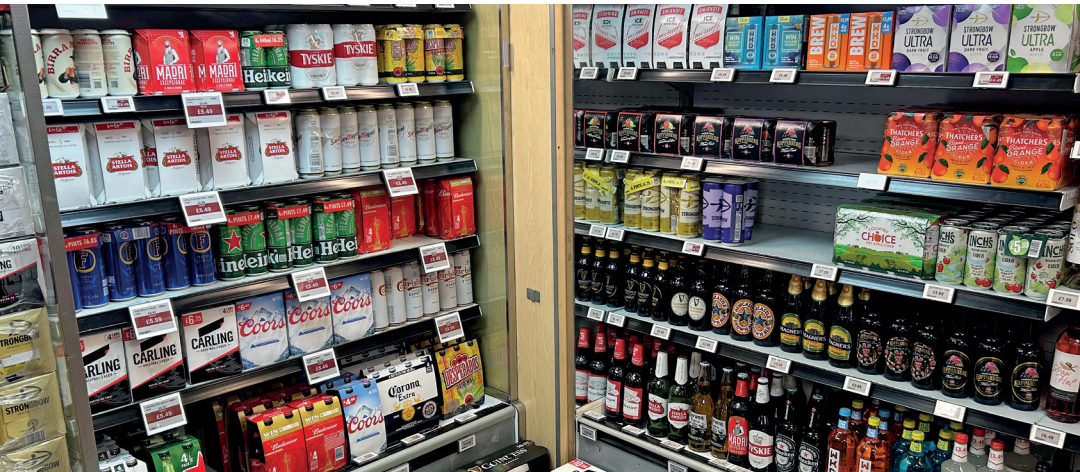


30 ^{RN} UNDER THIRTY

Shining a light on the rising stars of independent retail

**Innovative, highly
profitable and building
brilliant local shops:
Discover 2023's 30 best
retailers under 30**

#RN30UnderThirty



Celebrating this year's innovative winners

RN's 30 Under Thirty Awards herald the 30 best young retailers

The 30 Under Thirty winners guide returns for its third year, with more truly impressive retailers.

Over the following pages, we will take you through their achievements, discovering the key trends and tactics they've used to grow sales, increase footfall and create more successful stores. We will also be looking to the future, because these retailers have got big plans for 2024 as they look to take their stores further.

The winners were all under 30 years old and come from across the UK. Some are managing their first store, others have taken on the store they've worked at for some time. Several are store managers with ambitions to own their own shop in the future, while others have responsibility for

one key facet of a business, which they have shaped and improved to the benefit of the overall store.

There are some returning winners from previous years, who have built upon their successes in 2021 and 2022 to take their store to new heights. And there are plenty of newcomers, full of new ideas and innovations.

One core learning that we can take from these retailers is the increased focus on certain categories that are leading the way in footfall and profit generation. These include next-gen nicotine in all its varied formats, food to go – whether made in store or through self-service machines – global products like US confectionery, fresh food, and even toys and sporting accessories.

Beyond key products, the 30 Under Thirty are also embracing the online world of social media, home delivery and loyalty apps to grow their reach and customer demographic, and engaging heavily with their locals to become the heart of their communities. These winners are led by more than instinct, and place a huge amount of emphasis on EPoS data and research to explain and direct their decision-making and success.

They have built their businesses and success on a combination of inspiration, research, due diligence, hard work, tech savvy and entrepreneurial spirit. There is plenty we can all learn from their examples and much for us to celebrate as we look to the future of retail, with these stars at the helm.

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The 30 Under Thirty winners

Aaron Gray

Store: ViVo Essentials, Greenisland, County Antrim

Symbol: Unaffiliated

Anish Panchmatia

Store: One Stop Wylde Green, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands

Symbol: One Stop

Arjun Patel

Store: Premier Cavendish Square, Swindon, Wiltshire

Symbol: Premier

Caerwyn Clement

Store: Ashby's, Brixton, London

Symbol: Unaffiliated

30 ^{RN} UNDER THIRTY

Charlotte Ward

Store: Spar Beech Hill Road, Tidworth, Wiltshire

Symbol: Spar

Lewis Woodward

Store: Nisa Colley Gate, Cradley, West Midlands

Symbol: Nisa

Connor Reid

Store: Spar Central Avenue, Grangemouth, Falkirk

Symbol: Spar

Liam Evans

Store: Londis Meon Vale, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire

Symbol: Londis

Nathan Whiteside

Store: One Stop Cefndy Road, Rhyl, Denbighshire

Symbol: One Stop

Sophie Nightingale

Store: Costcutter Epsom, Surrey

Symbol: Costcutter

Daniall Nadeem

Store: Nisa Motherwell Road, Bellshill, North Lanarkshire

Symbol: Nisa

Louise Moreland

Store: Greens Retail, Fife

Symbol: Unaffiliated

Nikheal Patel

Store: Plummers News, Barking, London

Symbol: Londis

Sophie Williams

Store: Broadway Convenience Store, Edinburgh

Symbol: Premier

Dilmeet Singh Gaba

Store: Londis Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire

Symbol: Londis

Luke Singh Mander

Store: The Three Singh's, Selby, West Yorkshire

Symbol: Go Local Extra

Rabpreet Singh

Store: Dyas Local, Birmingham

Symbol: Independent

Suki Athwal

Store: Shop Around The Clock, Tenterden, Kent

Symbol: Nisa

Girish Jeeva

Store: Girish's Premier @ Barmulloch, Glasgow

Symbol: Premier

Luke Vincent

Store: H & Jodie's Nisa, Walsall, West Midlands

Symbol: Nisa

Reuben Singh Mander

Store: The Three Singh's, Selby, West Yorkshire

Symbol: Go Local Extra

Tiarna Bebbington

Store: The Local Walmersley, Bury, Lancashire

Symbol: Go Local

Jack Matthews

Store: Bradley's Supermarkets, Rothley, Leicestershire

Symbol: Nisa

Manpreet Singh Sungu

Store: Shenstone Stores, Staffordshire

Symbol: Unaffiliated

Ricky Nestor

Store: Avondale Village Store, Widnes, Cheshire

Symbol: Best-one

Vidur Pandya

Store: Kislingbury Mini Market & Post Office, Northamptonshire

Symbol: Unaffiliated

Joshua James

Store: Fresh & Proper, Fordham, Cambridgeshire

Symbol: Morrisons

Miriam Al-Bazz

Store: Stannington Road Post Office, Sheffield, South Yorkshire

Symbol: Post Office

Rudau Ali

Store: Crossways Convenience & RSA Stores, Oldham, Lancashire

Symbol: Unaffiliated

Vinal Patel

Store: Jimmy's Store, Northampton

Symbol: Premier

VUSE
CHARGE BEYOND

VELO

Royals

**LUCKY
STRIKE**

**TEN
MOTIVES**
ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE


CIRRO


Rothmans

Pall Mall

DUNHILL
TOBACCO / LONDON LIMITED

Vogue


CUTTERS CHOICE

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REWARDS





RN 30 Under Thirty Recognition Programme

BAT UK are again the very proud headline sponsors of this year's, 30 Under Thirty initiative.

Massive congratulations to all the winners of 2023.

30 Under Thirty provides a fantastic opportunity for all retailers to learn from the next generation, on how they have taken their businesses from strength to strength, gaining insights and advice from latest retail pioneers through a shared learning platform.

We are looking forward to celebrating with you all and learning from your outstanding achievements which have made you stand out from the rest!



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30^{RN} UNDER THIRTY

Aaron Gray

Store: ViVo Essentials,
Greenisland, County Antrim
Symbol: Unaffiliated



A returning winner from last year, Aaron's efforts over the past 12 months have seen overall sales in the store increase, on average, by 19.5% per week. He has largely achieved this by focusing on his fresh food department, placing greater emphasis on it, which resulted in a sales increase of just over 30% in the category.

Aaron also used local suppliers in his range more, stocking products from a local butchers and a local bakers. A recent success story was the introduction of made-in-store pickle kits.

Aaron focuses heavily on his sales reports, analysing how each category is doing on a weekly basis, identifying opportunities and introducing the products that will help him take advantage of them. He works closely with his team, leading by example and enrolling them all – himself included – in an online training programme as he searches for leaders within the group.

Within the next year, he plans to open three more stores, as well as moving his existing store up the road to increase the size to 2,000sq ft.



one | stop

Anish Panchmatia

Store: One Stop Wylde Green,
Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands
Symbol: One Stop



Another returning winner, Anish has taken his store to new heights in the past year, with overall growth of 13% after inflation. On top of this, he has introduced an online selling platform, which went from £400 a week to over £6,500, with the average customer spend between £18 and £19. In August, his online offer brought in £30,000.

Anish focuses on analysing EPOS data to advance his offer and reach new customers. He goes through products and departments daily and does regular range reviews, looking

for underperformers. This enables him to be proactive, delisting slow-selling lines and growing sales elsewhere. For example, by reducing his slow-selling pet food section by a third, he has seen sales grow by 23%.

On top of this, Anish works hard to lead his team effectively, encouraging feedback to find more improvements for the store.

In the future, Anish wants to drive his online business further, developing the offer in line with EPOS research to include clever promotions and a better, more profitable range.





Arjun Patel



Store: Premier Cavendish Square, Swindon, Wiltshire
Symbol: Premier

Arjun increased the gross margin of the store by 4%, not including vape sales. Footfall is also up 10% compared to last year.

He has achieved this by improving existing innovations and introducing new ones.

He brought in another three-tank slush machine so he can offer six flavours, with alcoholic options now available, which tripled sales.

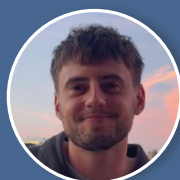
His Frappina iced coffee machine added a new dimension to his coffee-to-go offer that brings in 55% gross margin, even on promotion. A two-

metre fridge expanded his chilled food range and he plans to add a two-metre freezer as well. He also has custom-fitted shelves for a broadened vape stand.

He has put a manager in place and uses ChatGPT to generate Facebook posts, both of which allow him to work on the business rather than in it, sourcing new products – like US candy and snacks – and building relationships with suppliers.

He has taken over the fish & chip shop and plans to introduce a combined delivery option.

Caerwyn Clement



Store: Ashby's, Brixton, London
Symbol: Unaffiliated

Caerwyn, or Cae for short, has built a store that places community at the heart of everything it does. Ashby's in Brixton is a meeting point for people to get together and chat.

This success has been created almost from scratch. His unique selling point when starting out was the store's focus almost entirely on vegan and vegetarian products, although he has started introducing meat and fish as well. Cae has looked to fill his store with local produce and high-quality options, and has developed

his store's offering and position through a clear understanding of the local area, what makes it special and what locals want.

Cae is known for stepping up for his customers needs. A lifeline throughout the pandemic with its home-delivery service, Ashby's has built a loyal customer base in a competitive city.

Cae talks to customers and uses his own insights to source and recommend the best options for each basket, while maintaining a healthy balance sheet in a tough economic climate.



30^{RN} UNDER THIRTY

Charlotte Ward

Store: Spar Beech Hill Road, Tidworth, Wiltshire
Symbol: Spar



Charlotte only started working at Spar Beech Hill Road in May 2023, but since joining the business, she has already gone above and beyond her original duties to provide support and help in a remarkable number of areas.

She has Asperger's, which requires clearly defined goal explanations and expectations, but this has not stopped her from putting in huge amounts of effort, performing her role to an incredibly high standard and contributing to the store's overall performance, which is trading at 10% growth year on year.

She has been instrumental in decorating the store, something that Spar Beech Hill takes very seriously, for major events like the Women's World Cup, and has been described as a 'ray of sunshine' for her customers and the wider team, making the store a happier place to shop and to work.

Charlotte is already starting to learn about and take on management roles and jobs, such as handling orders, cashing up and setting up in-store promotions as she looks to rise further in the business.



Connor Reid

Store: Spar Central Avenue, Grangemouth, Falkirk
Symbol: Spar



Connor's approach and dedication has seen him promoted three times in the past three years, and he is now assistant manager. In the past year, he has improved the store's food-to-go offer, which resulted in sales growth of £3,000.

In the weeks leading up to local event Galaday, he set record-breaking weekly food-to-go sales of £3,700 and then £3,800. His engagement with the community saw him create activities for children and adults for Halloween and Christmas, including snowman hunts and raffles.

He took on the role of acting manager with another Spar store for eight weeks, retraining the staff. He also supported the store's refit by expanding its fresh and frozen product range by using store planograms and new refrigeration units.

This resulted in increased sales in frozen and fresh categories, as well as a reduction in wastage from 6% to 3%.

Connor plans to extend his skillset and become store manager, training other members of the team and helping them progress in their careers.



30 UNDER THIRTY. CONGRATULATIONS!

A massive well done to all of you for your fantastic achievements.

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30^{RN} UNDER THIRTY

Daniall Nadeem

Store: Nisa Motherwell Road, Bellshill, North Lanarkshire
Symbol: Nisa



While some retailers take on existing stores and turn them around, Daniall has instead transformed what was a run-down pub into an impressive store for the community. He took the pub on in 2018, when he was just 17 years old, and breathed life into the premises, bringing energy and attention to detail to the overall feel and offer of the venture.

Daniall has been quick to pick up new trends, including Prime energy drinks and MrBeast chocolate bars, and has also found innovative ways to provide much-needed and

footfall-driving services at the store, such as a self-service laundrette directly outside.

On top of this, Daniall has made excellent use of social media to promote his store and its products, creating competitions that drive connection and interactions. In addition, a partnership with Snappy Shopper has provided a strong delivery service for his customers that has driven more engagement and sales. Most importantly, he has built up and maintained very high standards within the store that are noted by his customers.



Londis

Dilmeet Singh Gaba

Store: Londis Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire
Symbol: Londis



Dilmeet has improved many aspects of his store this year. The acquisition of an industrial printing machine increased the number of customers coming to his store to drop off parcels by 35% within a four-week period.

He has worked with suppliers such as Aquavape and Heineken to increase his product knowledge, making confident recommendations and increasing repeat purchases from his store. Overall, sales have increased by 15%. Dilmeet has also introduced new categories, including a toy section and a growing US-

goods section.

Dilmeet has also worked to improve his sustainability. The store has always had a Biffa waste bin outside, but he has brought in more recycling wheelie bins and donates store supplies to the community. He has reduced his energy consumption by 23% by installing energy efficient lighting, sensor lighting in the stock room and a new plug in the mains sockets of the chillers that tell him how much energy they're using.

He has also worked with his water supplier to install eco-friendly water tools.





Girish Jeeva

Store: Girish's Premier
@ Barmulloch, Glasgow
Symbol: Premier



Girish took over this business in December 2021. He changed symbols from Best-one to Premier and invested £300,000 in a major refit.

Prior to his takeover, the store was turning over £20,000-25,000 a week. Within six months of trading post-refit, he had grown sales to £40,000 a week, with one week almost reaching £70,000.

Current weekly turnover is £65,000, and Girish has ambitions to take things further, up to £70,000-75,000 a week, on average, by the end of 2023.

Some of the categories that Girish has introduced into his store to great effect include an extensive, award-winning vape range, a beer cave, a range of freshly baked pastries and a vast array of slushie machines from Coca-Cola, Fanta, Tango and more that sit alongside a Costa coffee machine.

Girish sets high standards for his team and is always training them to be better and finding ways to improve the store further. He is introducing a self-scan service and electronic shelf-edge labels before the end of the year.

Jack Matthews

Store: Bradley's Supermarkets,
Rothley, Leicestershire
Symbol: Nisa



An ambitious, passionate and successful retailer, Jack has taken his family business to the next level in the past 12 months, investing the money made during the pandemic to undergo a massive refit in their store in Quorn.

The refit saw the shop reopen after three weeks with 25% more chilled space and a dedicated food-to-go offer, provided by Bradley's Kitchen.

A Zero Waste refills section creates zero packaging on products such as rice, pasta and cereal, with plans in place to grow this further.

In addition, the alcohol section has been backlit with LEDs to differentiate it from the rest of the store, while a Cook range appeals to other shopper missions.

He invested in the front of the store as well, bringing flowers and fresh fruit to the forefront, giving the impression that the store is bigger, while raised ceilings and colour-coded zoning have also improved the overall shopper experience.

As a result of Jack's investments, sales and footfall are up 17% and customer loyalty has been growing.



30^{RN} UNDER THIRTY

Joshua James

Store: Fresh & Proper, Fordham, Cambridgeshire
Symbol: Morrisons



After leaving university and working in catering, Joshua worked with Co-op as a team leader until February 2023. While working for Co-op, he designed a new store and brand – called Fresh & Proper – as well as securing a supply deal as a Together with Morrisons store.

The store is a completely new design, with high ceilings, wide aisles and a wide range of products on offer. It also has a completely new team in it, which Joshua has built up and trained with a combination of different methods to ensure they

all work together to provide an exceptional customer experience.

Joshua has incorporated the best of convenience with a farm-shop feel into the Fresh & Proper brand, featuring a strong range of Morrisons products alongside locally sourced goods.

This is something he intends to fine-tune even further as he looks to develop a blueprint to roll out into other stores. He has a great vision for the store, particularly around the use of technology, with the store using electronic shelf-edge labels.



Lewis Woodward

Store: Nisa Colley Gate, Cradley, West Midlands
Symbol: Nisa



As deputy manager, Lewis controls the rotas, ordering and merchandising for the store, and also runs its social media pages.

In the past six months, he has grown the store's Facebook followers from 6,900 to 8,040, increased Instagram followers from 1,600 to 2,070, and set up a TikTok account for the store.

He keeps up with social media trends and innovates with new advertising media opportunities, such as screens. He is dedicated to improving the business and making it more efficient with sys-

tems such as Connect and Slack.

He has also been involved in the recent overhaul of the store layout, which provided a better flow for customers and resulted in an 11% increase in value sales and a 27% increase in items sold.

In addition to this, Lewis now heads up all training for staff and is using the Slack app to show staff how to do all the tasks in the shop. He plans to grow sales further from £35,000 per week to £40,000 and relaunch the sandwich bar to grow weekly sales from £1,200 to £3,000.



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Liam Evans



Store: Londis Meon Vale, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire
Symbol: Londis

Liam has played a key role in managing the store, and while his focus is on the beer, wine and spirits (BWS) section, he also runs the store in owner Jeet Banshi's absence.

His wealth of knowledge about the category, blended with his can-do attitude and ability to gel with customers, has helped the store keep up with the latest trends and launches to ensure it stocks what its customers demand. He has also played a major role in training other members of the team, adapting his mentoring according to each team

member's skills and developing his relationship with the team.

He has a holistic approach to product knowledge and education, which has proved popular with staff and customers.

Liam's influence has seen the introduction of new products into BWS and trusted stock availability, resulting in sales growth.

Having previously managed a Co-op store, Liam has adapted to the independent culture of Londis Meon Vale, and is keen to expand his managerial skills further and manage his own store in the future.



Louise Moreland



Store: Greens Retail, Fife
Symbol: Unaffiliated (trading with Nisa)

Over the past year, Louise has gone above and beyond to support the growth of the company.

As head of trading at Greens Retail, alongside being category controller for alcohol and tobacco, she has recruited key suppliers, growing the overall range to deliver on shopper needs. This has resulted in an overall sales increase of 64% from the previous year for the whole business, with growth of 20% in the Kirkcaldy site, 14% in Ellon and 12 in Nisa Leven.

As part of the senior management team, she has also been critical in

overseeing the acquisition and reopening of several Greens stores. She efficiently and confidently manages the company's trading team, showcasing excellent leadership qualities.

She has great communication skills and ensures her team are kept on track with their individual roles and responsibilities to ensure all deadlines are met – while always remaining open and approachable. Her attention to detail has enabled any errors to be resolved before they have an impact on the wider business.





Luke Singh Mander

Store: The Three Singh's, Selby, West Yorkshire
Symbol: Go Local Extra



Together with his brother Reuben, and in partnership with Go Local, Luke has implemented a full store refit that helped to grow sales by 15% without losing that important community store feel.

While Reuben is studying at university, Luke runs the store on a day-by-day basis, using a daily checklist and tasks to ensure that standards are maintained, while also using EPOS data to analyse where improvements can be made to his range.

A forward-thinking retailer, Luke has helped to spearhead a

social media campaign that has promoted the shop and its products to a wider audience. With a focus on Facebook, he has created a full monthly promotional programme and, as a result, the account has gone from strength to strength.

Luke has worked to build relationships with reps and gets involved in supplier activations alongside anything Parfett's is doing, which has enabled him to further bolster his range and promotional capacity. He has also worked hard to make sure his store has the newest products first.

Luke Vincent

Store: H & Jodie's Nisa, Walsall, West Midlands
Symbol: Nisa



Luke started out stacking shelves during the pandemic and has since become the online sales manager at the award-winning H & Jodie's Nisa. The store's co-owner, Amrit Singh Pahal, has long heralded the growing importance of a store's online presence in the modern world, and Luke has been at the forefront of the development of the store's offer and its continued success.

Since taking over, he has transformed the business' online presence, spearheading month-on-month growth and pushing things beyond what

had previously been thought possible.

A burgeoning Facebook page that saw 35% growth last year has also been complemented by a TikTok account to reach another audience. The growth has been so impressive that it has made the case for further investment in the store's warehouse. The store created its own unique app, which has increased its profitability and overall online footprint.

Luke has hopes for continued growth, with expansion into European and South American markets targeted.



30^{UN}DER THIRTY

Manpreet Singh Sungu



Store: Shenstone Stores, Staffordshire
Symbol: Costcutter

Manpreet is a community-driven retailer who has donated to his local community, set up a charity store in the village Christmas market and makes his store a welcoming environment for customers.

He has changed the opening hours to better reflect his customers' needs and created a wider range of products with a better pricing structure. He offers free deliveries for his elderly customers and has brought the post office to his community, while newspaper sales have grown from £500 a week to £2,300.

Taking on a rundown

shop in the middle of a pandemic and turning it into a thriving village store with growing sales, he has been central to supporting his legal-age smoker community with transitioning to smoke-free alternatives and has driven sales growth of next-gen nicotine month on month.

His work on driving alternative sales resulted in a range of new products being introduced, which the store was not offering when he took it over. He has also overseen an increase in Christmas greetings card sales of 23% year on year.



Miriam Al-Bazz



Store: Stannington Road Post Office, Sheffield, South Yorkshire
Symbol: Post Office

In a challenging year for the post office, Miriam's enthusiasm, innovation and adaptability has enabled it to thrive. She handled severe disruption from newspaper and magazine wholesalers by overseeing home deliveries and actioning problems as soon as they arose. She invested in an electric scooter, which allowed her to deliver newspapers herself.

Her example has inspired other people in the community who have asked to train under her watch as they seek to undergo similar career trajec-

tories. She has trained these youngsters with aplomb, with several still working at the post office. Miriam engages with distributors for the best stock fit for the community, has enhanced the shop floor and stock display, and listens to and actions the feedback from customers on how to improve their experience. She oversaw changes to store layout to make it safer during Covid-19 and provided a food delivery service for elderly customers.

Miriam plans to finish her AAT exams and become a subpostmistress.





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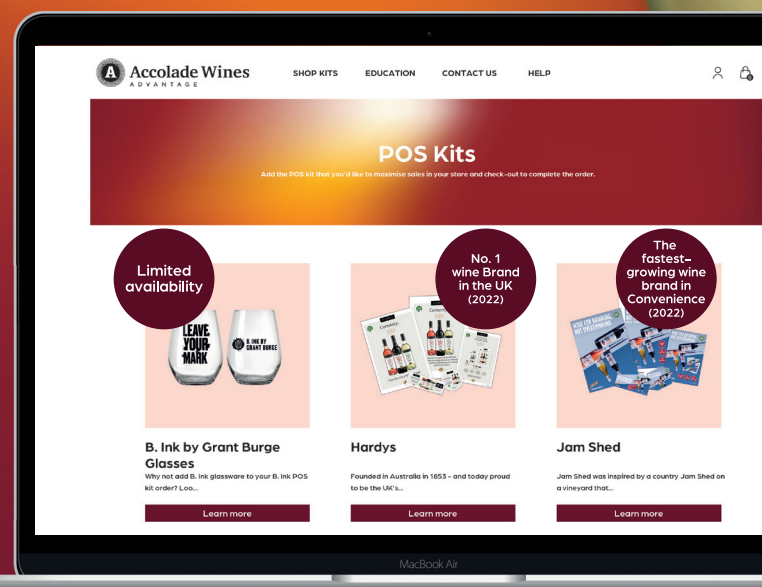
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HOW CAN DATA ENSURE YOUR PROFITABILITY?

SPOTLIGHT ON:

Category: Cigarettes

Product: Benson & Hedges Blue King Size Cigarettes 20s

Demographic: Urban

Store size: Medium (£2k-£3k daily)

REGION	REGIONAL RANKING IN TOP 25	AVG COST PRICE	MOST-COMMON SELLING PRICE	LOWEST SELLING PRICE	HIGHEST SELLING PRICE
East Midlands	1	£9.09	£11.85	£11.85	£13.80
East of England	1	£9.10	£12.50	£11.85	£13.00
London	1	£9.26	£12.50	£11.85	£13.65
North East	9	£9.14	£11.85	£11.85	£14.60
North West	2	£9.16	£11.85	£11.30	£13.50
Scotland	11	£8.97	£11.85	£11.85	£13.99
South East	1	£9.17	£11.85	£11.85	£13.89
South West	1	£9.16	£11.85	£11.85	£13.99
Wales	8	£8.76	£11.85	£11.85	£13.50
West Midlands	1	£9.00	£11.85	£11.85	£13.65
Yorkshire & The Humber	1	£9.14	£11.85	£11.85	£13.50

*table design not indicative of Pricewatch app display

HOW TO USE THE DATA IN OUR INNOVATIVE PRICEWATCH TOOL

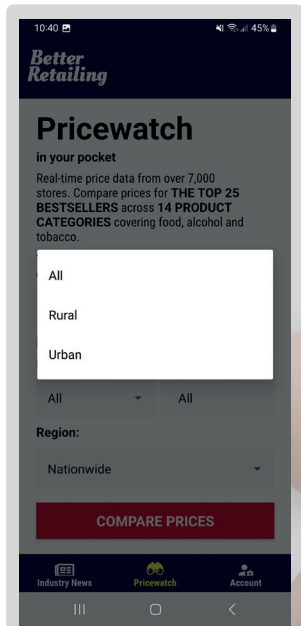
Focusing specifically on Benson & Hedges Blue King Size Cigarettes 20s, we can see that prices vary significantly from £11.85 to a well-above-average of £13.85 across the UK.

Action: Does your price fall within this range? If you're above the highest price point, you could be losing customers, if you're below the lowest price point, you could be missing out on margin.

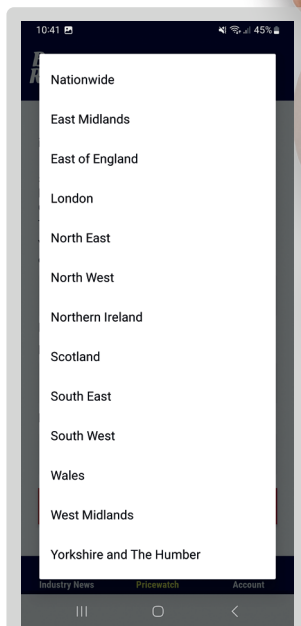
Pricewatch data shows us that, regionally, prices are lowest in Wales and highest in London. Are you pricing competitively in your region?

Action: If you're in London, you can afford to charge a little more. However, if you're in Scotland or Wales, prices need to be kept lower in order to remain competitive.

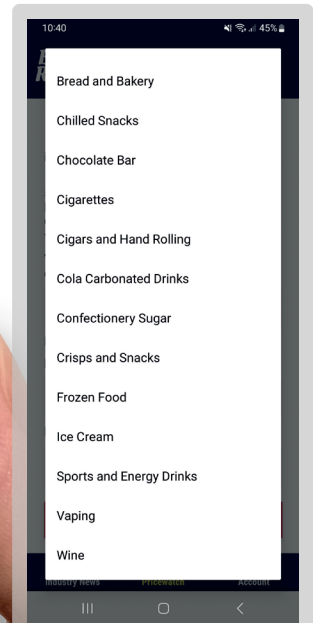
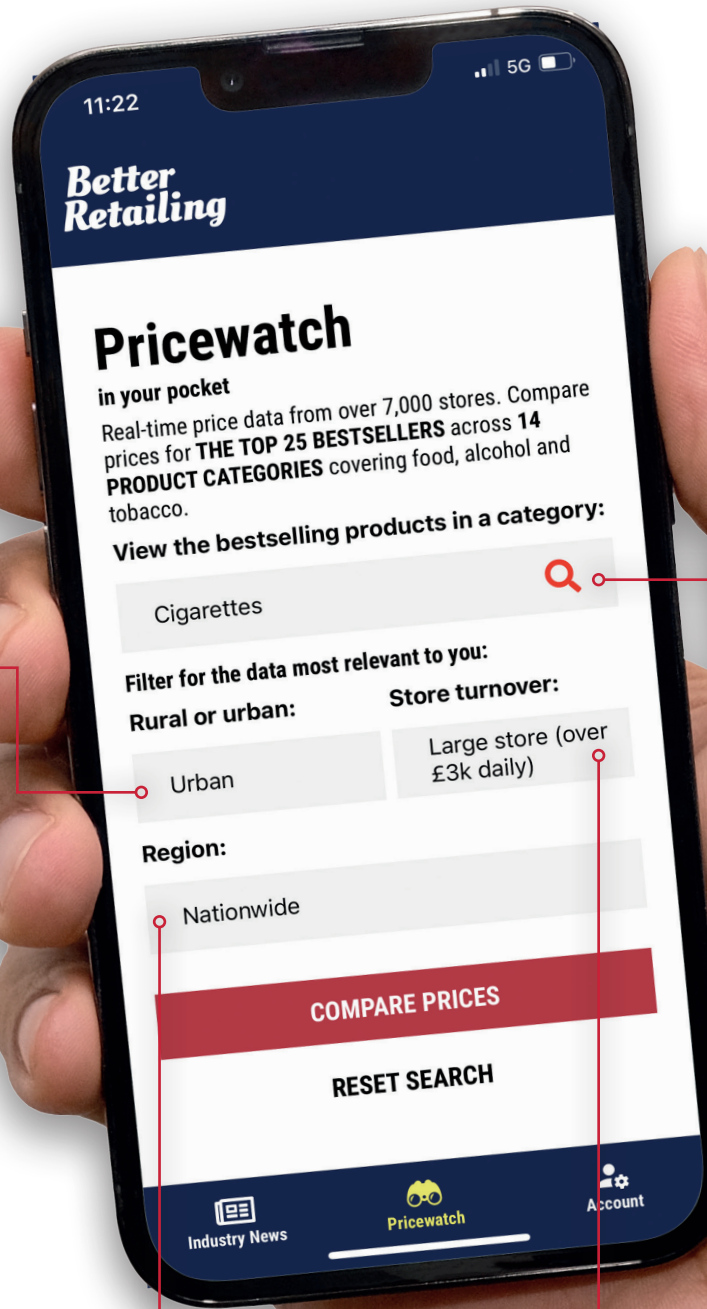
Pricewatch gives you the ability to carry out analysis across 350 different product lines – pinpoint where you can increase your margins, or attract new customers with the optimal range for your region and a competitive pricing strategy.



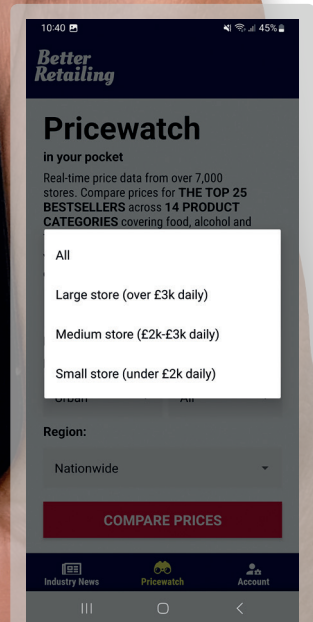
Rural or Urban?



Filter to your region or view the national average

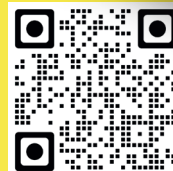


Choose from 14 product categories covering food, alcohol and tobacco



Small, medium or large store?

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30^{RN} UNDER THIRTY

Nathan Whiteside



Store: One Stop Cefndy Road, Rhyl, Denbighshire
Symbol: One Stop

In the past 12 months, Nathan has pushed the food-to-go offer in his store to new heights, doubling what they were selling previously out of the hot food cabinet and increasing the hours the food is available by an extra three hours to incorporate a greater lunch-time sales opportunity.

He has introduced Rollover Hotdogs, which sell more than 30 units a day, with further growth expected when a nearby college reopens. He has also added a Shmoo milkshake machine and swapped out the two-barrel slush machine

for a three-barrel machine, which has doubled the amount of high-profit drinks the store is selling.

He has played with the store layout to improve the shopper experience, sponsors several local sports teams and has added solar panels to the roof to reduce his electricity bills. Nathan has been putting his team on online training courses and aims to train his staff in every part of the store. In the future, he has even bigger plans for his food-to-go offer and wants to expand his sponsorship to more local teams.



Nikheal Patel



Store: Plummers News, Barking, east London
Symbol: Londis

Nikheal took over the day-to-day operations of his family's convenience store in 2022 and has taken to the running of the business with enormous drive and capability.

He has increased profit margins through strategic product purchasing and a dedicated approach to cash-and-carry visits. As well as maintaining pricing updates on the store's EPOS system, and representing the store at supplier meetings and trade shows, Nikheal has introduced a number of new categories and services to take the store to the next

level. These include a dedicated and growing next-gen nicotine offer, food to go and a bean-to-cup coffee machine.

He has shown leadership and proactive decision-making, maintaining strong relationships with the store's team and the local Fed district.

Next year, Nikheal plans to modernise the store, with a social media marketing system for the store that he wants to put into practice. He is also in talks to introduce Too Good to Go, which will reduce wastage and offer an important service to the local community.



Rabpreet Singh

Store: Dyas Local, Birmingham
Symbol: Unaffiliated



In the two years that Rabpreet has run Dyas Local, the store has seen a 30% increase in sales. He has achieved this by diversifying the range on offer considerably, with the introduction of phone accessories, US candy, tobacco accessories, perfumes, toys, next-gen nicotine products and more.

Beyond this, he has also identified the customer need for novelty and has kept each category in his store fresh and interesting with product innovation, and has started a delivery service.

By adding more aisles and creating a

cleaner and brighter store, Rabpreet has improved the overall customer experience, with customer service ranking high on his priorities. He has already signed trade agreements with the likes of BAT and has been in talks with perfume brand Yodeyma about becoming a flagship branch. He's not finished with innovating yet, with plans to introduce new shelves to increase range further.

He has identified a gap in the market for sports accessories and is planning to create a sales space for a large range outside his store.

Reuben Singh Mander

Store: The Three Singh's, Selby, West Yorkshire
Symbol: Go Local Extra



Another winner from last year, Reuben has continued to run the store with his brother, all while continuing his university education.

The brothers went on a full-scale refit of the store, gutting it from floor to ceiling to allow them to increase the ranging on their chilled options and to introduce a food-to-go offer that includes machines for coffee, slushie and Tango Ice Blast. In addition, Reuben has brought a vape display stand into the store to take further advantage of a growing trend.

Reuben, together with his brother, has

overseen the planning, development and implementation while working with the overall store development and shopfitting team to create the new store.

New products, promotions and an impressive social media strategy have also all contributed to growing footfall and sales.

In addition, within the past year, he has grown the store's margins from 23% to 27% by focusing on vapes and being more savvy with other purchasing decisions.

Reuben plans more innovations for the store next year.



30^{RN} UNDER THIRTY

Ricky Nestor



Store: Avondale Village Store, Widnes, Cheshire
Symbol: Best-one

Six years ago, Ricky took over management of the store, which had been in his family for 20 years. He has grown the business substantially over the past year. He has tracked the sales levels of his stock inventory and optimised the bestselling products in the store.

He put a lot of emphasis on the chilled category, growing it to include a full range that includes dairy and ready-to-go meal solutions, and has been rewarded with sales of up to £7,000 per week. The investment in a Tango Ice Blast machine has added to

the store's food- and drink-to-go strategy. He has reacted to local competition by streamlining his beer range, growing sales by 30%.

By introducing Jisp, he has added an extra £1,000 in weekly sales and helped his customers get more value for money, while a partnership with Too Good to Go has reduced wastage. He is active on Facebook, with 'Star Deals' attracting customers and raising basket spend.

Ricky wants to develop a new range of healthy options and expand fresh produce and meal solutions.



Rudau Ali



Store: Crossways Convenience & RSA Stores, Oldham, Lancashire
Symbol: Independent

Rudau took over the store in October 2020, leaving an architecture degree to instead take on a business with a weekly turnover of £8,000. Since then, his efforts have seen it grow to £15,000. In the past year, he has taken on another store, Lakeland Grocers, in a city-centre location that enjoys a weekly turnover of £28,000 during term time and £24,000 in the summer.

Rudau has gained a good understanding of the retail landscape, having learned from his retailer father, and within his two stores he focuses on commu-

nication, consistency and product knowledge to both help him interact better with his team and with his customer base. This has resulted in his understanding of shopper demands and a range that better reflects their needs and wants.

Rudau also connects with his local community by ensuring his store donates to local causes and events, including charity walks and runs, while ensuring his staff are friendlier to customers than the competition.

In the future, Rudau plans to acquire another city-centre store.



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Sophie Nightingale

Store: Costcutter
Epsom, Surrey
Symbol: Costcutter



Sophie has worked at Costcutter Epsom since 2017 and is responsible for handling and growing the vape category, which the store introduced around 15 months ago.

She sources products, places orders and has worked to get a better understanding of the category as a whole by visiting other stores to find out the latest trends.

She is strict on stock control and understands what her customers need.

Her input has seen the store increase its overall range, introducing flavours and zero-

nicotine bars.

As a result of her work, the next-gen nicotine section of the store has grown exponentially from a standing start. It now brings in around £130,000 every year.

Beyond her work with vapes, Sophie has also taken on further responsibilities, undertaking a first-aid course and becoming a driving force in improving store security, by making sure her colleagues are safe as shoplifting becomes a more worrying trend. She plans to carry out further training to learn more about the wider industry.



Sophie Williams

Store: Broadway Convenience
Store, Edinburgh
Symbol: Premier



Sophie has become a key team member, single-handedly organising a contactless home-delivery system.

When the store celebrated its 40th anniversary this year, Sophie took charge of organising a week-long series of events to thank customers for sticking by them. She ran competitions, sampling days, 'character' appearances, a prize trolley dash, a prize tombola, a healthy-eating programme with the local primary school, and a full social media programme, including designing all the publicity materi-

als. Every child in the school made a piece of art work for the celebrations, and Sophie spent two days displaying it all over the shop. Last year, Sophie also participated in a charity fundraiser in aid of a local family, raising more than £3,500.

Sophie has sole charge of the store's social media, and has built a Facebook following of nearly 3,000, while her TikTok posts get thousands of views, with children coming into the store asking if they can make a TikTok with her. She has also helped other retailers with their social media.



Suki Athwal

Store: Shop Around The Clock, Tenterden, Kent
Symbol: Nisa



Suki took over the store, which has been in his family for 33 years, in September 2017. In the past 12 months, he has grown delivery turnover from £1,800 a month to £3,000. What started out with him delivering himself has grown to the point where he's hired a part-time delivery driver, and it continues to grow month on month.

Suki has also kept on top of next-gen nicotine trends, and the store now sells just over £4,000 a week in disposable vapes, with e-liquids, pods and tanks also growing within the

store. He is constantly trying new flavours and delisting slower lines to ensure he's maximising space and stocking the right range.

He has created a 'destination' space in his store, complete with a one-metre bay of US confectionery and soft drinks, a Tango Ice Blast and a Hershey's milkshake machine.

His ownership of the fish & chip shop next door has allowed him to cross-promote both businesses and grow sales, while the in-store bakery's range of sandwiches, rolls and more drives further interest and footfall.

Tiarna Bebbington

Store: The Local Walmersley, Bury, Lancashire
Symbol: Go Local



Tiarna started at the store in April 2023 and has already had a major impact, particularly when it comes to social media, alongside driving digital innovations that make the business more efficient and effective.

She has brought her extensive online knowledge to bear in creating promotions and competitions on Facebook and using digital technology to grow the business' online footprint and presence through the use of Google reviews. She has achieved this by using near-field communication (NCF)

tag cards that are displayed in the shop.

Since she took over responsibility for social media interactions, sales have increased in store and its Facebook has seen its following grow by 70%, with more joining every day.

Tiarna has brought more digital innovations to the store, with stock checks now done digitally every week and all ordering done from the till as she makes full use of EPOS data to work out what products need to be ordered for each week far faster and more efficiently than before.



30^{RN} UNDER THIRTY

Vidur Pandya



Store: Kislingbury Mini Market & Post Office, Northamptonshire
Symbol: Unaffiliated

Last year, Vidur took over a store with weekly takings of £2,000 and grew it to more than £7,000. He achieved this without any refurbishment. Instead, he listened to customers before setting about remerchandising and restocking the store.

Vidur introduced new lines, including fresh fruit and vegetables, meat, local fresh bakery, vegan options, frozen food, specialist magazines and more. He also increased the post office hours to reflect demand.

He offers free home delivery to elderly and

vulnerable customers, as well as those in the middle of a party. He also contributes to local village clubs, events and charities.

Last summer, he introduced Arctic Slush, with alcoholic options for adults, and in the winter he introduced a coffee-to-go machine that has widened his customer base to a neighbouring village.

He also worked with Vapouriz to introduce a next-gen nicotine offer that now brings in more than £1,000 a week. He is introducing a complete vape gantry to expand the current range.



Vinal Patel



Store: Jimmy's Store, Northampton
Symbol: Premier

Vinal has been managing the store since June 2022 and is always looking for ways to improve its offering. He uses EPoS data to identify and delist slow-moving products, allocating space to fast-moving categories such as vapes, US confectionery and soft drinks, which he has been able to source faster than the competition. This, coupled with a new digital display, has increased revenue and profitability.

US products now generate £1,200 in revenue a month with an average 35% margin, and his sourcing of

MrBeast bars enabled the store to generate £500 in sales in two weeks. Vape sales have doubled to £12,000 per month and his development of the heated tobacco range is generating profits of £1,000 per month.

Vinal introduced a milkshake machine, which generates more than 160 sales per week during hot weather. He delegates tasks to team members, giving them the freedom to try out ideas and create social media content. He plans to use technology to restart the store's home-delivery offer.



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