



DISTRICT BULLETIN

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND DISTRICT

LOCAL NEWS AND VIEWS FOR NFRN MEMBERS

July to September 2018

Welcome to our summer Bulletin. As we enter the second half of 2018 I hope you are all enjoying the brilliant sunshine and that extra bit of business that comes with the good weather, such as enhanced sales of soft drinks and ice lollies. Long may it last!

As we continue to cope with acquisitions and takeovers that now seem to be happening on a daily basis and as the NFRN heads towards its 100th year, I would like to use this welcome to take a look back at just how much we here in Ireland have achieved for independent retailers over the years.

It was 21 years this June when Peter Steemers and I, in conjunction with CTN Systems and the NFRN, agreed to trial a scanning system in our shops. It was a huge task to undertake as there was no barcode stock database available in Ireland at the time but we were not going to be beaten! With the help of our wives and families we spent weeks entering data barcodes into our system. A huge task indeed, but I'm sure Peter would agree we have never looked back. What a success story for ourselves and, not surprisingly, our NFRN colleagues quickly followed suit.

Another forgotten story involves stamps. Remember the time when we bought postage stamps at the post office at face value and had to sell them at zero margin? Then along came Tom Burke, an ex national councillor and district president, who lobbied governments and thanks to his efforts managed to obtain a six per cent margin for the retailer. Sadly, this has been reduced in recent years and now stands at four per cent.

Recent news that may affect some members is the announcement that Euronet Worldwide has completed the acquisition of Easycash branded ATMs in Ireland from Ulster Bank. Euronet said that approximately 400 Easycash branded ATMs will be migrated within its current network in the coming months but is promising that there should be no disruption in service. It has already

unveiled plans to offer value-added services on the ATMs, including cash deposits, foreign currency dispensing, event ticketing and promotional advertisements.

However, our advice to members is:

1. Check your current ATM contract
2. Do not sign any new contract
3. Call the NFRN helpline for advice and free legal aid on 453 799.

It's not easy being an independent retailer in the present economic climate; however, we must stand together and support one another to achieve our goals.

Martin Mulligan
District President



PAYPOINT TO LEAVE THE IRISH MARKET



Following an extensive review of its business, PayPoint has advised that it has decided to leave the Irish market and will close its operation in October 2018 to focus on its core markets.

In a letter to PayPoint retailers in May, the company said it was still “very much business as usual and you should continue to serve customers as normal.”

Specific details about the closure of the service will be revealed over coming months, it added.

PayPoint said: “We would like to thank you in advance for your continued support over the next six months as we close down our operations.”

Members are reminded that most service provider contracts are not solely serviced by PayPoint in Ireland. In fact, Payzone is the dominant player in the market and services the same clients as PayPoint.

SUN SHINES WITH COVER PRICE RISE AND PRO RATA TERMS

Recent price rises and pro rata retail terms on the daily, Saturday and Sunday editions of the Irish Sun have been welcomed by the NFRN.

From July 2 the price of the weekday edition rose 10c to €1.10, meaning retailers now earn 27.75c per copy.

From July 7 the Saturday edition rose to €1.20, giving retailers 30.27c per copy and the increase to €1.20 for the Irish Sun on Sunday means that stockists will earn 27.52c per copy.

THIRTEEN PER CENT OF CIGARETTES SOLD ARE CONTRABAND, SAYS REVENUE

Thirteen per cent of all cigarettes sold in Ireland are contraband, according to the Revenue Commissioners 2017 Annual Report.

In addition, 15 per cent of pouch tobacco used for roll-your-own cigarettes is smuggled.

The money lost to the Exchequer from unpaid duty on the sale of illegal packets of cigarettes is put at €229 million.

The report also found that 26 million packets of illegal cigarettes were sold out of a total national sale of 215 million packets.

Revenue classifies illegal cigarettes in several ways – 10.1 per cent of the illegal 13 per cent are known brands smuggled into the Republic; 2.9 per cent are known as “illegal whites”, that is, cigarettes made illegally and smuggled to a point of sale; and counterfeit packs of known brand names.





MENZIES DUBLIN TO HOST FIRST EVER OPEN DAY: SEE YOUR NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES PACKED

Ever wondered how your newspapers and magazines are packed before arriving at your store? Well, you will shortly have the chance to find out as we are delighted to announce that the popular NFRN trade days held in association with Menzies Distribution are coming to Dublin.

The event will take place on November 28 between 9.30am and 2pm and follow similar trade days held with Menzies in England and Scotland over the past year.

These open days form part of the NFRN's strategy to bring more members together in a way to help you boost sales and profits.

One of the main attractions is likely to be a depot tour where Menzies customers can see first hand the magazine packing, returns and voucher processing operations, along with the opportunity to talk to local wholesale management about any service-related issues you have.

Members will also have a perfect opportunity to meet suppliers, learn about their new products, promotions and services and pick up some special on the day offers.

We are also hoping to run some seminars on topical subjects and district officials and NFRN

staff will be on hand to offer assistance and advice, or just for a chat.

NFRN national events manager Nigel Smith said: "During 2017 and during the first half of this year we have run a number of successful trade days with Menzies and we are delighted to be bringing this event to Dublin on November 28. I look forward to seeing Republic of Ireland members there."

There will be more details in the autumn district bulletin and keep an eye out for flyers advertising the events. More information can also be found on our page of the NFRN website www.nfrnline.com.



All set for the depot tour

IS YOUR BUSINESS READY FOR BREXIT?

Thanks to a new SME Scorecard online tool any business can quickly self-diagnose whether they are ready for Brexit.

This Enterprise Ireland (EI) scorecard is a first step that members can take in developing a robust Brexit plan. It will help business owners to stimulate thinking about the key areas that may be impacted in their business and to self-assess their level of preparedness.

The Scorecard can be accessed at www.prepareforbrexit.ie or at www.localenterprise.ie. Enterprise Ireland said: "Despite the uncertainty, Irish companies should be taking immediate action to mitigate the potential risks and position themselves to take advantage of the opportunities."

The scorecard is one of a number of tools developed by the government to assist businesses in their preparations.

Heather Humphreys, minister for business, enterprise and innovation, said: "Government departments, enterprise agencies and regulatory bodies have a range of advisory supports, tool-kits and financial supports available to help business to navigate their way through Brexit impacts and to prepare for Brexit.



Heather Humphreys

"Understanding the potential implications is a key first step in developing your Brexit Contingency Plan. We will continue to work across government to ensure our information to businesses and the supports available are best suited to helping business innovate, compete and trade and to meet the challenges and opportunities of Brexit."

More information about the tools and grants available can also be found at <https://nfrnonline.com/information/irish-government-brexit-update/>

IRISH TIMES GETS GREEN LIGHT FOR EXAMINER TAKEOVER

The acquisition of the Irish Examiner by the Irish Times has received ministerial approval, it has been announced.

The Irish Examiner reported that the minister for communications, climate action and the environment, Denis Naughten, had approved the proposed transaction. The next step in the deal will

be for a number of legal and compliance regulations to be adhered to, following the minister's decision that the merger would not be "contrary to the public interest in protecting the plurality of the media in the State."

Further updates are expected to be made as the deal progresses.

As well as the Irish Examiner newspaper, the group publishes the Cork Evening Echo, the Western People, the Nationalist titles, and a number of high-profile websites including Breakingnews.ie and Benchwarmers.ie.