

BottomLine



THE VOICE OF MIDWEST INDEPENDENT RETAILERS // VOL. 30, NO. 4 // APRIL 2019

It's All About the Show

pg 18

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■ State of Convenience Store Retailing // PAGE 8



16 Categories

Over 140 Items



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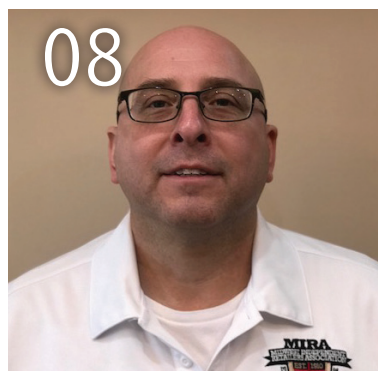
THE VOICE OF MIDWEST INDEPENDENT RETAILERS
VOL. 30, NO. 4 // APRIL 2019

features



A WINDY CITY RECAP

The Midwest Independent Retailers Association (MIRA) hosted its Second Annual Chicago Metro Grocers Gala last month at the Empress in Addison, Illinois. The event included fine cuisine, dancing, entertainment and a casino night.



STATE OF CONVENIENCE STORE RETAILING

Now more than ever it is important to be in tune with the macro trends that are impacting the world of convenience store retailing. There are many headwinds we are facing, like proposed minimum wage increases and regulations on e-cigs/vape products. These are just several of many issues that will continue to evolve, but there is hard data in critical categories we can look at today in order to see immediate challenges we are facing.



COVER STORY // IT'S ALL ABOUT THE SHOW

The flowers may be blooming and the temperatures climbing, but spring time also means show time in the retailer industry. Many suppliers are hosting their annual spring shows including Lipari, Sherwood, SAS, Team SLEDD Convenience Distributors and McAneny Brothers Co.



chairman's message

PAUL ELHINDI // MIRA CHAIRMAN

The Board Retreat Helped Spark MIRA

The Midwest Independent Retailers Association (MIRA) Board of Directors conducted a successful retreat in Chicago, Illinois and attended the Chicago Metro Grocers Gala in late March. It was enjoyable and inspiring to meet and mingle with Chicago MIRA members. While the Chicago market is unique, attendees benefited from the exchange of ideas and solutions affecting our association and businesses.

The MIRA Board of Directors utilized the retreat to discuss and develop ways to shape the future of the association. Much emphasis was placed on the fact that MIRA members are part of an integral team, regardless of where they operate their business. The Board of Directors is fully committed to participating in all events in each state MIRA is present in and looks forward to aiding in the execution and planning of future events. It is also vitally important for MIRA members to attend trade shows and events offered by our association. These events provide tremendous insight and support for anticipating and being ahead of changes shaping the outlook of your business or industry.

We congratulate Saad Abbo and Mike Mitchell on being appointed chairman and co-chairman of the PAC fund committee and invite all members to take part in assisting or joining the PAC committee, as well as participating in future functions. PACs provide much needed access to legislative leadership. Therefore, it is vital that legislative efforts are undertaken in each state MIRA is present in through PACs. Since fund-raising is crucial to a healthy PAC, all members are encouraged and expected to view the PAC fund as a necessary 'utility' or fixed cost to successfully operate their business. A monthly member contribution to the PAC fund is advised as a method of strengthening the PAC fund.

As a part of the ongoing pledge to our members to always operate in the best interests of our association, MIRA seeks to recruit participants for our Board of Directors who possess the desire and dedication to contribute ideas and attend meetings and events. We have developed a step-by-step plan to help candidates understand what will be expected of them on the board. A potential candidate will be provided the opportunity to attend and observe the inner workings of the MIRA Board prior to making a commitment.

March was a productive month filled with developing ideas, planning future objectives, and setting newly formed strategies into motion to benefit MIRA and our members. As a reminder, please review all programs that we offer to make sure you are taking advantage of the rebates and discounts available. As always, please feel free to call me at (800) 666-6233 or email me at paul@miramw.org, with any ideas, questions, or comments. ■

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Details:

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- Additional 1% on Energy Supplements (Total of 3%)
- Additional 2% on Foodservice products (Total of 4%)
- Additional 2% on Supplies (Total of 4%)

Requirements:

Customer must purchase the following categories:

- Cigarettes
- OTP
- Energy Supplements
- Supplies
- Coffee (If offered by retail operator)

Customer needs to average \$3,500 in total weekly purchases

Customer needs to purchase 12 out of the 13 weeks per quarter

Customer must maintain good credit standing

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Estimated Rebate*
(Annual Total Paid Quarterly)

\$2,000

**Est. MIRA Member
Program Savings**

\$3,350

**Total Member Benefits
PER LOCATION**

* Based on \$1,000 non-tobacco purchases weekly

**For more information on Team Sledd, call the office at 800.333.0374
or E-mail Sheila Reilly at SReilly@TeamSledd.com**



A Windy City Recap

The Midwest Independent Retailers Association (MIRA) hosted its Second Annual Chicago Metro Grocers Gala last month at the Empress in Addison, Illinois. The event included fine cuisine, dancing, entertainment and a casino night.

About 400 people attended the annual event. Members from Chicago and from the Midwest traveled to the Windy City for the night out.

Chicago is the largest city in the Midwest and the 4th largest in the country and board members say it would be a disservice to all if MIRA did not have a Gala in Chicago.

It was a night filled with great people, food and entertainment. It was a night to kick back and enjoy the festivities with the people from the industry and the vendors that members deal with on a daily basis. It was an opportunity

for Independent Grocers of Chicagoland to network with members and vendors.

Some of the highlights of the night were Eddie Butts Band, casino, silent auction and an open bar. Last but not least, we had cash door prizes that surprised guests.

"The Chicago Gala was once again a big hit," said Auday Arabo, president and CEO. "The gala attracted even more people than last year." ■

ASK THE MEMBER // WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT MIRA'S CHICAGO GALA?

"I thought it was a successful event. The food was good and there were a lot of people – I think there were about 400 people. Everyone enjoyed themselves."

– LOU TENUTA // VALLI PRODUCE

"I liked catching up with my industry peers and retailers. The Eddie Butts Band was solid as usual."

– BRAD MILLER // UNFI

"The best part of the Gala for me was to see the attendees (retailers, suppliers, distributors, etc.) having fun all together and celebrate the industry. MIRA has been a great host and you could clearly see it on everybody's face. It is very important to take at least one day a year to do so."

– ANDREA VALENTE // MIRA

"It was great seeing vendors, other independent retailers, and even competitors outside of the food show and in regular social environments. It's always good to see and get to know others in the industry beyond just our businesses."

– GOLAN MOR // GARDEN FRESH.

"I feel that the gala was a success like last year. There were a bunch of positive remarks on the layout, food and music. It seemed as if more people played the games this year. As we grow the gala will only get better."

– MINOS ELIOPOULOS // BROOKHAVEN MARKETPLACE

Event Sponsors...

MIRA GRACIOUSLY THANKS THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS
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Chicago Metro Grocers Gala

FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2019

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petroleum news & views

EDWARD WEGLARZ // MIRA DIRECTOR, PETROLEUM

Increased Tobacco/Alcohol Investigations/Audits

If you sell tobacco and/or alcohol, you need to read this article! The local police agencies, the State Police and The US Food & Drug Administration are actively conducting tobacco and alcohol investigations and audits at retail establishments, especially gas stations and convenience stores. They are actively looking for untaxed items.

Just so you know what they are looking for and the laws and regulations they are actively enforcing, here's a rundown.

You must have available, whenever your store is open for business, the last four (4) full months of original invoices for all tobacco products in your store: cigarettes, cigars, snuff, loose tobacco and any other tobacco-like products. So, save your invoices from all tobacco suppliers, file them in a folder or envelope and have them immediately handy for your cashiers to provide to the investigators. The investigators will not wait for you to travel from home to your store if you are not there. Investigators will not wait for you to retrieve your invoices from your accountant or your off-premise office. Original invoices must be available immediately during all hours that you are open for business.

If your accountant wants your invoices at the end of the month, give him a photocopy, not the original. I will also mention that it is illegal to transfer and/or trade tobacco products between locations even if you own and operate both locations involved in the transaction. Only businesses holding wholesale cigarette licenses can legally do so.

While doing the investigation/audit they will also be looking for illegal drug paraphernalia. Save

yourself some trouble, don't stock or sell such items.

Also have the correct signage displayed. It's a great idea to have a cash register that can read the IDs that customers provide and immediately tell your cashier whether a legal sale can be made.

While they are at it, they'll also check for counterfeit NHL, MLB, NFL, NBA and college wearables. Don't stock or sell "stuff" that is offered by the guy selling out the unmarked van.

The officers will usually be in plain clothes. They should be professional and respectful of you, your employees and your business. You need to act in the same way. You should ask each officer for their identification and a business card, while providing each officer with your identification and business cards.

If you have security camera footage, save it to validate the date of the visit and how many officers visited your premises. Don't be surprised if the number of officers that visit is between 6 and 8.

The advantage of having all the paperwork ready and available for review is the fact that the investigation "team" will be in and out of your store within an hour. If you don't have the paperwork ready, they could be there for hours inventorying all your undocumented tobacco products. And they could confiscate the tobacco products without invoices, and you won't get them back until the product is stale.

The alcohol compliance is easy. You can't sell alcohol to anyone who is under 21 years of age or already intoxicated! Check ID's, use the age verification application on your cash register or pump controller, or purchase an age-verification swipe machine that will read a customer's ID and immediately verify if you can make the sale.

There is a responsibility that goes along with the option to sell cigarettes, alcohol and tobacco. Save yourself a lot of trouble by complying with the rules!

Remember MIRA offers responsible alcohol training (TiPS), and for 10 or more students we'll come to your store to do the four (4) training and testing. ■



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CATEGORY
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PROMOTIONAL
TOOLS

SALES SUPPORT

MIRA rebate program details:

- Minimum order of \$800, must purchase weekly to qualify.
- We service PA, OH, MD & NY.
- 2% Non-tobacco / non cigarette rebate.
- Plus and extra 1% if purchasing energy supplements
- Plus an additional 2% if purchasing foodservice products
- Plus an additional 2% if purchasing supplies

Customer must purchase these categories to qualify:

- Cigarettes
- Smokeless & other tobacco
- Energy supplements
- Coffee

Subject to pre-qualification by McAneny Brothers



c-store news & views

JIM GREEN // MIRA VICE PRESIDENT, PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

State of Convenience Store Retailing

Now more than ever it is important to be in tune with the macro trends that are impacting the world of convenience store retailing. There are many headwinds we are facing, like proposed minimum wage increases and regulations on e-cigs/vape products. These are just several of many issues that will continue to evolve, but there is hard data in critical categories we can look at today in order to see immediate challenges we are facing.

Altria said U.S. cigarette sales volumes declined 4.5% last year. This was more sharply than expected while E-cigarette sales grew 35%. Over the same period, the company's market-leading Marlboro brand declined 5.2% in volume. Altria now expects U.S. cigarette volumes to decline 3.5% to 5% in 2019, and 4% to 5% a year through 2023, while e-cigarette volumes grow 15% to 20% a year. This validates the company's \$12.8 billion investment in Juul Labs Inc. This would allow the tobacco giant to support and even accelerate transition to noncombustible alternative products.

Gasoline consumption was basically flat for 2018, this is a trend to pay close attention to. While there is data that shows there will be more drivers in the next several decades, watch for significant changes in the adoption of electric vehicles. Tesla has introduced the Model 3 at \$35,000. The Tesla Model 3 has quickly conquered the luxury car segment. In its first full year on the market, the new EV sold an estimated 138,000 units in the US, beating out the Lexus RX, which sold 111,641 units, and sailing past the BMW 3 and 4 series, which sold 75,957 vehicles. The Model Y SUV Crossover is expected to begin in 2020. The Model Y

costing \$39,000 for the standard version and \$47,000 for the long-range version. Estimates on what Tesla will deliver in 2019 range between 300,000 – 360,000. CEO Elon Musk said Tesla will have approximately one million Model Y's made within the next year. Even if these production goals are not achieved it is easy to see the adoption of EV accelerating.

According to the 2019 NACS/Nielsen Convenience Industry Store Count, the number of U.S. Convenience Stores dipped slightly. There was a 1.1% decline from 154,958 to 153,237 stores. More importantly there was a 2,188-store decline in single store operators.

Looking at declining cigarette sales, potential changing gasoline demand and a reduction in independent retailers, foodservice will continue to be a big part of keeping independents viable in an environment of mergers, acquisition and consolidation. This is one of the biggest reasons MIRA has partnered with three new wholesalers in 2019, S. Abraham and Sons, Inc, Team Sledd and McAneny Brothers. All three of these valuable MIRA partners have food service solutions that are designed to help any level of retailer. Each have strong grab-n-go and fresh solutions that are easily implemented. In addition, they have branded solutions that can offer menu options for all dayparts. Just to name a few, S. Abraham and Sons, Inc has Fried chicken from Champs Chicken and Cooper's Express Chicken, Pizza and Subs from Piccadilly Circus Pizza & Subs and Fresh Mexican from BluTaco. Team Sledd offers Corner Etery, Curb Café and several pizza solutions. McAneny Brothers offers an extensive line of foodservice products with Scratch, Prepared, and Packaged options. They sell fresh dough pizza, fresh chicken, soups, breakfast favorites, fresh meat and produce. While all three of these wholesalers have different programs, one thing they have in common is they are industry leaders when it comes to food service. Please schedule an appointment with one of their representatives to see what they can do for you! ■

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michigan lobbyist report

MATT MINER // CAPITOL STRATEGIES GROUP

Gas Taxes, Business Taxes and .05 BAC Cue an Active Start to 2019

The problem was easy to diagnose, the solution is not as simple. #FixTheDamnRoads was her motto during the 2019 Gubernatorial campaign and during her 2019-2020 budget announcement, Governor Whitmer released her solution to the motto she coined. Just a few weeks ago she proposed adding a 45¢ per gallon gas tax increase to raise the \$2.5 billion she believes is needed to fix the roads and bridges in Michigan. She has since begun to tour the state to sell this proposal directly with her constituents at town halls stretching east, west, north and south. Not helping the cause is the steady uptick in gas prices across Michigan, coupled with a firm resistance from the Legislature to even touch such an increase in the gas tax. The ball is now in the legislature's court to craft an alternative if the tax is DOA. Leadership in the House and Senate have begun to search for savings first, but will likely need to settle on some form of new revenue, setting up what looks to be a long battle.

Another proposal floated during the budget presentation was an extension of the Corporate Income Tax to all LLC's and S-Corps which make up a vast majority of small businesses. The additional 6% tax would generate \$280 million and would affect 150,000 entities across the state. This proposal is intended to offset the repeal of the public portion of the pension tax passed in 2011 by then Governor Snyder and legislative republicans. Private pensions would still be taxed under this proposal.

This proposal was also met with resounding objections from the legislature and business communities. It remains to be seen if this issue will ever get a vote in the legislature, but it remains as a point of difference between the Governor and the Legislature that carry on into the fall when the budget deadline comes into play.

Just recently, Representative Abdullah Hammoud introduced legislation to reduce Michigan's blood alcohol intoxication level from .08 to .05, citing that current law doesn't do enough to prevent drunk driving. House Bills 4419-4421 were referred to the House Judiciary Committee. Representative Hammoud noted that 44% of fatal crashes in Michigan are a result of impaired driving and a reduction in the blood alcohol limit would reduce that figure by 11%.

It is not clear if the committee plans action on this package of bills at this time, but MIRA and its legislative team are monitoring their status. ■



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michigan lottery report

BRIAN O. NEILL // MICHIGAN LOTTERY COMMISSIONER

New Fast Cash Instant-Win Draw Games Expected to Generate Excitement; Boost Sales

When the Fast Cash suite of games launched in July 2017, the Michigan Lottery expected them to generate excitement for players and boost sales for retailers. The Fast Cash games proved to be immensely popular with players and their performance has far exceeded our expectations.

In fact, the launch of Fast Cash in Michigan was the most successful launch of the games among the many states that currently offer these types of games. Since the games launched, sales have eclipsed budget projections totaling more than \$133.4 million and

players have won more than \$95 million. To capitalize on the Fast Cash popularity, four new games are being launched on May 5th:

- Bowling Bucks II – Each \$1 ticket offers players a chance to win prizes ranging from \$1 up to \$100 and 10% of the Fast Cash progressive jackpot.
- Whole Lotta \$100s – Each \$2 ticket offers players a chance to win prizes ranging from \$2 up to \$500 and 20% of the Fast Cash progressive jackpot.
- Doubler Wild Time Progressive – Each \$10 ticket offers players a chance to win prizes ranging from \$10 up to \$6,000 and 100% of the Fast Cash progressive jackpot.
- Jumbo Jackpot Slots – Each \$20 ticket offers players a chance to win prizes ranging from \$20 up to \$10,000 and 100% of the Fast Cash progressive jackpot plus \$250,000.

Fast Cash games range in price from \$1 per play up to \$20 per play and print from terminals at Lottery retailers.

Fast Cash has also been a successful game for retailers. More than 99% of Fast Cash prizes may be claimed at Lottery retailers creating new opportunities for redemption commissions. Since Fast Cash launched, retailers have earned more than \$1.9 million in sales and redemption commissions. ■



**MICHIGAN
LOTTERY™**

About 97¢ of every dollar spent on Lottery tickets is returned to the state in the form of contributions to the state School Aid Fund, prizes to players and commissions to vendors and retailers. In the 2017 fiscal year, the Lottery's contribution to Michigan's public schools was a record \$924.1 million. Since it began in 1972, the Lottery has contributed more than \$21 billion to support public education in Michigan. For additional information, follow the Michigan Lottery on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and online at www.michiganlottery.com.

INSTANT TICKETS // PULL TAB TICKETS

NEW INSTANT TICKETS:

On sale April 2nd:

- IG 294 – \$30,000 Wild Time – \$2
- IG 296 – Double Bonus Cashword – \$5
- IG 279 – Super Triple 7's – \$10
- IG 270 – Millionaire Maker – \$20

INSTANT GAMES SET TO EXPIRE:

Expiring April 1st:

- IG 206 – Bingo Twist – \$2

Expiring May 6th:

- IG 202 – \$2 Wild Time Series – \$2
- IG 216 – Crusin' – \$2
- IG 223 – Platinum Wild Time – \$10
- IG 786 – Cash in a Flash – \$2

NEW PULL TAB TICKETS:

On sale April 2nd:

- MI 543 – Big League Brew – \$1
- MI 531 – Red Hot 7's – \$2

PULL TABS SET TO EXPIRE:

Expiring April 3rd:

- MI 500 – 3's A Charm – 50¢
- MI 598 – Chimp Change – \$1

Expiring April 16th:

- MI 595 – Cherry Twist – 50¢
- MI 596 – Kickoff Cash – \$1

Expiring May 14th:

- MI 502 – \$30,000 Super Slots – \$5
- MI 512 – Lucky Loot Multiplier – \$2
- MI 597 – Bigfoot's Fortune – \$1
- MI 599 – \$15,000 Jackpot – \$2
- MI 581 – Win Pigs Fly – 50¢

TICKET ACTIVATION: Retailers are reminded to activate all game tickets before putting them on sale to ensure winning tickets may be redeemed by players.



DOUBLER DAYSSM

**Double their winnings.
Double your redemption commission.**

Watch players have double the fun with DOUBLER DAYS in April. That's when random Club Keno tickets print with a doubler message. Lucky players who find that message on their ticket will double their winnings. And when a player doubles their winnings, you'll double your redemption commission. Tell your customers to play Club Keno today!



Applies to Club Keno, Kicker and Extra prizes only. The Jack prizes and Extra 10-spot game top prizes are excluded from this promotion. Club Keno, Kicker and Extra prizes will be doubled up to a maximum of \$4 million per draw. The Club Keno mark is a registered trademark with IGT Global Solutions Corporation. Overall odds of winning Club Keno are from 1 in 4 to 1 in 17. Overall odds of winning Extra are from 1 in 3 to 1 in 10. Knowing your limits is always the best bet. Call the Michigan Problem Gambling Helpline for confidential help at 1-800-270-7117.





ohio lobbyist report

TERRY FLEMING // TC FLEMING & ASSOCIATES

Gas Tax

HB 62, the state's two-year Transportation Budget bill is at the center of attention for the Ohio General Assembly. The bill, as submitted by Governor DeWine, called for an 18¢ per gallon gas tax increase and a 20¢ per gallon diesel fuel tax increase. The bill did not restore the 3% tax collection allowance and it tied future increases to the CPI. The Ohio House reduced the gas tax to 10¢ phased in over two years: 7¢ the first year and 3.4¢ the second year, while diesel tax would increase 20¢ over a three-year period. The House also eliminated indexing the tax and, like the Governor, did not restore the 3% tax collection allowance. The House greatly increased the vehicle registration fee for all vehicles not using gasoline or diesel, i.e. electric and hybrids, along with subjecting CNG vehicles to a gas tax equivalent. MIRA provided opposition testimony to Governor's original bill and to a passed House bill due to not restoring 3% tax collection allowance and not addressing concerns over unbranded fuel being sold at branded stations in Ohio, as well as below-cost-selling. After meeting with House leaders, MIRA was told that since the Transportation Budget bill must pass by the end of March there wasn't time to look at those issues, but they'd consider them in the General Revenue Budget (GRF). As of this writing HB 62 is being considered by Ohio Senate where massive changes are expected with the final bill being determined by a conference committee between House and Senate.

The Governor's GRF Budget will soon be introduced and it's expected to focus on children, drugs, Lake Erie and job creation; it's also expected to be over \$400 million dollars more than two years



ago. To pay for all the new programs, the Governor is expected to seek increases in cigarette and e-vapors tax and possibly alcohol. MIRA is part of a large coalition that is already at work and meeting with legislators to convince them such a tax is counter-productive. MIRA would support a statewide bill making 21 the age for purchasing tobacco or vapor products. The GRF must pass by the end of June.

Other bills of interest to MIRA are HB 92, HB 118 & HB 71. HB 92 would require a countywide vote on any increases in liquor taxes by County Commissioners. MIRA believes this would be a good check on runaway taxation. HB 118 would require all service stations to have signs on pumps indicating what you pay in federal and state taxes for gasoline. While not a bad idea, there could be a cost factor. Also, weather could erode such notices and possibly lead to infractions. HB 71 deals with minimum markup for cigarette sales to wholesalers. This bill has had numerous hearings and seems to be on the fast track. MIRA has met with wholesalers and at this point in time, has no problem with the bill.

We start 2019 with a new Governor and Speaker of the House, so the first six months will be a test between Executive and Legislative branches of government, as each try to outdo the other for leadership. It will be a bumpy ride. ■



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MIRA MEMBER EXCLUSIVE



ohio liquor report

JIM V. CANEPA // OHIO DIVISION OF LIQUOR CONTROL

Secondary Liquor Sales

Reselling furniture and lightly used items is a common practice these days, and with the increase in online marketplaces, doing so can be done in the click of a button. While you can resell your car, electronics and even your house online, what you cannot resell is spirituous liquor – regardless of whether on an online marketplace or not.

This type of illegal activity is more prevalent with bourbon than any other spirituous liquor – driven by the demand of bourbon collectors and the low supply of specialty product by distillers. In fact, more than 90% of the secondary liquor sale cases charged by the Ohio Investigative Unit from December 2018 to February 2019 were advertised as bourbon and whiskey products.

HURTS OHIO'S SPIRITUOUS LIQUOR MARKETPLACE

These black market transactions are causing more damage than you might think. When distillers see that their highly allocated product is being sold by Ohioans in a secondary market, it can make them less likely to offer their products to Ohio.

Additionally, there is no guarantee that the buyer from a secondary sale will receive what is being advertised and the product may have been tampered with. Let's say you bought a product on the secondary market (which was switched out for a different product) and hated the taste, would you buy it again? Probably not. Then, the brand you thought you tasted loses a customer. This is not only a safety risk, but it negatively affects the brand's quality and safety.

This risk is so serious that brands have employees dedicated to tracking this illegal secondary sale market. When this type of activity is caught, the brands send screen shots and proof to our office. That's when we pass the information along to the Ohio Investigative Unit to take over. While much of the brand risk is the customer receiving subpar product substitutes, the biggest risk is a customer receiving a tainted product causing illness or death.

WHAT'S IN THE BOTTLE?

A great thing about our state is that you can go into any OHLQ Agency and know that the product you're buying is exactly what you expect it to be. Purchasing a product through illegal secondary sale is risking not knowing exactly what is in the bottle.

Aside from being a risk to a brand, it can be a hazard and potentially life threatening to your health. Just in February of this year, over 100 people in India died after consuming alcohol that was bought from an unlicensed seller. On the secondary market, there is no way to ensure your health and safety.

In fact, one study found that 40% of whiskies acquired in the secondary market were fake or not distilled in the year advertised. And on top of that, the study found that 100% of malt whiskies advertised as being distilled around 1900 or earlier were completely fake.

Why would anyone want to purchase a product that they do not have 100% confidence in?

The bottom line is, unless you are licensed to sell liquor, doing so is illegal - not just in Ohio, but across the country. If you see suspicious activity, I encourage you to say something and report it to the Ohio Investigative Unit. They can be easily reached by dialing #677. ■





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A close-up photograph of a person's torso and hand. The person is wearing a light grey suit jacket over a white button-down shirt. A bright red lanyard is draped around their neck. Their right hand is holding a silver metal clip that is attached to the lanyard. The clip is holding a white rectangular card. On the card, the text "It's All About the Show" is written in a bold, red, sans-serif font. The background is slightly blurred, showing hints of a blue wall and a window.

**It's All
About
the Show**



The flowers may be blooming and the temperatures climbing, but spring time also means show time in the retailer industry. Many suppliers are hosting their annual spring shows including Lipari, Sherwood, SAS, Team SLEDD Convenience Distributors and McAneny Brothers Co.

“There are deals available on so many products with multiple ship dates,” said Jim Green, Vice President of Program Development for MIRA. “It really gives the retailers an opportunity to save money and see new products and programs.”

SAS concluded their 33rd Annual Vendor Exhibit & Trade Show in February and said, “Thank you to our customers and suppliers for attending the show and helping to make our “Back to the 80’s” themed tradeshow an awesome success,” as stated on their website. “We look forward to many more years with you as part of our team—you are part of what has made SAS successful these past nine decades!” Their next show is February 27 & 28 in 2020.

McAneny Brothers is a full-service convenience and grocery store distributor, offering on-line ordering and next day delivery throughout Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland, West Virginia and New York. They hosted their 2019 tradeshow, “Emerald Aisles of Savings” last month on March 13th. More than 200 vendors were on hand at the Pasquerilla Convention Center in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, where it was a “whale of a show.” Touted on their website.

Customers saw firsthand all the new products and what’s trending in the industry. They also had special “show-only” pricing, free tastings, samples, prizes and incredible deals.

After the show, customers enjoyed delicious Shades of Green Buffet at the Holiday Inn-Johnstown, then strolled two short blocks to the 1st Summit War Memorial Arena, and attended a concert by Cole Swindell, a young singer/songwriter who has six platinum singles and an amazing eleven No. 1 country music titles, including Chillin’ It, Hope You Get Lonely Tonight, Ain’t Worth The Whiskey, Let Me See Ya Girl, You Should Be Here, Middle of a Memory, and Flatliner.

“The focus of these shows are emerging trends and how they are impacting their business. Specifically, in Healthier for You, foodservice, tobacco and e-cig/vape categories,” said Green.

In terms of highlights at the shows, “opinions will vary but I am always of the mindset that a retailer should always be on the look out for how they can improve their foodservice offering,” said Green. “It is very easy for a retailer to experience “Menu Fatigue”. Look for products

that can expand or compliment your current offering. Limited Time Offers are a great way to shake things up and let your customers know they have new choices.”

There are shows coming up including Lipari’s show on April 3rd at the Suburban Showplace in Novi. They have been hosting a trade show for 35 years. More than 6,000 people are expected to attend. “It is a great way for our customers to be able to purchase products at the best prices,” said Tony Franchi, Senior Vice President of Sales Lipari. “We also tell our customers that it is a true buying show, so be prepared to make deals.”

Like every show, Lipari will feature new products, “We have two new categories that will be introduced,” said Franchi. “Health Wellness & Beauty and Ethnic Foods. The show is the best way for our company to show new trends and items that we are selling at Lipari Foods.”

Sherwood Food Distributors is hosting their Detroit Show on April 16th called “Sherwood’s Price is Right”. The admission is free and the show is from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Burton Manor in Livonia. The website touts great deals on a variety of items. They will feature beef, pork, poultry, processed meats, lamb, veal, seafood, deli, dairy, eggs, frozen foods, Hispanic, kosher, bakery, foodservice and grocery products. You can register online at www.sherwoodfoods.com.

Team Sledd is hosting their 2019 expo “Driving the Future” on April 18th at Mountaineer Race Track and Casino in Chester, West Virginia. The show goes from 9:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. and then a dinner follows with entertainment inside the Grand Ballroom. “The retail landscape is changing,” Team Sledd quotes on their show flyer. “Our expo is designed to address head on the big trends impacting the convenience category today. In one focused day, you’ll learn how Team Sledd delivers.”

There are specific ways to approach a show and that is “with an open mindset that our industry is continuing to change and evolve,” said Green. “U.S. cigarette sales volumes declined 4.5% last year – more sharply than expected – as e-cigarette sales grew 35%. Over the same period, the company’s market-leading Marlboro brand declined 5.2% in volume. Altria now expects U.S. cigarette volumes to decline 3.5% to 5% this year and 4% to 5% a year through 2023, while e-cigarette volumes grow 15% to 20% a year. Given this environment, what are retailers doing to off-set this trend and grow their business?”

Shows are not just about the products. They are also about the people. “It is a great opportunity to network with industry professionals,” said Green. “The manufacturers, brokers and wholesaler teams are great resources to help members stay on top of what is happening in our industry. It gives our members the opportunity to learn, improve and be more competitive.” ■



Customer Focused Supplier

Like many in the industry, the customer is king at D & B Grocers

■ BY ASHOURINA SLEWO // DENHA MEDIA GROUP

While D&B Grocers first opened its doors in 1994, it was not the Hesano family's first venture into the world of retail. In fact, it was after their market expansion that the family decided to venture into distribution. The Hesano first entered the retail industry in 1962 when Michael Hesano Sr. opened the doors of Hesano's Market in Detroit.

More than anything, D&B Grocers was born out of an apparent need in the Detroit retail industry. With a great need for an independent distributor to serve independent retailers, the Hesano family has found great success, as they have become the primary source for independent retailers throughout Southeastern Michigan.

"The distribution business was always intriguing to me and since we started in 1994, we have grown to more than 1,200 locations," explained Bobby Hesano, owner and Midwest Independent Retailer's Association (MIRA) board member. "We service c-stores, gas stations, markets, specialty stores and more. It's a gambit of different market segments throughout the retail sector."

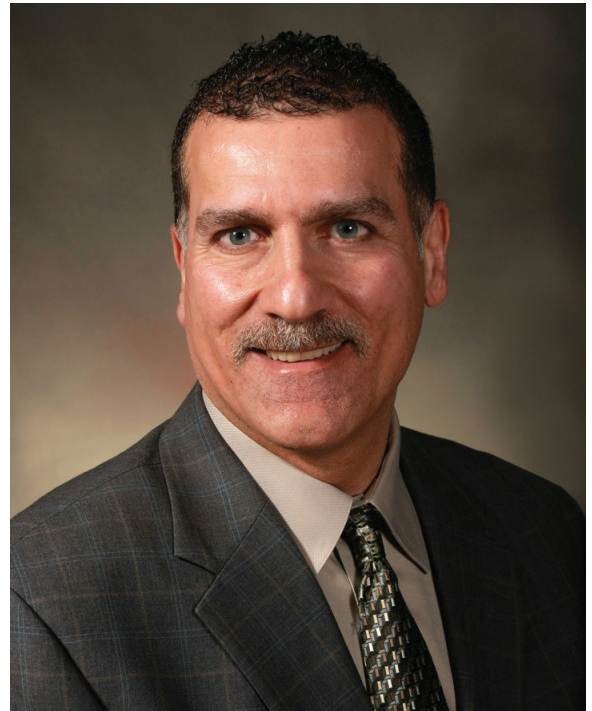
These 1,200 locations span across four states in the Midwest including Ohio, Illinois and Indiana. With D&B roots being in Michigan, it is the most predominant state on their roster.

Setting D&B Grocers apart from their competition is the company's attention to customer service above all else and their ability to adapt.

"Customer service is above everything, it is number one," explained Hesano. "Our adaptability also sets us apart. We are able to adapt to the many changes in the industry with technology being one of those changes. We have been able to adapt to the ebbs and flows of the food industry."

It is this ability to adapt to industry fluctuations that has allowed D&B Grocers to continuously grow.

"I would say changes have always been positive. We continue to grow



year after year," said Hesano. "But it's simply because we have been able to adapt to the different changes in the industry. As the industry changes, so do we."

Recognizing that these fluctuations hit distributors and retailers across the board, Hesano says they try to help their retailers adapt as well.

"I would say the changes in the industry are of course always going to affect you in either a negative or positive way, and it could have affected us in a negative fashion, but we are not going to allow that to happen," he said. "That's why we try to figure out ways of facilitating the changes to our retailers."

Upon reflection, Hesano finds that no matter how big D&B Grocers gets, his favorite part will always be working with his customers. For him, nothing beats being able to help his customers.

"My favorite part is our customer interactions and the diversity of our customer base," explained Hesano. "That has always been my absolute favorite part. We always say customers come first."

Looking back at the distribution company's more than 20-year history, Hesano cites MIRA as a pivotal part of their success as the association embodies their famed seven pillars of service.

"MIRA allows us to network with other members where a lot of those members may help us if we have questions," he explained. "We share experiences, whether it's similar distribution companies, or we share experiences with the retailers that are also members. We get different perspectives from within the industry through other members. That gives you a feeling of almost being a part of a fraternity."

More importantly, he says, MIRA gives its members a "unified voice within the industry. ■

SUPPLIER: D & B GROCERS

Location: Westland, Michigan

Founded: 1994

Employees: About 100

MIRA Member Since: 1994

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What's in This Spring

As the weather finally starts to warm up, retailers everywhere begin to shift and start preparing their stores and businesses for the long summer days. From the hot new items hitting the market to preparing their stores, retailers have much to keep in mind when the flowers start blooming and the sun is here to stay.

Preparation is key, says Matthew Loussia of Value Wholesale Distributors. Retailers should be prepping for spring and summer before the warm weather hits.

"Prepping stores for summer time items such as beverage and BBQ type items are important," explained Loussia.

In addition to getting stores prepped and ready to go for the spring and summer, Loussia also explains that the warmer months are a great way for retailers to engage with their surrounding communities. "Stores should also work on finding ways to engage in the communities this summer," he said. "Such as hosting events at their stores or sponsoring local sports teams."

Presentation is imperative, retailers should cater their displays and décor to the season.

"It's important for retailers to remember with the change of season, you should make changes in store on displays and décor," explained Loussia. "Make your store summer friendly and incorporate more outdoor décor."

While the displays and décor of the store play a large role in preparing for the warmer months, Loussia stresses the importance of keeping a clean store.

"Spring is a great time to do a deep clean in the store to remove all the dirt and salt brought into the store throughout the winter months," he explained. "Cleanliness is crucial! If you wouldn't shop in your store, don't expect your customers to want to. From the entrance to the checkout, a bucket of paint or floor polish can go a long way. Also find ways to make your store's aroma fresh."

If you are going by the calendar, retailers should have already started the switch into spring and summer. "Spring/Summer readiness depends on the geography," said Larry Newman, director of merchandising for Spartan Nash. "The first target date is daylight saving time change, followed quickly by Spring Equinox on March 20th."

"Patrons have severe cabin fever and on the first warm day they are ready for outdoor cooking and meal transitions," noted Newman. "The offerings have to be in place to satisfy this immediate need."

Charcoal, lighter, condiments, candy, grilling meats, sport beverages, waters and lighter fare meals are the expectation that retailers need to deliver on. "Time of day shopping pattern will change dramatically," said Newman. "A clean, fresh spring-like look needs to transcend across the entire store with every department offering an invitation of season values."

The biggest mistake retailers make is missing the deadlines. "There is nothing worse than walking into a market that is stuck with winter carryover products

still on endcaps and display vehicles," said Newman. "Low grades show up immediately if the store is reflective of everything the consumer does not want to purchase. Ad plans need to be a comprehensive and alluring offer, with in-store activity that support a speedy transition to warmer weather. Exciting Point of Sale (POS) can be a huge component in conveying this message."

Spartan Nash is reminding retailers that are several hot new innovations, especially in frozen foods. They say a must carry this spring and summer are:

- Mickey Mouse Ice Cream Bars
- Johnny Pops
- Pints continue to grow
- Traditional vegetable brands expanding to entrée/meals
- Green Giant Harvest Protein Meals
- Birds Eye Veggie Made Entrees
- Healthy Choice Power Bowls
- Authentic Asia (a real growth segment)
- Candy by the yard
- Taco Bell Cheeses
- Kraft Trio Snacks
- Capri Sun Adventures
- Bitten and Twisted Ranch Salad Dressing
- Pioneer Woman Dressing – food network
- Store made Pop Corn
- Anything coffee
- Wine in Cans
- Licensed Cereals

Spartan Nash is also reminding retailers that now is the time to

WHAT'S IN THIS SPRING
continued on next page.



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Gas Tax Increases Hit the Midwest

Tax hikes in Michigan, Ohio to hurt independent gas station owners

■ BY ASHOURINA SLEWO // DENHA MEDIA GROUP

With the release of Governor Gretchen Whitmer's budget came the news of a drastic gas tax hike. Nearly tripling the current state gas tax, Governor Whitmer has proposed a gas tax increase of 45¢ per gallon. This increase is to directly aid in the repair of roads throughout the state.

At 45¢ per gallon, Governor Whitmer's plan to fix the roads would make Michigan's total fuel taxes the highest in the United States.

A tax hike has also passed in Ohio. The Ohio House has passed HB #62 to pass a 10.7 cent-per-gallon gas tax. Reduced from the proposed 18 cent per gallon gas tax, this tax increase will be phased in over a period of three years.

In both states, these tax increases have been met with opposition. This increase has an

across the board effect. Many have spoken out against the increase, including the Midwest Independent Retailers Association (MIRA) who say this increase will be detrimental to their members who operate independent gas stations as well as motorists.

"This is going to hurt the consumers' wallets, they will have to pay more to fill their tank," said Ed Weglarz Director of Petroleum. "As for gas station owners, there's really no money in selling gasoline. It's for this reason gas station owners offer ancillary items in their stores, or offer car washes, or do repairs. If it takes more for a consumer to fill their tank, they're less likely to purchase ancillary items."

An increase in the gas tax will result in lower gas volume and reduced sales and profits in companion sales. In Michigan, MIRA is urging Governor Whitmer to take other solutions into consideration before

implementing the tax increase that will be sure to hurt motorists and gas station owners alike.

"We ask the Governor to consider the actual needs to fix roads and bridges, create a more equitable taxation of alternative fuel vehicles, and direct any fuel tax increase entirely to roads and bridges," said Weglarz. "We would also like to see a "sunset" provision to any gas tax increases."

In Ohio, as the gas tax heads to the senate, MIRA is also urging the legislature to consider all options before giving the green light on the increase. In particular, says Weglarz, the legislature must consider whether there truly is a need for this increase.

"What also needs to be taken into consideration is that hybrid cars and electric cars are on the roads, too," said Weglarz. "We need to either increase registration fees for these drivers or find another way to equalize the taxation of cars that utilize alternative fuel." ■

WHAT'S IN THIS SPRING *continued from previous page.*

make sure your store is ready for the Summer selling season. Make sure you are switching over your displays to create a summertime feel. For instance, retailers should have a S'mores display up all summer. Below are a few other ideas for your store displays.

- Popcorn, peanuts and Cracker Jacks displays.
- BBQ, marinade and steak

sauce displays should be in the Meat aisle.

- Picnic End – ketchup, mustard, pickles/relish, mayonnaise, baked beans and Suddenly Salad.
- Charcoal displays with skewers, BBQ sauce and utility lighters.
- "Got Ice" signs at all checkout registers.
- Graduation information and order guides for each department.

- Merchandise around snacks, candy, pop, Isotonics and water to maximize sales.
- Make sure you display umbrellas for those rainy days.
- Expand the grilling section in the Meat Department.
- Display grilling seasonings every four feet within the Meat Department.
- Have a minimum of four bun displays throughout the store. Make sure one of them is in the Meat Department. ■



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Is it a Good Idea to Put Your Child's Name on Your Bank Account?

■ BY NORMAN E. RICHARDS // CUMMINGS,
MCCLOREY, DAVIS & ACHO, P.L.C.*

It is fairly common for an aging parent to add an adult child's name (sometimes more than one child) as a joint owner on the parent's bank accounts. The arrangement is usually viewed as a simple and inexpensive solution to the following concerns:

- Someone needs to be able to pay bills when the parent is ill or hospitalized;
- Funerals are expensive and money will be needed immediately;
- The account will otherwise go to probate upon the parent's death;
- Probate is expensive and time consuming; and
- Estate planning involves costly attorneys and fancy legal documents.

Many people are not aware of the hidden problems and risks that come with this arrangement. What seems like a practical and inexpensive solution may actually create financial complications and ignite family conflicts. Here are some reasons NOT to add a child's name to a bank account:

1 LOSS OF CONTROL

Adding a joint owner means the parent loses sole control of the account. Some parents are shocked to discover they are unable to remove the child's name from the account without the

child's consent. This is a problem if the relationship sours or the child uses the money in a way the parent doesn't like.

2 INVITATION TO CHILD'S CREDITORS

Adding a child to an account gives the child ownership, not just access. Because the child has ownership, anyone to whom the child owes money (IRS, divorcing spouses, judgement creditors, and more) may be able to claim the funds in the account.

3 NO BACKUP PLAN

If the joint owner child is ill or dies before the parent, there is no one else authorized to access the account. Adding more names to the account is not a wise decision for all the other reasons discussed.

4 ACCIDENTAL DISINHERITANCE

The trusted child may be expected to share the money with other family members according to the parent's wishes after the parent's death. If the parent's wishes are not expressed in a will, then the child may claim the account and not follow those instructions. Also, if the child dies shortly after the parent, then the account will pass to the child, become part of the child's personal estate, and then be distributed to the child's own family.

5 IGNITES FAMILY FEUDS

Other children and family members usually look suspiciously at the child who is joint on an

account with the parent. There may be suspicions the child used the money personally, moved money to other accounts, or did not accurately report how much was in the account. This may lead to fights in court or broken family relationships.

Fortunately, there are alternatives to joint ownership. Many of the aging parent's concerns can be solved with carefully designed powers of attorney (POAs). These allow a trusted child to access the account without the risks that come with joint ownership. Also, POAs identify alternates to replace the child and may require accountability and restrict what the child can do with the money. Transfer on death designations can be used to make sure an account is distributed appropriately to other family members. A revocable trust may also be a useful tool. An estate planning attorney should be consulted about which of these tools are best for the aging parent's situation. Most estate planners are reasonably priced and may well save the family from expensive legal fights in the future. ■

**Norman E. Richards (Gene) is a partner at the law firm of Cummings, McClorey, Davis & Acho, P.L.C. where he focuses his practice on estate planning and elder law. He assists clients with the development of customized estate plans to address their specific needs, including family owned businesses, senior adults concerned about long term care needs, and special needs trusts for children with special needs. He may be reached at (734) 261-2400 or nrichards@cmla-law.com.*

A man with a beard and mustache, wearing a dark t-shirt with the 'Florentine' logo, stands in a commercial kitchen with his arms crossed. The background shows stainless steel equipment and a tiled floor.

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If you'd like to manage energy use to save money at your business, visit dteenergy.com/savenow.



DOL Publishes New Proposed Overtime Rules (Again)



■ BY RONALD W. TAYLOR, JENNIFER G. PROZINSKI & ROBIN L.S. BURROUGHS // VENABLE LLP

The Department of Labor (DOL) has formally proposed to withdraw Obama-era overtime regulations and replace them with a more modest alternative. If finalized, the proposed regulations would set the salary threshold for the so-called white collar exemptions to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) at \$35,308 a year (\$679 a week).

By way of background, the FLSA generally requires employers to pay non-exempt employees “overtime pay” at a rate of one and one-half times their regular rate of pay for any time worked over 40 hours in a week. Certain “white-collar” workers, namely those employed in a “bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity,” may be exempt from this overtime

pay requirement if they meet two “tests”: (1) they must have certain exempt job duties, and (2) they must be paid a salary of at least a certain amount. An employee must meet both tests in order to be exempt from the FLSA. Determining whether an employee passes the “duties” test requires a fact-intensive assessment of the employee’s work and specific job responsibilities; it is often easier to tell if an employee does not make the required salary. The proposed rule would not change the “duties” portion of the test.

The current salary threshold of \$455 per week (\$23,660 annually) has not been updated since 2004, despite the passing of a final rule by the Obama-era DOL. The Obama-era rule would have raised the salary threshold to \$913 per week (\$47,476 annually) starting in 2016; however, a court entered a nationwide injunction temporarily blocking implementation of that rule just days before it was planned to take effect. President Trump took office shortly after that, and DOL announced it would go back to the drawing board on the salary threshold. This new proposal increases the salary threshold from its 2004 level, but does not go as far as the Obama-era regulations did. Furthermore, while the Obama-era regulation included language that would automatically update the salary threshold periodically,

the new rule does not provide for automatic adjustments; DOL will need to promulgate a new rule to change the salary threshold again in the future.

The new DOL rule would allow employers to use certain types of bonuses and incentive payments (including commissions) to satisfy up to 10% of the salary requirement. It also proposes increasing the salary threshold required to be considered a “highly compensated employee” from \$100,000 per year to \$147,414 per year. Highly compensated employees must meet a less stringent duties test to be considered exempt.

DOL’s proposal will be open for comment for 60 days. Once the comment period has closed, DOL will review the comments and issue a final rule (including an effective date). Any changes will take effect only after the publication of the final rule. While the exact date that the new rules would become effective is not yet known, DOL hopes they will be implemented in early 2020. For now, the federal salary threshold of \$23,660 remains in effect. Note that some states, such as California and New York, have additional laws that already provide for a higher salary threshold than the FLSA.

If you have not evaluated your employee classifications recently, consider getting in touch with a member of Venable’s national Labor and Employment team. ■



What C-Store Customers Want

An inviting forecourt, clean restrooms and good customer service help draw fuel customers inside, GasBuddy survey finds

■ BY NACS ONLINE

Convenience retailers generate nearly three-fourths of gross profit dollars from in-store sales, according to GasBuddy, a tech company featuring apps and websites that provide real-time fuel prices at more than 140,000 gas stations in the United States, Canada and Australia. Unfortunately, the company reports, a similar percentage of fuel customers never come through the store's door, and this is a core challenge facing the industry today.

A GasBuddy survey conducted in July and December 2018 finds that whether gas customers go inside the store hinges on consumers' needs for safety, cleanliness and hospitality, as well as their response to certain promotions and strategies. In fact, 83% of frequent c-store customers

form their opinions of the operation based on the overall design and upkeep of the store.

Survey respondents said that the forecourt makes a big first impression. If gas customers think a store is dirty, boring or unexceptional, they're unlikely to go inside. GasBuddy concluded that retailers must prioritize the basics first before addressing other customer needs.

Reputation also is important. What customers say in online reviews and the stories they share with friends have a major impact on brand perception. By providing first-class customer service and monitoring customer feedback, retailers can boost their store's reputation and drive sales.

Clean restrooms bring customers inside, and that may be the only opportunity to connect with a fuel-only patron. Shoppers who

use a c-store's restroom will frequently (22.6%) or occasionally (56.8%) make an in-store purchase. Outdated, dirty or poorly maintained facilities cast doubt upon every other aspect of the operation – especially foodservice.

If your restroom is clean and inviting, let customers know. Most female customers (75%) surveyed said their decision to visit a store would be influenced if retailers promoted restroom cleanliness.

Pumping fuel is a time when 73% of consumers ages 18 to 34 take a moment to check their phones. According to survey respondents, mobile phone ads would influence them to visit a c-store if those ads promoted healthy food options (69.7% for women vs. 56.9% for men), redeemable coupons for store products (81.3% for women vs. 72.5% for men) or loyalty rewards for store products (81.4% for women vs. 73.8% for men). ■

Leadership Announcement from UNFI

■ BY BILL CHEW, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES // UNFI

UNFI is pleased to announce that Brad Miller has been named Vice President of Sales – Midwest Region. Brad will be responsible for the operations and sales for our Midwest retailers in the Central Region. Brad will transition into this role on March 18, 2019.

Brad brings extensive retail

operations and market development experience to his new position. Brad started his career nearly 31 years ago with CUB Foods holding positions as a Store Director and Operations Support Manager. Since transferring into Independent Wholesale, Brad has held roles in our Market Development team, most recently serving as VP of Market Development for the Midwest Region. Brad has

been instrumental in growing our business in the Chicago and Detroit markets. Brad is a graduate of Cornell's NGA Leadership Program at the University of Southern California.

Brad will continue to be based out of the Midwest Region office in Pleasant Prairie, WI. Please join me in congratulating Brad on his promotion to Vice President of Sales. ■

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Alkamano & Associates (248) 865-8500
UHY Advisors-MI (248) 355-1040

BUSINESS BROKERAGE

Global Petro advisers (614) 332-8762
McDade & Associates (Manufacturers Rep.) (734) 254-1699

BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC RELATIONS

Clear Rate Communications 1-877-877-4799
Tamar Designs, LLC (248) 760-7211

C-STORE & TOBACCO DISTRIBUTORS

McAneny Brothers, Inc. (304) 559-1510
 S. Abraham & Sons, Inc. (616) 453-6358
 Team Sledd 1-800-333-0374
Apollo Eyewear (630) 260-5100
Capital Sales Company (248) 542-4400
Eby-Brown (630) 536-3968
H.T. Hackney-Grand Rapids 1-800-874-5550
Seaway Cash N' Carry (216) 361-5757
United Custom Distribution (248) 356-7300

C-STORE MISC. TAXABLE MERCHANDISE

Associated Distributors, Inc. 1-800-553-5197
Li'l' Drug Store Products (319) 393-0454
Sober Sticks (248) 436-8007

CAR DEALERSHIPS & TRANSPORTATION

Superior Buick 1-877-586-8665

CHARITABLE GAMING

All-Star Gaming (330) 779-0888

CHECK CASHING

Pre Paid Ventures (516) 455-2940
Secure Check Cashing, Inc. (248) 548-3020

CHIPS, NUTS, CANDY & SNACKS

Lipari Foods, Inc. (586) 447-3500
Better Made Snack Foods (313) 925-4774
D&B Grocers Wholesale (734) 513-1715
Frito-Lay, Inc. 1-800-359-5914
Motown Snack Foods
(Jays, Cape Cod, Tom's, Archway, Stella D'oro) (313) 931-3205
Northern Confections, Inc. (231) 436-5356
Sugar Foods Corporation (830) 515-0981

COFFEE

Goodwest Industries, LLC 1-800-948-1922
Lava Mountain Coffee (248) 267-0227
Ronnoco Coffee, LLC (314) 371-5050

CONTRACTORS & CONSTRUCTION

Duraguard Commercial Roofing (810) 730-2532

COUPON REDEMPTION/MONEY TRANSFER/ BILL PAYMENT

MIRA Coupon Redemption 1-800-666-6233
..... (405) 525-9419
DivDat Kiosk Network (248) 399-0715

CREDIT CARD PROCESSING

MIRA Credit Card Processing 1-800-666-6233
Clearnet (248) 444-8009
First Class Payment Systems 1-888-255-2211

DELI & MEAT MANUFACTURERS & DISTRIBUTORS

Lipari Foods, Inc. (586) 447-3500
A to Z Portion Control Meats (419) 358-2926
Dutch Farms (773) 660-0900
Premier Snacks Distributors (248) 289-1088
Sherwood Food Distributors (313) 659-7300
Wolverine Packing Company (313) 259-7500

ENERGY, LIGHTING & UTILITIES

DTE Energy 1-800-477-4747
DTE Your Energy Savings 1-855-234-7335
Mid-American Energy Services, LLC (563) 333-8570
Running Right (248) 884-1704

FOOD EQUIPMENT, MACHINERY & KIOSKS

Culinary Products, Inc. (989) 754-2457
Taylor Freezer/Broaster Chicken (734) 525-2535

FOOD MANUFACTURER

Barilla America (847) 405-7575
Nino's LLC (847) 685-0478

FRANCHISING OPPORTUNITIES

DCT Enterprises-Little Caesars Pizza (989) 792-0322
Jopatico-Little Caesars Pizza (989) 686-3600

GAS STATION BRANDING & MAINTENANCE

Oscar W Larson Co. (248) 620-0070

GASOLINE WHOLESALE

Beck Suppliers, Inc. (419) 332-5527
Central Ohio Petroleum Marketers (614) 889-1860
High Pointe Oil Company, Inc. (248) 474-0900
Markham Oil Company, Inc. (517) 861-7366
Obie Oil, Inc. (937) 275-9966
Teer Management LLC, Exxon Mobil (810) 584-7975

GREETING CARDS

Leanin' Tree 1-800-556-7819 ext. 4183

GROCERY WHOLESALE & DISTRIBUTORS

Lipari Foods, Inc. (586) 447-3500
D&B Grocers Wholesale (734) 513-1715
International Wholesale (248) 353-8800
SpartanNash (616) 878-2248
UNFI West Region (262) 942-3387
Value Wholesale Distributors (248) 967-2900

HISPANIC PRODUCTS

La Preferida, Inc. (773) 254-7200

HOTELS, CONVENTION CENTERS & BANQUET HALLS

Genoa Banquet Center (517) 545-1000
Penna's of Sterling (586) 978-3880
Petruzello's (248) 879-1000
Suburban Collection Showplace (248) 348-5600

ICE CREAM SUPPLIERS

Nestle DSD (Small format only) (616) 291-8999
 Prairie Farms Ice Cream Program 1-800-399-6970 ext. 200
 Blue Bunny Ice Cream (810) 234-4155
 Velvet Ice Cream Co. (740) 892-3921
Cedar Crest Dairy, Inc. (616) 7971103

ICE PRODUCTS

U.S. Ice Corp. (313) 862-3344
Arctic Glacier Premium Ice 1-800-327-2920
Home City Ice (513) 598-3738

IMPORTERS & DISTRIBUTORS

Via Volare Imports 1-847-258-4502

INSTORE MUSIC/AUDIO MESSAGING

Vibenomics, Inc. (812) 205-7000

INSURANCE SERVICES: AUTO & HOME

Lakeview Insurance/Liberty Mutual Auto & Home Discount
Program (586) 553-9954

INSURANCE SERVICES: COMMERCIAL

Conifer Insurance Company (Liquor Liability) (248) 559-0840
Cox Specialty Markets (Conifer) 1-800-648-0357
Globe Midwest/Adjusters International (248) 352-2100
Insurance Advisors, Inc. (248) 694-9006
JA Knapp Agency (740) 362-4044

INSURANCE SERVICES: HEALTH & LIFE

BCBS of Michigan (313) 225-9000
 Blue Care Network (248) 799-6300
Business Benefits Resource, LLC (248) 482-8282


INSURANCE SERVICES: WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Conifer Insurance Company (248) 559-0840
 CareWorks 1-800-837-3200 ext. 7188

LEGAL SERVICES

Ayar Law (248) 262-3400
Bellanca Beattie, PC (313) 882-1100
Cummings, McClorey, Davis & Aho, PLC (734) 261-2400
Dawda Mann (248) 642-6961
Denha & Associates, PLLC (248) 265-4100
Kullen & Kassab, PC (248) 538-2200
Lippitt O'Keefe Advisors, LLC (248) 646-8292
Willingham & Cote, PC (517) 351-6200

LIQUOR SHELF TAGS

 Saxon, Inc. **M** (248) 398-2000

LOTTERY

IGT Global Solutions (517) 272-3302
Michigan Lottery (517) 335-5648
Ohio Lottery 1-800-589-6446


MILK, DAIRY & CHEESE PRODUCTS

 Dairymens **D** (216) 214-7342
 LaLa Branded Products (Lipari) 1-866-648-5252
 Lipari Foods, Inc. (586) 447-3500
 Prairie Farms Dairy Co. **M** (248) 399-6300
Cedar Crest Dairy, Inc. (616) 797-1103
Dutch Farms (773) 660-0900
Sherwood Food Distributors (313) 659-7300

MONEY ORDERS

 Retailers Express Money Orders 1-800-666-6233

OFFICE SUPPLIES

 Office Depot (855) 337-6811



PAPER PRODUCTS & PACKAGING SUPPLIES

Joshen Paper & Packaging (216) 441-5600
YPV Distribution (847) 718-1101


PAYROLL SERVICES & MORE

Paychex 1-888-811-6042

PIZZA SUPPLIERS

 Omni Food Concepts **M** **D** 1-888-367-7829
 Tringale's Pizza Pinwheels (Lipari) (248) 943-5090
Hunt Brothers Pizza (615) 259-2629

POINT OF SALE & RETAIL TECHNOLOGY

 Great Lakes Data Systems (LOC Software) (248) 356-4100 ext. 107
BMC-Business Machines Company (517) 485-1732

PRINTING, PUBLISHING & SIGNAGE

 Saxon, Inc. **M** (248) 398-2000
 Wheelhouse Graphix 1-800-732-0815
American Solutions for Business (216) 672-3819
Fisher Printing (708) 598-1500
Huron Web Offset Printing (519) 845-0821
Pace Custom Printing (248) 563-7702


PRODUCE DISTRIBUTORS

Anthony Marano Company (773) 321-7500
Heeren Brothers Produce (616) 452-2101
Michigan Potatoes (517) 253-7370

PROPANE

 Pinnacle Propane Express (847) 406-2021


REAL ESTATE

 Sell Your Business Program 1-800-666-6233
NAI Farban (Commercial Real Estate) (248) 351-4386

REFRIGERATION SOLUTIONS (COMMERCIAL)

Raves Cooler Doors (248) 887-0648

RETAIL FIXTURES & DISPLAYS

 Display Max (810) 494-0400
Detroit Store Fixture Co. (313) 341-3255



REVERSE VENDING MACHINES & SERVICE

UBCR, LLC (248) 529-2605

SECURITY, SURVEILLANCE & MORE

 UTS Telecom **M** **D** (248) 669-2300
Central Alarm Signal (313) 864-8900
Netco Services (248) 850-2228

SODA POP, WATER, JUICES & OTHER BEVERAGES

 Coca-Cola Refreshments (Metro Detroit program) Metro Detroit **M** (313) 868-2008
..... Belleville **M** (734) 397-2700
..... Flint **M** (810) 237-4000
..... Cleveland **D** (216) 690-2653
 Faygo Beverages, Inc. **M** (313) 925-1600
Alligator Ice 1-866-594-2867
Absopure Water Company (734) 207-4906
Boom Boom Energy (313) 722-2221
Monster Energy Company 1-800-666-6233
Pepsi Beverages Detroit **M** 1-800-368-9945
..... Howell **M** 1-800-878-8239
..... Pontiac **M** (248) 334-3512
..... Cleveland **D** (216) 252-7377
..... Twinsburg **D** (330) 963-5300




TOBACCO ALTERNATIVES

Grinds Coffee Pouches (412) 414-3155
JUUL Labs (415) 299-7341

TOBACCO COMPANIES & PRODUCTS

8 Mile Smoke (844) 678-6453
Altria Client Services (513) 831-5510
R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company (336) 741-0727

UNIFORMS, LINENS, WORK WEAR & SUPPLIES

 Detroit Chemical & Paper Supply /
1st Impressions (586) 558-8805
 Socks Galore Wholesale (248) 545-7625
 UniFirst Corporation (888) 256-5255 ext. 232

WASTE DISPOSAL & RECYCLING

 Midwest Recycling **M** **D** (Clothing recycle boxes) (313) 304-9099
Commercial Waste Systems (Cardboard recycling buyers) (219) 663-5678
Stamper Facility (586) 228-6500

WINE & SPIRITS COMPANIES

 Benchmark Beverage Co. 1-800-666-6233
Broken Shed Distilleries (914) 282-0457
Cornerstone Wine Distributor (586) 839-2552
Diageo 1-800-462-6504
Heaven Hill Distilleries 1-800-348-1783
Luxco (313) 333-4637
Proximo Spirits (810) 278-0599
Remy Cointreau USA (248) 347-3731
Vision Wine & Spirits (312) 320-4445

WINE & SPIRITS DISTRIBUTORS

European Wine Imports of Ohio, LLC (216) 426-0979
Great Lakes Wine & Spirits 1-888-860-3805
Imperial Beverage Co. (269) 382-4200
Lagnippe Beverage (773) 358-2344
RNDC of Michigan 1-888-697-6424

FOOD RESCUE / FOOD BANKS

MICHIGAN

Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank (616) 784-3250
Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank -
Benton Harbor (269) 983-7229
Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank -
Cadillac (231) 779-0056
Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank -
Ishpeming (906) 485-4988
Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank -
Sault Ste. Marie (906) 632-0348
Food Bank of Eastern Michigan (810) 239-4441
Food Bank of South Central Michigan .. (269) 964-3663
Food Gatherers (734) 761-2796
Forgotten Harvest (248) 967-1500
Gleaners Community Food Bank (866) GLE-ANER
Greater Lansing Food Bank (517) 908-3680
Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes (269) 343-3663
The Manna Food Project (231) 347-8852
Western Upper Peninsula Food Bank ... (906) 482-5548

OHIO

Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank (330) 535-6900
Cleveland Foodbank (216) 738-2265
The Foodbank, Inc. (937) 461-0265
Freestore Foodbank (513) 482-4500
Mid-Ohio Foodbank (614) 274-7770
SE Ohio Foodbank & Kitchen (740) 767-4500
Second Harvest Food Bank of Clark, Champaign and
Logan Counties (937) 325-8715
Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio
..... (440) 960-2265
Second Harvest Food Bank of the Mahoning Valley
..... (330) 792-5522
Shared Harvest Foodbank (800) 352-3663
Toledo Northwestern Ohio Food Bank ... (419) 242-5000
West Ohio Food Bank (419) 222-7946

ILLINOIS

Central Illinois Foodbank (217) 522-4022
Eastern Illinois Foodbank (217) 328-3663
Greater Chicago Food Depository (773) 247-3663
Northern Illinois Foodbank (630) 443-6910
Peoria Area Food Bank (309) 671-3906
River Bend Foodbank (563) 345-6490
St. Louis Area Foodbank (314) 292-6262
Tri-State Foodbank (812) 425-0775





JUNE 18, 2019

**MIDWEST INDEPENDENT RETAILERS
FOUNDATION'S 10TH ANNUAL
SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON**

Every year, the Midwest Independent Retailers Foundation awards academic scholarships in the amount of \$1,500 each to extraordinary and deserving students in Michigan, Ohio and Illinois. Help the MIR Foundation invest in the leaders of tomorrow. Tickets and sponsorship opportunities available.

Detroit Athletic Club // Detroit, MI



JUNE 20, 2019

MIRA'S 14TH ANNUAL OHIO GOLF OUTING

This outing is a social event where retailers, wholesalers, manufacturers and service providers all come together to have a little competitive fun. A day on the course includes breakfast, dinner and 18 holes of golf!

Shale Creek Golf Club // Medina, OH



JULY 17, 2019

**MIRA'S 43RD ANNUAL MICHIGAN
GOLF OPEN**

A day on the course includes breakfast, lunch, 18 holes of golf and samples at every hole! Last year we sold out! Sponsorship opportunities are available.

Fox Hills Golf & Banquet Center // Plymouth, MI



SEPTEMBER 16, 2019

**MIRA'S 21ST ANNUAL HOLIDAY
FOOD & BEVERAGE BUYING SHOW**

As Michigan's largest liquor show, retailers and on- and off-premise licensees come from miles to see, sample and buy a wide variety of new products. Admission for MIRA members is free. Must be 21 years or older to attend this show.

Suburban Collection Showplace // Novi, MI

publishers statement

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MIRA works closely with these associations:





We're proud to offer the Our Family brand to independent retailers. It's a brand your customers can trust - WE GUARANTEE IT!

HERE FOR YOURS.



Our Family® anchors a broad portfolio of private brand items currently provided to retailers like you.



Meat, deli, bakery, seafood, and ready to heat selections



Experience unique flavor profiles from around the world



Natural and organic selections

TopCare®

Health and beauty products for the whole family



A full line of quality baby care



Affordable pet care and toys

Visit SpartanNash.com for more information or call:

Jim Gohsman 616-878-8088

Ed Callihan 330-903-8076

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