



Scottish Wholesale Achievers 2019

This feedback for participating wholesalers in the categories below has been provided by the sponsoring suppliers who identified best practice during the judging process and have highlighted these examples.

Best Marketing Initiative



Sponsored by Quorn Foods

Utilising all aspects of media available, either as blanket coverage or bespoke, detailed coverage to target specific groups.

Having a core theme at the heart of any initiative or messaging, and allowing this to flow through all aspects of the business.

Engaging with suppliers and customers to link the two together, not just concentrating on one or the other.

Understanding the customer and supplier need and developing initiatives that benefit all parties.

Demonstrating passion for what they do across the board.

Taking feedback on board constructively and acting upon it.

Adding value to a brand by working collaboratively with suppliers.

Getting involved in community projects to give something back to the local area.

Reducing wastage, whether packaging, food or other.

Championing local brands/foods/suppliers – either to give a point of difference or reduce food miles.

Driving hot topics and trends.

Best Delivered Operation – Retail



PHILIP MORRIS
INTERNATIONAL

Sponsored by Philip Morris

The category this year had a lot of running themes. Going digital and switching to online ordering is definitely where the future lies with this side of the retail business.

By offering App-only deals, wholesalers have ensured they are driving their customers to use this technology in the correct way, while still accommodating the retailers who are still using conventional ways of making orders.

Wholesalers are also supporting retailers in the transition of “going digital” and offering help to all retailers.

We have also seen an increase of effective route planning to be more efficient on the environment, while still satisfying their customers.

Wholesalers are clearly making a conscious effort to focus on customer service, and in most cases, recently dedicating a whole department to take care of these issues promptly.

The effective rollout and use of POS materials and the use of EPOS data keeps wholesalers and the retailers on the same page and both benefiting.

Best Symbol Group



Sponsored by Carabao

Listen to your retailers – not just the top-performing and flagship stores but give all symbol group members the chance to be heard and to give input. Face to face is best and a rotation of retailers, not always the same ones.

Build community point of difference by giving retailers the tools to engrain themselves in their locality. With Tesco looking to cut costs by removing services such as deli counters and downgrading in-store bakeries, this could represent a great opportunity for local symbol stores.

Food to Go solutions don't have to be provided "in house". Network to gain support for small providers who will be keen to work with forward-thinking groups of retailers who can help grow their business and awareness of their brands.

Communicate. Give your retailers clear, timely information that is relevant and helpful. Understand how each individual retailer prefers to receive this (email, WhatsApp, Facebook etc) and how often.

Share data within your symbol group. Best practice real examples with data are more powerful and will help you and your retailers grow and develop.

Share data with your suppliers who can help you identify opportunities and trends. Suppliers are also more likely to spend time and money with groups who can give real results and feedback as this will also help them, within their businesses, fight for the channel share of voice.

Consider relevant trends where your stores can move much faster than larger competitors. Vaping would be a good example of this in practice.

Review your order systems (websites, Apps) regularly to make it easy for retailers to buy from you. Recommend a core range but make sure there is clear communication space for NPD and trends so retailers do not miss out on opportunities.

Best Cash & Carry



SOFT DRINKS

Sponsored by AG Barr

Training and development was embedded in the depot, driven by the passion and commitment of the manager. The depot had become a hub for training with excellent career progression demonstrated in numerous examples.

Product availability was almost perfect with all SKUs, well merchandised and given the space deserved to keep them in constant stock; pricing, RRP and POR% was visible for every SKU.

H&S was the number one priority for this depot. Training, SSOW and risk assessments were all well documented and they had created a culture of H&S, not just a list of rules to be obeyed.

We visited unannounced and found the housekeeping to be exceptional – from the car park to the checkouts and aisles, the manager of this depot clearly put a lot of effort into making sure the customer experience started as soon as they arrived in the car park.

Great Place to Work



Sponsored by Premier Foods

Employee of the Month Awards as part of recognition and reward schemes.

Performance reviews across ALL depot employees.

Full induction plans.

Role profiles outlining job tasks and KPIs.

Links with external bodies such as Age Scotland, for future and development planning.

H&S initiatives, making employees feel safer at work.

Investment in improving common employee areas, such as canteens, breakout facilities, meeting rooms etc.

Investment in HR managers to develop employees.

Late night transport.

Early morning transport.

Employee discount schemes.

Listening to employees' needs and acting upon this (that are viable).

Improved communications via internal noticeboards, employee councils and briefings from senior team members.

Best Licensed Operation

HALEWOOD

Wines & Spirits

Sponsored by Halewood Wines & Spirits

During the judging we saw great use of new technology to help make wholesalers more efficient and these changes will ensure wholesale can stand up to the challenges of the ever increasingly competitive market.

This was demonstrated by the use of App technology and a new website that was able to highlight products based upon their business type, location etc that could add value to their offering.

We also saw technology used to offer a tailored service to customers to add value to the entire chain and to ensure their customers are offering the most relevant products for their customers while also ensuring a personal touch as it triggers any issues/anomalies so the relevant point of contact can contact the customer to see the reason for it and offer a solution if necessary.

One wholesaler is leading the way in reducing their environmental impact with a full cardboard return scheme already in place, electric vehicles for head office and they are self-sufficient with their energy as well which again shows wholesale is leading the way.

As referenced before the ever-increasing challenges from the grocery channel have meant that offering a bespoke tailored service to meet customer demands is more important than ever and we saw this across our entrants. But one really stood out as they have had to modify their vehicles to meet the requests of one of their customers, and this level of customer support is how this channel will continue to grow.

We have also seen how a wholesaler in this area is able to react much faster than businesses outside of this area and to maximise opportunities. This was demonstrated by one wholesaler who attended an awards dinner which had a gin of the year award – as soon as the winner was announced this was put on social media with a link to buy the product and they sold out overnight.

Best Delivered Operation – Foodservice



Sponsored by Pritchitts

Spotting trends ahead of the mainstream and relating these to customer activation to support driving business for both parties – providing innovative solutions/driving local/driving veganism etc, and bringing in experts in the field to support the harnessing of these trends to add value to customers.

Recognising the daily challenges and ongoing changes with foodservice to offer flexible approaches and ways of doing business – extended ordering hours, multiple ways to place orders, size of orders, size of product/product split orders.

Local autonomy at depot level (within different departments/functions within businesses) to drive individual geographical and customer challenges.

Supporting employees through ongoing training, graduate programmes and mentoring schemes, along with reward and recognition within businesses.

Monitoring of customer feedback and auctioning results to improve service – transparency across the business on the results to have total depot ownership.

Engaging with the wider shareholder to raise issues of the industry supporting customers and the key challenges they face ie how can we drive sugar reduction, packaging, recycling, Brexit etc.

Supporting with industry-led needs such as allergens, food safety, recycling, wastage, sustainability and striving to improve on their current position.

Engagement with supplies to ensure the “right products” are stocked, available and supported from the start to the finish of the supply chain operation (farm to fork), adding value and moving above a purely price conversation.

Engagement from all total businesses to “getting it right and doing it better”.

While some practices could be seen as the norm and expected, in our opinion the main form of best practice that we witnessed and was clearly demonstrated was the way that a Scottish wholesaler is prepared to adapt any of their current processes to go the extra mile to help and support their customers’ needs/requirements.