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Food Retailing or Food Entertainment?

By John Stanley

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Food retailing is going through a global revolution. On one side of the equation companies such as Walmart, Aldi and Liedl are gaining market share as local commodity food retailers.

Where does this leave the independent food retailer and does he have a future? If you ask Pete Luckett of Halifax, Nova Scotia in Canada, the answer is a definite yes. As the food giants move the industry in one direction, the independent retailer has no choice but to move in the opposite direction and to make food shopping an entertaining experience.

Pete started his retail life as a "barrow boy" selling fruit and vegetables in the English town of Nottingham. Having toured the world he ended up residing in the Atlantic provinces of Canada where he opened his award winning "Pete's Frootique".

Pete's philosophy is simple; provide an entertaining experience and top quality product and your customers will keep coming back.

It's about people

Pete's philosophy is that you need to show you care about people if you are to compete with the mass food retailers.

As a consumer visiting Pete's retail outlet you are guaranteed to be greeted at the entrance by a team member in top hat and tails. Steve the piano player will play your favourite tunes on his piano which is positioned on a stage above a display of fruit.

It's not all gimmicks to entertain you

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Pete employs a nutritionist to provide professional information on health related issues and each week team members attend product knowledge training sessions to ensure they can pass on product benefits to customers.

Pete is committed to building a team, his internal customers are as important as his external customers. Interviews to hire team members take place at 7.00am as a test to see if potential team members can get to work on time. The interview concentrates on checking the potential team member's personality. Technical knowledge can always be learned, personality is an ability that is essential to become a member of a team.

Retail is detail

Pete's Frootique is a theatrical experience, customers are directed through a "boutique" store layout.

On the journey they pass by "The English Butcher", "The French Deli", a bakery and an English

product shop which stocks many of Pete's favourite products from when he was in Britain.

On the consumers journey they pass by theatrical props displayed in the ceiling as well as tasting stations that entice consumers to try new fruits and vegetables from around the globe.

Pete has one of the smallest advertising budgets in the industry. He rarely advertises in local newspapers, but has one of the most effective marketing strategies in the industry.

Pete has authored three books on fruit and vegetables, their origins and unique ways of cooking them.

He regularly appears on the national Canadian TV as a food expert and has a two minute segment on the national lifestyle program just before the weather report. These segments can include how to identify when mangos are ripe to how to cook new potatoes to preparing celeriac and beetroot soup.

Pete has a regular thirty minute documentary program on the Food Channel. Each episode takes one fruit or vegetable and follows its origins, how it is grown commercially and unique ways of preparing and cooking the produce. Programs have been produced on mangoes, macadamias, kiwi fruits and truffles.

Pete is also a motivational speaker. I have shared the stage with him at retail conferences in Canada, USA and the United Kingdom. His enthusiasm is contagious and an excellent advertisement for his business.

Effective retailing

Consumers don't just visit Pete's Frootique because it is a fun place to go. They visit because he and his team are excellent retailers.

Power displays are built with skill based on years of experience. The team know how to effectively

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dummy displays, so that a little can look a lot. Endcaps are used throughout the store and cross merchandising ensures that they maximise the basket spent per customer.

Branding is critical

The brand "Pete's Frootique" is precious to Pete and his team. The logo is evident outside the business, on all team members' business cards and on all signs used to promote products. Every customer is constantly aware of what business they are in.

Pete is fully aware that all his customers have to go to a supermarket to finish off their weekly shop. He has secured the position as the expert on fruit and vegetables and the company that cares about the customer where consumers can enjoy shopping. This is a truly unique experience that customers talk about to their friends.

Pete and I have produced a training video "Winning at Retail" based on Pete's Frootique. Its aim is to act as a training tool for retail team members on how to develop an experience in a retail environment. This video is available via our web site www.johnstanley.cc

If you have the opportunity to visit Canada, put Pete's Frootique on your itinerary. You won't be disappointed.

John Stanley is a conference speaker and retail consultant with over 20 years experience in 15 countries. He regularly contributes to retail magazines around the world and has authored several successful marketing and retail books including the best seller Just About Everything a Retail Manager Needs to Know. Visit

Quality Dog Food Is Essential For The Health Of Dogs

By Mike Yeager

Dog food is very important for the health of dogs. It is easy to overlook it, but it is essential to pick the right dog food for your pet dog. People sometimes just pick the first dog food bag they see at the store, instead of considering what is needed for your own dog. Puppies need different types of food than mature dogs, just as different breeds of dogs also require different types of dog food. If your dog seems like it has no energy, consider switching to another type of dog food. If you are unsure what kind to buy, you should consult your veterinarian.

Dog Food should be healthy and tasty.

If your dog does not like a certain type of dog food, do not force your dog to eat it. Instead, try to find another type of dog food that has all the vitamins that your dog needs, and your dog enjoys eating. Also, be aware that your dog's taste may change over time, and may not necessarily eat the same dog food all of its life. If it does not like its current dog food, then buy some other types of brands, and see

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which one is its favorite.

Mike Yeager
Publisher

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