropriate courses for all staff.

Let me emphasise that all stores will be required to have a personal licence holder on duty at all times. For obvious reasons we will require all our management teams, including stand-in supervisors, to have this required training and pass the exam. All staff will be required to receive an additional four hours of training covering the new piece of legislation.

Of course, it is all very well providing the training but what will happen if someone ignores the training provided? This is perhaps the most troublesome element of the new Act. We understand that many Licensing Boards will automatically suspend a licence for three months in a store that fails a single test purchase! If any of our stores lost a licence for this period of time then I would suggest that we would lose tens of thousands of pounds, not to mention the subsequent job losses. This concerns me greatly. Last week we carried out 10 internal test purchases – three people failed!

We have been discussing this issue at head office and have decided to raise our 'Challenge 21' policy to 'Challenge 25'. In other words, from January 1 2008, we will ask for proof of age of anyone who looks under 25.

What do you think? I would urge store managers to carry out a poll in their stores and post the results on our intranet discussion board (see page 4).

David Sands helps launch new age-restricted sales initiative

AS all staff should be aware, selling a packet of cigarettes to a 17-year-old is now illegal and, from Monday, October 1 retailers and their employees across Scotland could be landed with a £5,000 or even a six-month jail sentence.

David Sands takes all legislation – however difficult it may be to implement – very, very seriously indeed so we were more than happy to help Fife Council and NHS Fife launch their new handbook for businesses, called the Fife Age Restricted Sales Guide.

The pack has been put together by health professionals, trading standards officers and police. It has been designed to assist traders to comply with laws restricting the age at which cigarettes, alcohol, fireworks and other products can be legally sold.



David Sands helped launch the Fife Age Restricted Sales Guide

David Sands makes commitment to support local and Scottish suppliers



STAFF will already be aware that David Sands Ltd has made a commitment to sell more local and Scottish-produced lines in our stores.

Since we last spoke to you about this, the company has joined forces with Scotland Food & Drink in an attempt to really get this initiative moving – and give customers easier access to products that are grown or produced on their own doorstep.

Representatives from 40 companies from all over Scotland recently attended an excellent event at Alligin House to introduce them to our convenience store chain with the view to learning more about our business and how they might be able to trade with us. This was organised on our behalf by Scotland Food & Drink with support from Highlands & Islands Enterprise and Scottish Enterprise.

Scotland Food & Drink is the new industry-led body which aims to harness the collective resources of one of Scotland's most successful sectors to create an industry worth £10 billion by 2017.

Lindsay Sands, our chairman, commented: "As a company, we have made a commitment to introduce more local foods into our stores and this summer we launched our new chilled distribution division to enable us to develop this aspect of our business.

"It is important that we offer our customers quality products that are appealing – this enables us to provide a point of difference over our competitors and gives customers another reason to shop at David Sands."



David Sands has made a commitment to introduce more local and Scottish sourced products into our stores

The companies attending the event were shown our company video before taking in a fact-finding tour of the Cardenden and Ralston Drive, Kirkcaldy stores. There was also a tour of the warehouse and distribution facilities then a Q&A session. Visitors were divided into four groups led by David Sands, Lindsay Sands, Margaret MacLeod and Laura O'Brien.

The next stage in this project is a 'Meet the Buyer' session, again at Alligin House, on November 13-14.

Forum explores ways of developing newspaper sales in our stores

IN September, the company held its first News Forum – an event designed to explore ways of working more closely with publishers and increasing sales of newspapers in our stores.

Publishers accepting our invitation to join us on the day included the Fife Free Press Group, Scotsman Publications and DC Thomson, publisher of The Courier. "We have reached the stage where we are now the biggest customer of the Fife Free Press group accounting for 12% of their total circulation," explained David Sands.

"I think generally publishers are realising that we are a good customer and one they can work with to develop sales of their newspapers."

The opportunity to develop this key category was identified as part of our ongoing involvement with the Harris International Marketing Convenience Tracking Programme (CTP) – read more on page 1.

Top Shops

TIME really does pass quickly and it's hard to believe that we're pretty much in the final stages now of our annual Store of the Year competition – the Awards will be presented at our popular company shindig in February (dates and venue to be confirmed).

Operations director Stephen Brown, whose feet still haven't quite recovered from all his fancy footwork with the ladies at this year's dinner at Keavil House Hotel, is keen to keep you all on your toes in our stores as well as on the dance floor! He said: "There's always room for improvement and all of us can make a difference, even by doing or suggesting something quite simple.

"The scores at the top end of the table are pretty close so the top prize for Store of the Year is by no means in the bag yet. So, in these final stages of the competition, I would ask you all to go that extra mile for your store – managers, rally your staff and see if you can improve your current position."

News in Brief

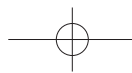
- **The company has acquired its fifth store in Perth. This newest addition to the David Sands estate is a newsagent's located on busy Jeanfield Road near the city's royal infirmary. This is a much smaller store than most of our outlets but it's in a great location with a lot of potential. It will be refitted and upgraded in due course but, in the meantime, a very warm welcome to the staff.**
- **Despite the somewhat muddy conditions underfoot, T in the Park was, once again, a great success – particularly for our Kinross store. In the build-up to the music festival, the store had considerable extra footfall created by contractors and workmen. Adding an extra day onto the event also brought extra business for us. And one of our biggest sellers this year? Wellies!**
- **Read all about it! David Sands has been featured extensively in the trade, local and national press over the summer months. Thanks to a proactive PR strategy, we have been in: The Grocer; Scottish Grocer; SLR; SLTN; Independent Retail News; Convenience Store; The Scottish Farmer, Edinburgh Evening News; The Courier; Fife Free Press; Perthshire Advertiser; Central Fife Times; and the Sunday Herald.**
- **David Sands has been shortlisted in the forthcoming Robert Wiseman Dairies Neighbourhood Shop of the Year Awards, taking place at Fairmont St Andrews on December 6. We've already got a clutch of Wiseman Awards under our belt and we have high hopes for 2007 when Kirkcaldy (Ralston Drive) is in the running. Good luck, everyone!**
- **Meanwhile, the David Sands store at Tulloch, Perth won the Bread Retailer of the Year at the Scottish Local Retailer Awards, presented at Stirling Castle in June. The store, managed by Lorraine Ritchie, has been refitted and upgraded to provide customers with a wider range of products and more modern shopping environment. Congratulations to Lorraine and her team.**

David Sands scoops prestigious industry awards

EARLIER this year, we won Best Retailer Voted by Suppliers at the high-profile Convenience Tracking Programme (CTP) Awards, organised by the London consultancy firm, Harris International Marketing.

David Sands was also awarded Best Impulse Retailer Voted by Customers in the CTP initiative which identifies sales and profit improvement opportunities for retailers, suppliers, distributors and service providers within the convenience store industry.

The awards, presented at the Natural History Museum in London, are based on feedback from 30,000 convenience store shoppers and 3,500 store staff and managers, plus suppliers who rate retailers and vice-versa.



New challenge for Laura with promotion to fresh foods controller

CONGRATULATIONS to Laura O'Brien, who has been promoted to fresh foods controller, a new position within the company.

Laura's appointment coincides with the introduction of our new chilled distribution facility at our warehouse in Kinross. This investment is designed to help David Sands nurture relationships with local suppliers whose products we cannot source through Nisa and already she is busy dealing with some of the companies which attended our Scotland Food & Drink event.

For Laura, who is just 25, this is a tremendous challenge and she must surely be an inspiration to everyone in the company having joined us eight years ago as a sales assistant in Cardenden, where she lives. From there, she moved to Kirkcaldy as a supervisor then spent time at head office as PA to the managing director then a buyer.

David Sands said: "We're delighted for Laura and already she is embracing this exciting new challenge with gusto. We see fresh foods very much as a growth area for the business and our new chilled distribution facility will give us the chance to offer our customers more products."



Laura O'Brien is already embracing the challenge of her new role

Healthy kids in Lochgelly

DAVID Sands has held another successful Big Breakfast for kids in the Lochgelly area, this time hosting an event in Lochgelly West Primary School which saw 300 kids – and a host of parents – enjoy a healthy breakfast on us.

Stephen Brown, operations director, said: "This is the fourth time this has taken place, further bonding our two stores in Lumphinans and Lochgelly with the community. The head teacher was delighted with the positive response from pupils and their families and the day was made possible with the support of Robert Wiseman Dairies, Fife Fruits, Kellogg's and Raith Fruit who all helped by supplying healthy products to give the kids the best possible start to the day."

David Sands is one of the original supporters of the Scottish Government-backed scheme to promote sales of fresh, healthy produce in convenience stores and, at the same time, encourage our customers to eat more healthily. This excellent initiative is growing stronger all the time under the banner of the SGF Healthy Living Programme and is identified in our stores by the 'green apple' healthyliving logo.

Programme co-ordinator Ross Kerr, who also attended, said: "There can be no doubt that education at this age is vital for the future health of children who, of course, are David Sands' customers of tomorrow. It is important, therefore, that stores have effective ranges and displays of fruit and veg and other healthier-for-you products so kids and their parents can make the link when shopping at David Sands."



Stephen Brown serves up healthy breakfasts for kids and their parents at Lochgelly West

'Challenge 25' to be introduced in January 2008

AFTER much analysis and discussion, David Sands has decided that, from January, we will introduce a 'Challenge 25' policy in relation to age-restricted sales.

Stores adopted a 'Challenge 21' policy some time ago and while this has proved to be an effective means of helping us to prevent sales of alcohol and other products to young people, we believe that raising the age to 25 will safeguard our staff.

"Following discussions with managers and supervisors, the company has reached the unanimous decision to introduce a 'Challenge 25' policy in our stores from January," said David Sands. "Staff are very supportive of this change and we believe that in the current political and health climates – and the imminent changes to licensing legislation – it is the responsible way forward for our company."



David Sands and Margaret Drummond are ready for 'Challenge 25'

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? 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@btoopenworld.com. With your help, we're getting more local news and trade press coverage than ever before so let's work even harder at getting the David Sands name out there!

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

