



**TOPAZ IRELAND ACQUIRED
BY COUCHE-TARD**

**PLUS NEWS FROM
AROUND THE WORLD**



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Welcome

Welcome to another online edition of C-store Executive.

Our main feature covers the news from Couch-Tard's move to enter the Irish fuel and convenience retail market. While it is a small market, it represents a significant step with its geographical closeness to England, Scotland and Wales.

The 7 Eleven saga in Australia continues with the authorities. Thanks to Keith Berg for his input and local perspective. Also thanks to C&I's Claire Hibbit in Sydney for her contribution to our "Outlook 2016".

Our news from around the world in this issue includes; EuroGarage & Subway in the UK, Fairprice Singapore, Oxxo Mexico, Reitan Norway, Maxol Ireland, Kesko Finland, AlfaMart Indonesia to name a few.

Finally a reminder that CstoreWorld will be carrying out a quick visitor data exercise this quarter. As always, we are delighted to get your feedback and receive your contributions of news and articles.

David Egan

International Editor

C-Store Executive

PLEASE NOTE:

Convenience retail contributions for 2016 are welcome!

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Topaz Ireland Acquired by Couche-Tard

Couche-Tard in Canada has announced that it has signed an agreement to acquire Topaz Ireland.

This acquisition would position Couche-Tard as one of the leading fuel and convenience retailers in Ireland. The transaction is anticipated to close in the fourth quarter of Couche-Tard's fiscal year 2016 and is subject to the usual regulatory approvals and closing conditions. It would be financed using Couche-Tard's available cash and existing credit facilities. The parties have agreed not to disclose the purchase price for this acquisition.

Brian Hannasch, President & CEO of Couche-Tard stated "In 2012 we declared that Statoil Fuel & Retail would be our platform for growth in Europe. This agreement to acquire Topaz's network and assets, our second announcement in Europe this year following the Danish Shell deal, would allow us to add yet another high quality network to our operations. Ireland has been on an extraordinary journey over the past decade. We have been looking at this market for several years. With the addition of Topaz, we would expand our geographic footprint into what is one of Europe's best performing economies."

Emmet O'Neill, Chief Executive of Topaz, described the transaction as a "game changer" for the retail sector in Ireland. He said, "Couche-Tard is one of the strongest names in retail in the world and their presence in Ireland will transform the retail sector here. I am thrilled that they have chosen Topaz as the foundation for their entry to the Irish market. They will bring enormous skill, energy and resources to this business and this market."

O'Neill said that the deal followed a transformation of the company over the past two years; "In the last two years Topaz has moved from being a challenged business to one which has been transformed at every level and which now leads the market here. We have refinanced the company, upgraded the infrastructure,



acquired and built new sites and convenience stores and ultimately acquired the business of Esso in Ireland.

Jacob Schram, Couche-Tard's Group President Europe stated, "As part of the larger Couche-Tard merchant family, and with the strong, global Circle K brand in our portfolio, we are well-equipped to take on this significant market. Topaz would be a great strategic fit for Couche-Tard and it would strengthen our position in Western Europe. It has an extensive and attractive convenience and fuel network, with good locations, quality forecourts and stores, an excellent food offering and very professional teams. We look forward to welcoming Topaz into our family."

Topaz is one of the leading convenience and fuel retailers in the country, made up of 464 fuel service stations across the island of Ireland including its recently acquired Esso fuel retail network. Of these sites, 162 are owned by Topaz and 302 by dealers. The agreement also encompasses a commercial fuels operation, with over 30 depots and two owned terminals.

CstoreWorld 12015



Australia: Top 7-Eleven Managers Resign

On the heels of 7-Eleven's wage fraud scandal, 7-Eleven Australia has announced the resignations of its Chairman Russ Withers, CEO Warren Wilmot and General Manager Operations Natalie Dalbo.

Independent Non-Executive Director and Deputy Chair Michael Smith will assume the role of Chairman and Mr Bob Baily has been appointed interim CEO. Mr Smith will lead an executive search process to find a new CEO.

In an announcement by 7-Eleven, Mr Wilmot said that it would be difficult for him to play a central role in navigating the company through the current challenges it faces, given his long standing executive role, and that a

new independent CEO was appropriate in the current circumstances. Despite his resignation as chairman of 7-Eleven, Russ Withers will stay on as chairman of the group holding company, which has investments of around \$1.5 billion in 7-Eleven and Starbucks plus a substantial real estate and share portfolio.

“Naturally this is a major decision for me to stand aside as chairman,” said Mr Withers. “However I will continue to be a shareholder and I am determined to make sure the company is in the right hands to move forward.”

Incoming chairman Michael Smith was, until the wage scandal broke, chairman of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. He has a solid business background as the most senior level and is said to be one of Australia’s acknowledged authorities on corporate strategy. Bob Baily, following senior roles at SPC Foods, the old Ampol Road Pantry chain and chairmanship of AACCS, has held several high profile management positions. He was managing director of The Swan Brewing Company and continues to hold a number of independent directorships.

As previously reported by C&I WEEK, incoming Chairman Michael Smith reiterated that 7-Eleven has implemented a number of actions to identify the true extent of the under-payment of staff by franchisees and to implement appropriate and lasting remedies, including refining the business model in cooperation with franchisees. This will cost 7-Eleven many millions of dollars.

In an interview with Fairfax Media, Mr Smith said: “This has opened my eyes. I think we’re at the beginning of a revelation of something that is a very widespread problem. I think in this country we will find a very large numbers of workers who are not paid properly.”

Fairfax Media, which carried out the wages investigation in conjunction with the ABC’s Four Corners program, claimed that it had been inundated with calls from workers at small businesses and franchised chains who claimed that they were being underpaid.

Most Australians will know that under-payment is rife in Australia. High youth unemployment, a large student population and work hour restrictions for those on student visas has created a large pool of part timers who will reluctantly accept below-award wages in exchange for a steady job. There can be little doubt that many other organisations, large and small, may be trapped by a rigorous wages audit.

Since the early 1990’s 7-Eleven’s Russ Withers and more recently Warren Wilmot have worked extensively to further the interests of the convenience store industry and to raise its profile in Australia. Under Withers’ stewardship, the company was a founding member of Australasian Association of Convenience Stores and both have served as its chairman. 7-Eleven has been one of the industry’s most staunch supporters as well as its leader in retail innovation. Warren Wilmot has regularly interrupted a crowded schedule to accept pro-bono speaking engagements all over the country.

The damage to the 7-Eleven brand will be expensive and difficult for the company to repair, especially now that at least one major bank is reported to have closed its loan book to prospective 7-Eleven franchisees. There can be little doubt that broader convenience industry has also been tainted. Regardless of whether they are innocent or guilty of any wrongdoing, this is the last thing that Withers and Wilmot would have wanted.

CstoreWorld 1215

Editor's Choice

WORLD NEWS

Updates & Developments in the Convenience Retail Industry

Convenience Retail Global Daily News Service

[Selection of Headlines – online](#)

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Big Red Stores Launches Discount Fuel Card
Corner Store C- Store Chain Rebrand

Vietnam:

Customers turn to convenience stores

Australia: Officials Raid 7-Eleven C-stores

At least fifty 7-Eleven stores were raided last week across Australia with 150 staff from the Fels Wage Fairness Panel and Deloitte visiting stores unannounced to seize documents including rosters that aren't available from head office.

Staff at 7-Eleven franchises were allegedly being underpaid half the award rate and some foreign workers claimed they were threatened with deportation if they spoke up. According to a joint media investigation by the ABC and Fairfax, internal documents reveal that between July and August this year, 7-Eleven head office reviewed the payroll compliance

at 225 stores and found that 69 stores had ongoing payroll issues.

The federal government of Australia will not cancel the visas of 7-Eleven staff that breached their work conditions in Australia while being exploited and underpaid by the convenience store chain. In a move to encourage 7-Eleven workers to come forward, a Department of Immigration letter to lawyers Maurice Blackburn and the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association, said the government was prepared to provide assurances to the workers from overseas and visa holders.

CstoreWorld 1215



Canada: Sobeys Express – A fresh take on traditional convenience

Sobeys unveiled its new convenience and fuel store format to customers in Atlantic Canada. “Consumer research has shown us that customers are looking for more fresh food options to meet their on-the-go needs. They also want a one-stop shop for food and fuel and Sobeys express meets those customer needs in a larger and brighter store,” remarked Valerie Ryan, vice president, convenience and fuel, Sobeys Atlantic. “Sobeys express will carry a broader assortment of traditional convenience items however, the new format will focus on the customer looking for a fresher alternative. “The Sobeys express store, inspired by Sobeys Inc.’s IGA express banner in Quebec, offers customers fresh, healthy alternatives to traditional convenience store snacks and meal ideas.

“Sobeys express is a new concept for convenience shopping in Atlantic Canada,” added Ryan. “Rotisserie chickens and freshly made salads aren’t your typical convenience store fare but based on our customer research, we know customers want better choices when they are on the go and Sobeys express stores will set us apart from the traditional

convenience retailers in this regard. “Appealing to travellers, the meal deal featuring a sandwich, drink and snack, will reward customers with two cents off per litre on a subsequent fuel purchase at Fast Fuel and Shell locations across Atlantic Canada. To complete the offer, Sobeys express customers will receive AIR MILES® reward miles on purchases made in-store and at the pump.

CstoreWorld 201215

Canada: Tax Rise for Alberta Fuel & Convenience Retailers

For the second time in the calendar year, the Alberta Government is increasing fuel and tobacco taxes - two key products for Alberta convenience store owners. “The tax burden on our stores and on our customers is becoming overwhelming,” said Andrew Klukas, President of the Western Convenience Stores Association (WCSA). “In this economy, owners are fighting just to keep their stores open. The last thing we needed was another tax increase.” Tobacco and fuel taxes have gone up twice in the last year.

The increased price of gas impacts the costs of all goods and services. Credit card fees increase for everyone when customers use their cards to pay for gas, and store owners will have to deal with more

drive-offs as people try to avoid paying for fuel. It should come as no surprise that the illegal tobacco trade continues to thrive in Alberta.

While new taxes may provide the Notley Government with short term revenue, they will place an incredible strain on small businesses and impact every Albertan’s purchasing power.

CstoreWorld 021115

China: Wal-Mart in share-purchase deal with China Resources SZITIC Investment

Wal-Mart Stores Inc has signed an agreement with China Resources SZITIC Investment Co Ltd for the purchase of minority interests in 21 joint ventures.

The deal is valued at 3.3 billion yuan (\$520 million). This agreement is subject to approval from the relevant government authorities. Sean Clarke, president and CEO of Wal-Mart China said, “The investment closely follows the decision to acquire 100 percent of Yihaodian.” At the completion of the proposed share purchase, China Resources SZITIC Investment Co Ltd will no longer be a shareholder of the joint ventures with Wal-Mart.

New store openings in China have driven up third-quarter sales growth by 2.9 percent for Wal-Mart Stores Inc. Its

“operate for less” productivity initiative remains a focus, allowing it to invest in more staff and its customer experience, particularly when it comes to fresh produce. Yihaodian, the retailer’s e-commerce business in China, remains focused on further leveraging the company’s local assets.

Kantar report shows that China’s hypermarkets, supermarkets and convenience store sectors all remained sluggish during 2015, growing 2.4 percent across the board nationally.

CstoreWorld 191115

Source: China Economy Net

England UK: Morrisons Pilot With MFG Opened

The first Morrisons convenience store on a Motor Fuel Group (MFG) site has been launched in Crewe, England. The c-store is the first of five pilot stores, which are planned for MFG sites. The c-store will be branded with a new fascia, ‘Morrisons Daily’ using a logo that has been trialled in two of Morrisons’ Leeds stores. It will receive deliveries of fresh and ambient food utilising Morrisons existing supply chain that will include food to go, fruit & veg, meat, fish, ready meals as well as essential groceries. Ross Eggleton, Morrisons logistics & supply chain director, who is

leading the pilot project, said: “These pilots will allow us to create different propositions for each location and the customers they serve. The first pilot in Crewe allows us to test and refine our approach ahead of opening another four early in 2016.”

As reported by PetrolWorld, Morrisons announced the partnership with MFG a short time after it sold its 140 portfolio of convenience stores to a team lead by fuel industry veteran Mike Greene, and backed by Greybull Capital. MFG has 373 sites operating under the BP, Shell, Texaco and JET fuel brands.

CstoreWorld 151215



England UK: Subway Inspires EuroGarage Fuel Retail

Euro Garages has set itself the ambitious target of having 175 new Subway stores open in its fuel retail network by the end of 2016. The group revealed its foodservice aspirations for the next 12 months after recently hitting its end-of-year target with the opening of the 100th integrated Subway store at Holtspur Fuel Service Station in Beaconsfield. Euro Garages has created around 700 jobs since embarking on its plans to reach 100 Subway stores, with the latest opening in Buckinghamshire creating 20 positions.

Having acquired 172 new petrol sites, including 104 ESSO forecourt sites in the South East and a further 68 Shell sites across the country earlier this year, EuroGarages is on a major national expansion drive at present. It now owns and operates a fuel retail network of more than 360 sites in England. Ahmed Kazi, operations manager at Euro Garages, said "It is with great pleasure to announce the opening of our 100th Subway store at Holtspur Service Station, and achieve our 100 stores target earlier than forecast. Subway currently operates more than 2,000 stores in the UK and Ireland.

CstoreWorld 031215

England UK:ACS Calls on Chancellor for Meaningful Reform

ACS has called on the chancellor to take action on business rates, employment costs and drop proposals to devolve Sunday trading rules in its submission to the Treasury ahead of the Autumn Statement on 25th November.

Since the chancellor's announcements of the introduction of a National Living Wage of £7.20 in April 2016 and plans to devolve Sunday trading powers to local authorities, investment levels in the convenience sector have fallen by over 35% and optimism has reached its lowest level for two years. ACS has estimated that the removal of Sunday trading regulations would result in a net loss of over 3,270 jobs.

ACS chief executive, James Lowman said: "The announcements made in this year's Budget will have a significant negative impact on local shops and other small businesses, with many delaying investment plans whilst looking to cut back on the number of staff hours in their business. We urge the Chancellor to take action to reduce the burdens that he has placed on convenience retailers by dropping the unpopular and unnecessary plans to remove Sunday trading regulations

and to follow through on his commitment to conduct meaningful reform of business rates.

"In addition to the cost burdens being placed on retailers, they also face a constant battle against the illegal trade which costs the Treasury billions of pounds every year. We are calling on the Government to increase the level of enforcement against duty fraud at a local level to give legitimate retailers the opportunity to trade responsibly without fear of being undercut by criminals in their area selling potentially dangerous goods."

CstoreWorld 1115

ACS' full submission is available on the ACS website

Finland: Kesko Acquires Rival Stores

Kesko Food announced this week that it will acquire the operator of Siwa and Valintatalo stores, Suomen Lähikauppa, from the private equity firm Triton for approximately €60 million. The takeover will see the traditional retailer take control of a total of 643 Siwa and Valintatalo stores and add 4,100 employees to its payroll. The takeover will also allow Kesko to expand its network of neighbourhood shops and generate notable synergies.

Analysts were not surprised by the announcement.

“Speculation about this has continued for quite some time,” said Taavi Heikkilä, CEO of SOK. The takeover will reduce the number of competitors in what is already one of the most concentrated grocery markets in Europe. It will see the combined market share of Kesko and S Group creep up to 86 per cent and that of the three largest grocery retailers to as high as 95 per cent. The takeover still requires the approval of antitrust authorities.

Juhani Jokinen, the director general of the Finnish Competition and Consumer Agency (FCCA), refrained from commenting on the proposed takeover. The FCCA, he estimated, will comment on the issue by the end of March.

The takeover will not only shake up the domestic grocery market but may also signal the disappearance of one of the best-known corner shops from the streets of Finland.

Suomen Lähikauppa has previously announced that it will re-organise its Valintatalo stores under the Siwa brand. Lindblom doubts that the takeover will bode well for the future of Siwa as an independent brand. He also estimates that the decline in the number of competitors in the grocery market is bad news both for consumers and wholesalers.

CstoreWorld 18115

Source: Helsinki Sanomat

France: Carrefour City C-store Opens at Orly Airport

Carrefour Group has opened their first City convenience store at Orly Airport Paris. City C-store is Carrefour’s first airport site in France. Based in the Departures lounge of Paris-Orly’s terminal, this new City retail outlet has 200 m² of sales area and stocks a broad selection of nearly 3000 items. Georges Plassat, CEO of the Carrefour Group and Augustin de Romanet, CEO of Aéroports de Paris attended the opening of the first City convenience store.

According to Georges Plassat Carrefour’s CEO, “This initiative that we have launched with Airports de Paris is a shining example of Carrefour’s unique multi-format profile. In many countries, we anticipate our customers’ needs, creating stores that are specifically designed to meet their requirements, selling products and providing services designed to make their lives easier”.

CstoreWorld 231115

Indonesia: Alfamart and Garuda Partnership

Garuda airline will introduce a direct ticketing system through Alfamart franchised retail outlets across Indonesia.

The carrier has signed a deal with the Alfamart convenience

store group, which operates in second-tier towns and less-developed locations across Indonesia - mainly using cash payments. “With this partnership we will make it easier for Garuda Indonesia to service users [who can] make payments through a network of more than 11,000 Alfamart, Alfamidi, and AND+AND outlets throughout Indonesia,” Garuda spokesperson Handayani said.

Indonesia has a population of approximately 250 million, and the country’s mobile phone penetration rate of some 40% nationwide has meant internet access and potential booking has boomed. However, its credit card penetration of only around 10-15% has seen ticket payment pose a problem for potential travelers outside major urban areas. The convenience store payment method has proven popular in other largely cash-driven Asian economies, with Vietjet Air in Vietnam offering tickets through hundreds of local bank agencies, and Lion Air and Air Asia also offering payment options through convenience stores. Garuda said it was also looking at extending the localized convenience store payment system to other countries, and was exploring cooperative ventures with Japanese chain Lawson.

CstoreWorld 131115

Source:ATW

Ireland: Maxol Mace store redesign & Moreish fresh food unveiled

As part of the Maxol Group's ongoing investment in store refits across Ireland, Maxol Ardcahan has unveiled its redesigned Maxol Mace store. The Mace store at Maxol Ardcahan has been remodelled with a bright new look, and features a Moreish deli with seating areas. With a range of speciality sandwiches, freshly ground coffee and a range of teas, Maxol hopes to make the outlet the new go-to destination for delicious food in the Ardcahan and Castlebridge area.

As part of the official launch, local customers were invited to a Moreish lunch that included tastings of the new menu, competitions to design the best sandwich and family fun, with the Beat Radio Fleet team providing the entertainment. Fergal Harrington, Group Brand Development Manager, Maxol commented, "We're delighted to launch Moreish here today with Patrick and Claire Durack, Licensees of Maxol Ardcahan. Customers to Moreish can expect friendly service, comfy seating, free wifi and modern restroom facilities."

Meanwhile, Maxol licensee Pat Durack welcomed the redevelopment and Moreish concept, saying that they have made the business a one-stop

shop for all his customer's needs. "We look forward to delighting our customers and continuing to grow our Wexford business," he concluded.

CstoreWorld 301015

Japan: Convenience Stores Trial Food Home Delivery Services

Japanese convenience store networks are adding new service to their existing offer of postage, ATMs and ticket dispensing systems. Now convenience stores are bringing their services to customers' front doors with food delivery. There are already several players in the food delivery business, such as those distributing box meals and side dishes directly to customers, but this has not stopped convenience store giant's 7-Eleven, FamilyMart, and Lawson from entering the market.

Takuhai Cook 123 is a service run through a FamilyMart subsidiary that delivers box meals to elderly customers. Lawson is working with Sagawa Express for delivery service, while Seven-Eleven has partnered with Yamato Transport. Suzuki Toshifumi, chairman and CEO of Seven-Eleven parent company Seven & I Holdings, has set a policy for its convenience stores to become a part of social infrastructure that supports the surrounding area. Services

targeting seniors are the next development in that process, and home delivery may only be the beginning.

CstoreWorld 121215

The Rise of E-Money in Japanese Convenience Retail

7-Eleven, FamilyMart & Lawsons have all made efforts this year to make electronic money more usable for payments in a bid to attract more customers and increase sales.

Lawson Inc. will start accepting Waon, which is issued by retail giant Aeon Co. and the most widely used e-money in Japan. At present, Lawson accepts e-money from online shopping operator Rakuten Inc.'s Edy and railway service-related Suica cards. "Waon is widely used by housewives and its introduction can provide us with a new customer base," a Lawson official said. Lawson also added e-money functions to its Ponta reward card in November.

Meanwhile, FamilyMart Co. started accepting e-money in the form of T-Money in June, and in November began introducing self-checkout machines that accept e-money at outlets inside Keisei Electric Railway Co. stations. FamilyMart has said it hoped to install more of the machines in a bid to save

customers' time during rush hour. In other convenience stores, Seven-Eleven Japan Co., a unit of retail giant Seven & I Holdings, focused on the group's nanaco e-money card for payments. According to Nomura Research Institute, e-money payments totaled ¥4.2 trillion in Japan in 2014, led by Waon and nanaco, with the market expected to grow to ¥11.4 trillion by 2021.

CstoreWorld 091215

Luxembourg Post Network Change

A total of 35 post offices across the Grand Duchy are to close their doors in a significant move announced on by POST Luxembourg.

At a press conference last week, POST Luxembourg are reorganising their store network and diversifying their presence across Luxembourg. Over the coming months, the physical presence of POST Luxembourg will evolve, adapting to current lifestyle trends and aiming to satisfy customers who require easily accessible sites with extended opening hours for their three business lines "POST Telecom", "POST Mail" and "POST Finance".

At present, the POST Payment network is based on a coexistence of two networks, i.e. one of "POST Telecom"

and the other of "POST Courier" and "POST Finance". Nationally, 97 post offices and over 20 POST-Shops are operated, some of which are only partially available to customers, due to restricted opening hours, or a difficult geographical location.

A study conducted in May 2015 by TNS ILRES via a representative survey showed that the criticism expressed by customers of postal services mainly concerned opening hours being deemed too short, and poor accessibility of post offices, a lack of parking and long waits to be served. The most common reasons for which people visit post offices are for buying stamps or postage-paid envelopes, followed by collection of packages, sending letters and delivering or collecting registered mail.

For automated collection points, POST Luxembourg already has 32 PackUp stations, with this number set to double by the end of 2016. In addition, conventional postal products can now also be found in partner companies (Cactus Shoppi, service stations and small shops). The employees concerned will be redeployed to strengthen the teams in the busiest post offices to improve service and reduce wait times.

CstoreWorld 051215

Mexico: Amazon Launch Prepaid Cards With C-store Operators

A pilot scheme in Mexico will see Amazon trial prepaid cards with Oxxo & 7-Eleven c-store network. The companies are targeting people without debit or credit cards. Juan Carlos Garcia, director of Amazon Mexico said "This is our first foray into cash in Mexico and the idea is to make it easier for customers who do not have credit or debit card to make their purchases in Amazon Mexico.

This week, the Oxxo in Mexico City, Monterrey, Guadalajara, Puebla and Toluca shops have gift cards in denominations of 300, 500 pesos. Other establishments such as Chedraui and shops for gamers also incorporated into its offerings in the coming months and reach more cities cards. Users no longer need credit or debit card to buy MercadoLibre because the e-commerce platform would launch gift cards. Starting this week the 7-Eleven Mexico City offer gift cards 300 and 600 pesos to buy MercadoLibre.com.

CstoreWorld 161215

Mexico: Oxxo Network Heading for 16k

Oxxo convenience stores expected to number 16k stores this year according

to Eduardo Padilla, CEO of FEMSA Comercio. Eduardo Padilla, CEO of Femsacomercio, explained that this year expected to end with a c-store network of 16,000 sites across Mexico.

So today in Mexico Oxxo convenience stores exceeded the network of bank branches in the country providing new business opportunities. The Femsacomercio CEO stated "It gives us the opportunity to provide banking services, even in many villages we have enabled services because there are communities where there are no banks, including the Federal District."

The growing network of c-stores in the country with over 105 thousand employees has enabled them to secure a very significant market presence.

The network of fuel service stations numbers 300 sites in 10 states. "In the fuel retail market, we work with a model in the north with three important elements. The first is training, second is service, and the third is to develop fuel consumption. The model is supported by special promotions like our current 'liter to liters'.

CstoreWorld 181115

Norway: Gardermoen Airport To Have 10 Convenience Stores

Gardermoen Airport owner Avinor has already selected 10 convenience store operators and 37 f&b outlets for the new Oslo Airport that is scheduled to open on 27 April, 2017.

"A long, meticulous selection process has resulted in our decision to enter into a partnership with five operators," said Øyvind Hasaas, Managing Director of Oslo Airport. "These operators submitted the overall best tenders and we feel certain that the Norwegian people will be pleased with our choices. "The five winners are Reitan Convenience Norway, Joe & The Juice, SSP, HMSHost-UMOE F&B Company, and BIT. The number of food and beverage establishments will increase from the current 20 to 37, while the number of convenience stores (kiosks) will increase from six to ten. "Our ambition has always been to bring in more operators and now we have a good mix of companies that will provide better and more extensive food, beverage and kiosk offerings than what we have today," said Hasaas. Airport management says that Point, Narvesen and 7 Eleven will now operate 10 convenience kiosks, compared with the current six.

CstoreWorld 171115

Philippine: Local 7-Eleven Licensee's Higher Profits

The local licensee of the 7-Eleven convenience stores grew its net income by a tenth in the third quarter on higher sales. Philippine Seven Corp.'s (PSC) bottom line increased to P159 million in the July to September period from P144 million in the same period last year, accompanied by a 25.8% year-on-year growth in system-wide sales to P6.25 billion from P4.97 billion, it disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Net profit climbed by a tenth year-on-year to P515.5 million in the first nine months of the year from P468.3 million on the back of a 24.8% uptick in system-wide sales to P18.4 billion during the period from P14.8 billion.

Rate of the earnings would have grown faster pace if not for the company's capacity building expenditures to support its foray in Visayas and Mindanao, PSC said.

"This will impact profitability in the medium term, in the form of underutilized warehouses, but is expected to benefit the company by achieving dominant position in new markets," the listed firm said. PSC closed the third quarter with a total of 1,480 7-Eleven stores all over the country, up 26.6% from year-ago levels. At the end of September, it

was operating 1,318 stores in Luzon, 149 in the Visayas and 13 in Mindanao.

CstoreWorld 111115

Source: BusinessWorld

Russia: Auchan launches first chain of convenience stores in Russia

As part of its expansion in the country, French retailer Auchan has started developing its first convenience store chain in Russia. Auchan has already opened four convenience stores in Moscow under the name Kazhdy Den (Every Day), Auchan Russia's CEO Wilhelm Hubner told Vedomosti, adding that the retailer's own-brand products will account for about half of the stores' range of items. Hubner didn't specify how many stores the company plans to open in the future, saying that Auchan is currently testing the new format.

The Auchan brand had previously only operated supermarkets in Russia, though one of Groupe Auchan's other subsidiaries, Atak, is already developing another convenience store chain. St. Petersburg-based retailer O'Key said in August it would focus on the expansion of its convenience store chain Da! (Yes!) instead of developing its supermarket chain.

Another major retailer, the Russian arm of Germany's

Metro Cash & Carry, launched a chain of convenience stores in 2012 that operate under the brand Fasol (Bean). The company now operates 75 small stores around the country.

CstoreWorld 271015

South Africa: Actis invests in pan-African food retailer, Food Lover's Market

Actis has announced an investment of R760m (US\$54m) in Food Lover's Market, estimated to be one of the largest independent food retail groups in South Africa. Food Lover's Market is one of the last few independent food retailers of scale. It has a strong brand and a growing footprint across South Africa. In recent years it has added categories such as bakery, grocery, butchery and deli foods to complement its market leading position in fresh produce.

The Food Lover's Market Group also operates over 200 FreshStop convenience stores in Caltex fuel service stations, Market Liquors, a convenience liquor offering, an import export business and has recently acquired artisanal coffee brand, Seattle Coffee. The newly launched Food Lover's Eatery brand with stores in Cape Town and Brooklyn, Pretoria, is

testament to the retailer's ever-evolving approach to retail innovation and growth.

CstoreWorld 071215

Singapore: FairPrice Introduces New Dash Tap & Pay Option But...

FairPrice Express locations on Esso fuel service stations excluded from new Dash Tap & Pay option.

Gan Siok Hoon, VP of Commerce, Consumer Singapore, Singtel, stated, "When it comes to mobile payments, convenience and security matter the most to customers. To address this, we worked to improve the experience with the new Dash Tap and Pay feature, to better fulfill our customers' mobile payment needs."

Owners of Android smartphones with NFC capabilities can tap their phones on a reader and pay for their purchases. Dash is currently accepted at all FairPrice supermarkets, FairPrice Xtra supermarkets and standalone Cheers and FairPrice Xpress outlets. It is estimated that there are more than half a million shoppers at FairPrice stores daily.

Deputy CEO (Operations) of NTUC FairPrice, Gerry Lee said: "Dash is another step forward in our ongoing initiatives to introduce greater flexibility through

additional payment options to make it more convenient for customers.”

CstoreWorld 261115

South Korea Convenience Retail Continues To Expand

Convenience retail has developed with the new generation of consumers. Convenience stores that sell food and daily necessities in smaller quantities and stay open 24 hours have emerged as the key retail outlet in South Korea. The key players of GS Retail, BGF Retail and 7-Eleven have recorded growth in sales after opening about 2,000 new c-stores. This brings the total c-store network close to 26,000, according to the data compiled by the companies.

GS Retail, the operator of GS 25, posted 3.5 trillion won (US\$3.11 billion) in sales in the first nine months of the year, up 36 percent from a year ago. BGF Retail's revenue jumped 28.8 percent on-year to 3.15 trillion won in the January-September period, while 7-Eleven's sales rose 26.4 percent to 2.5 trillion won, their financial statement showed. Local convenience stores have introduced their own store brands, known in the country as "private brands," which have an edge over traditional and multinational labels in terms of price and costs.

CstoreWorld 241115

Taiwan: FamilyMart is Now Accepting Bitcoin

FamilyMart has agreed a deal with local wallet provider BitoEX. FamilyMart has been allowing customers to use bitcoin, through a BitoEX wallet, to buy cash coupons accepted at its c-stores. The coupons are dispensed by its FamiPort terminals, which are a common payment channel used for everything from paying parking ticket fines or utility bills to buying train or movie tickets.

The startup says the success of the bitcoin buying service put the digital currency on FamilyMart's radar, leading it to consider accepting bitcoin for goods. According to BitoEX, the number of bitcoin purchases at FamilyMart has more than doubled this year. FamilyMart is Taiwan's second-largest convenience store chain by number of outlets. Taiwan is one of six international markets that the chain, headquartered in Tokyo serves.

CstoreWorld 021215

Thailand: Tesco Lotus Express Expands Loyalty Programme

Tesco Lotus has announced an investment of Bt400 million in the latest stamp campaign to be held at its 1,500 Lotus Express stores.

The investment is part of the Bt1-billion budget

allocated for all stamp-collection campaigns held this year, starting from "We Love Doraemon" and "It's All about Mickey". "B.Duck Be Playful" will be the third stamp campaign kicked off this year, until February 29, 2016. The stamp-collection campaign is aimed at exciting market sentiment during the coming festive season. The retail giant hopes it will boost shopping frequency as well as increase the transaction value per basket for individual customers. The company expects B.Duck Be Playful to increase average sales at its Express stores by double digits compared with the normal period.

Chakkit Chatupanyachoti-kul, vice president for marketing at Tesco Lotus Express, said the company had created its stamp campaign by listening to individual clients and responding with a quality campaign they really want. "Based on our recent research findings, individual customers prefer campaigns that are affordable and easy to earn points with and redeem them with unique, valuable premiums.

Tesco Lotus operates about 1,500 Express stores in Thailand, of which about 60 opened this year.

CstoreWorld 151115

Source: Nation

USA: Rutter's Unveils "A Monument to Convenience"

Rutter's newest and largest store, located in York Springs and just 10 miles north of Gettysburg, PA, has opened. The 11.5 acre site boasts 7 high-speed truck diesel fueling spaces, 4 fueling lanes for petrol and auto diesel, 23 truck parking spaces, located right off the Heidlersburg, East Berlin exit on Pennsylvania Route 15. The exterior fuel monument sign and gas canopy debut a new enhanced Rutter's brand identity. Both use extensive LED lighting elements, bold colors, and have a signature-contrasting look by day and night. "The new location is the latest evolution of our brand. It will serve the needs of several key business segments; namely convenience store shoppers, professional truck drivers, and those seeking quick and casual restaurant quality food.

As with many of our newer stores, it will combine the best of those elements under one roof to meet the needs of customers in the Gettysburg region," said Derek Gaskins, Rutter's Chief Customer Officer. Rutter's is widely recognised as an industry leader in food service, innovative technology, and customer service, recently receiving the 2014 International Convenience Retailer of the Year award

given by NACS and Insight. Rutter's is currently guided by the family's 3rd generation of leadership with Scott Hartman president and CEO, Todd Rutter as president of Rutter's Dairy, and Tim Rutter as president of M&G Realty.

CstoreWorld 151215

USA: Circle K to Construct 1st C-store in San Antonio

Texas convenience store scene will soon witness the first new Circle K to be built in San Antonio. A chain with more than 3,300 stores in the U.S., plans to build its first local store on the Northeast Side. The fuel and convenience chain plans to build a 5,881 square-foot convenience store and fuel service station at 3804 N. Foster Rd., across the road from a Walmart. Construction of the \$2.1 million store is set to begin in February and be completed in August, according to filings with the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation.

The chain already has a large presence in Texas, including more than 20 locations in the Austin area and about 10 around Dallas and Fort Worth, according to its website. It traces its origin to three stores bought in El Paso by founder Fred Hervey in 1951.

CstoreWorld 071215

USA: Big Red Stores Launches Discount Fuel Card

Convenience store chain Big Red Stores in Central Arkansas has launched the Big Red Discount Fuel Card. This new card for a new customer rewards platform based on purchases made at any one of the retailer's 32 locations. With the Discount Fuel Card, all customers can automatically earn cents off fuel prices when they make in-store purchases. Rewards members earn 1 cent per gallon for every \$5 spent inside the store when using their card.

"The Big Red Discount Fuel Card program is another example of our commitment to excellent customer service," said David Hendrix, president of Summerwood Partners, parent company of Bryant-based Big Red. "When our customers pay for a fountain drink, coffee or any other items involved in the program, they will be able to earn additional cents off a gallon when they fill up."

If they purchase a car wash, they can save an additional 10 cents per gallon. A fountain drink purchase earns a 5-cent savings per gallon. Rewards members can also earn additional points if they are a Valero credit card holder, which will save them an extra 5 cents per gallon. A customer could save at least 20 cents per gallon on one visit,

according to the locally owned and operated chain. "We think it is a great way to reward and thank our customers for their loyalty," Hendrix said, noting the more they spend, the more they save.

CstoreWorld 251115

USA: Corner Store C- Store Chain Rebrand

The CST Brands plans a total brand makeover that will start in San Antonio and spread outward, creating a network of rebranded stores within 3 years. On November 19, 2015, CST unveiled its first rebranded Corner Store built from the ground up. The store is in north San Antonio, and the company plans to add four more just like it in San Antonio before the end of the year. The Corner Store name has not changed, but a dramatic new look and feel carries out the company's new service promise: "Simply Fresh. Always Friendly." The color palette and design elements are refreshing, neighborly and in-touch, and will encompass the store logo, signage, interior and exterior.

The larger stores will be known as Corner Store Markets, and will offer an expanded selection of fresh produce, quick meal fixings and a made-to-order food menu with pizzas, sandwich melts, soups, salads and

more. CST is launching the brand initiative with five new Corner Store Markets in San Antonio that will open before the end of 2015. In early 2016, the company will debut a total of 21 new and legacy San Antonio stores that will carry the new Corner Store logo, signage and color palette. The larger stores will also be Corner Store Market locations. After opening these new and refreshed stores, CST will begin a rollout to all Corner Stores in San Antonio and the surrounding area, with the goal of rebranding the network within 3 years.

CstoreWorld 201115

Vietnam: Customers turn to convenience stores

The retail market in Vietnam has recently witnessed a boom in development of mini marts and convenience stores with participation of not only domestic firms but international players.

The retail market has great potential for growth, Richard Leech, executive director of CBRE Viet Nam was quoted as saying. He added that while the revenue of convenience stores accounted for around 20% of the market, the market size rate of Vietnam remained below 10%. A survey by Nielsen found that currently around 20% of Vietnamese consumers shopped frequently

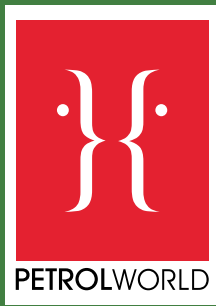
at convenience stores and this shopping trend was growing popular in a modern society.

Seeing the potential, many firms recently penetrated the retail market or had plans to penetrate the retail market with the development of convenience store chains. Statistics showed that the number of mini marts increased rapidly by 260% since 2012 to more than 530 units by the end of September. Since the end of last year, Vingroup had opened more than 93 Vinmart stores and recently planned to raise the number to 2,000 in 2016.

In July, 7-Eleven announced plan to develop 7-Eleven store chain in Vietnam, while Japan's FamilyMart also planned to increase the number convenience stores to more than 200 in 2016. Mobile World Investment Corporation recently announced the development of the retail store chain Bach Hoa Xanh following the model of Indonesia's Alfamart this year, first with between 30 and 50 outlets.

Dinh Thi My Loan, president of the Viet Nam Association of Retailers, said the competition would be harsh, not only among mini marts but also with other retail channels, especially online shopping outlets.

CstoreWorld 291015



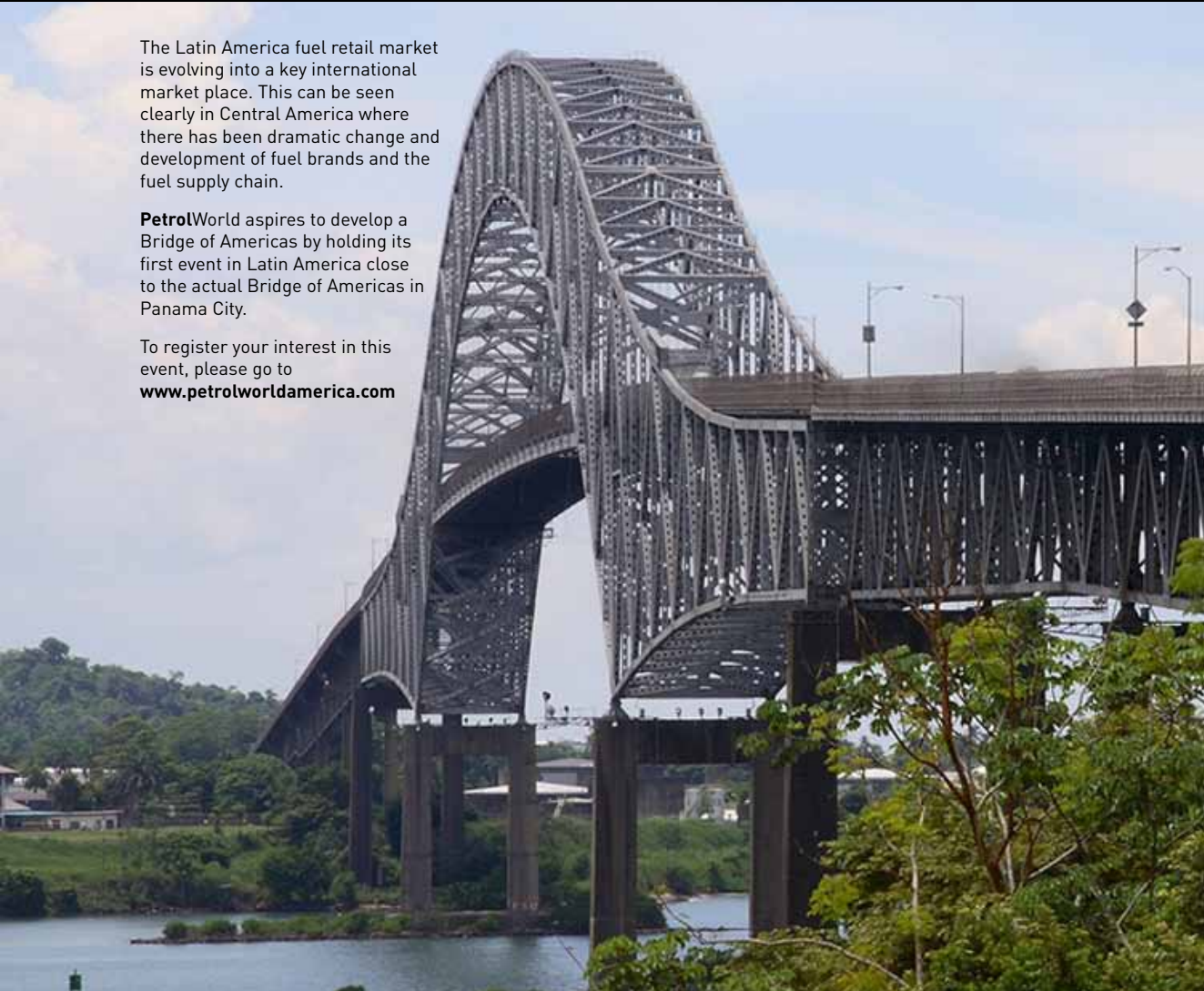
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The Latin America fuel retail market is evolving into a key international market place. This can be seen clearly in Central America where there has been dramatic change and development of fuel brands and the fuel supply chain.

PetrolWorld aspires to develop a Bridge of Americas by holding its first event in Latin America close to the actual Bridge of Americas in Panama City.

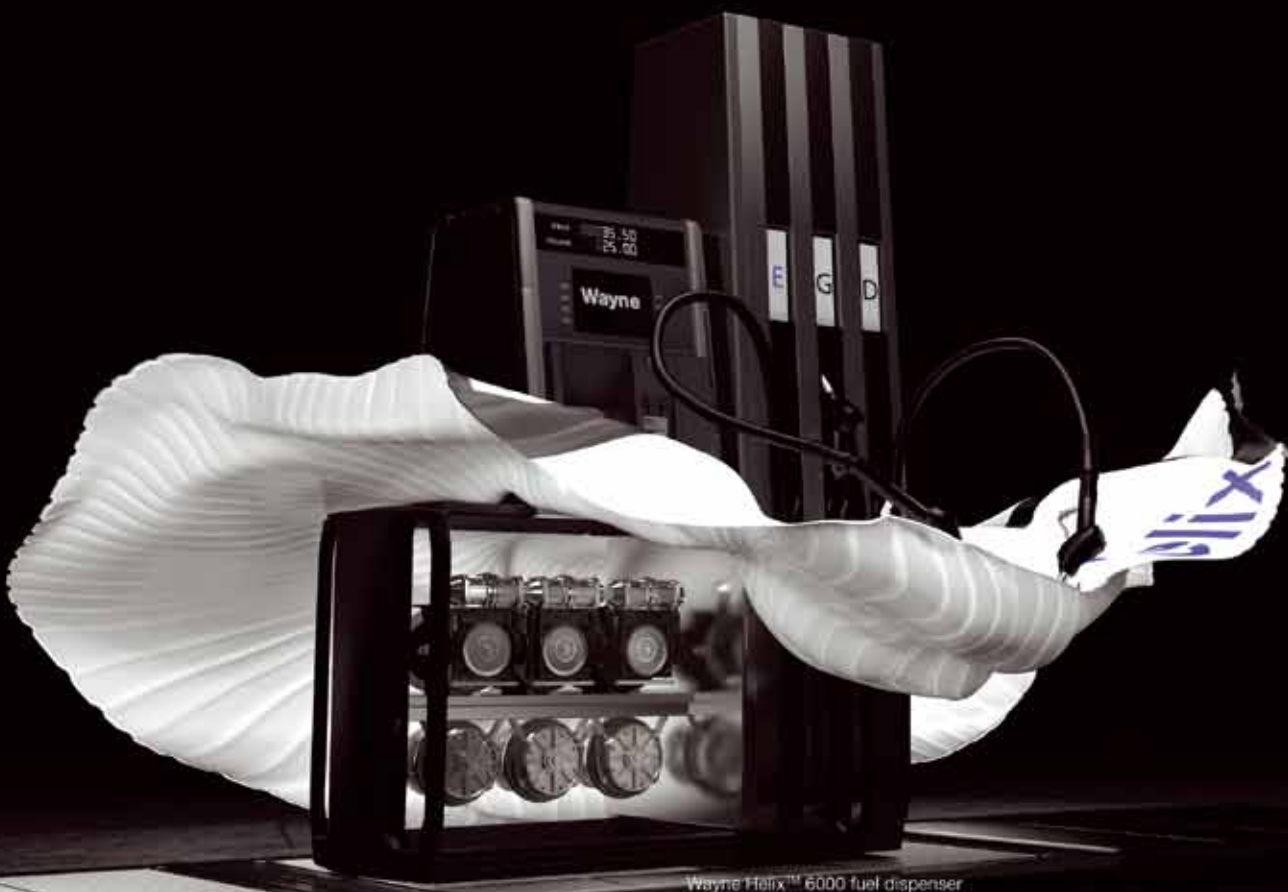
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