



**SITE OF INTEREST**

We are more than just another pound shop website  
– Rippleglen buying director Laraine Jones

**Kishor Patel approaches suppliers for online project**

Independent retailer Kishor Patel has started approaching suppliers for his new Just Eat-style online company set to launch later this year.

The project was revealed by Patel in January and will allow individual stores to target a wider customer base.

Patel said he was currently showcasing the project to selected suppliers. "So far, virtually all want to join us," he said.

He added he would approach retailers over the next couple of months before committing with suppliers in the second half of the year.

Patel sold four of his seven c-stores last year to free up his time to work on the project. Former Nisa trading director John Sharpe was appointed commercial manager in January.

# Rippleglen website takes on discounters

**Andrew Don**

Rippleglen is fighting back against the discounters by launching a new website, More Than Just a Pound.

The CTN operator, which has 91 stores, is a long-term critic of the discounters, claiming suppliers are not only damaging the business of traditional newsagents by developing exclusive ranges for discounters, but also devaluing their own brands.

Rippleglen managing director Mike Colley told The Grocer last month: "The discounters continue to take volume from CTN/convenience. Manufacturers remain oblivious to the damage they do to their own brands."



Rippleglen operates CTNs under the Supernews fascia

The majority of products on the new website, which marks Rippleglen's debut in e-commerce, retail for £1 alongside other products such as tobacco, e-cigarettes and bulk confectionery at various price points.

Other categories include grocery, health

& beauty, household and seasonal. Delivery charges start from £4.30 and a £10 minimum order is imposed.

Products at the £1 price point account for 50% to 60% of total products sold on the site, which went live last week with 220 items. These will increase to about 500

over the next six months.

The site has its own domain, morethanjustapound.co.uk, but redirects to Rippleglen's existing site rippleglen.co.uk.

"In recent months, the internet has seen an influx of £1 discounters entering the online market. We wanted to offer something different," said Rippleglen buying director Laraine Jones. "We are more than just another pound shop website."

Rippleglen, which is ranked 19th in The Grocer's Top 50 list of indie retailers, and has a turnover of £73m, operates CTNs under its own Supernews Discount, Express and Local fascias.

## Japanese restaurant sushi joins new look James Hall lunch offer

James Hall has completely overhauled its lunchtime offer with a new meal deal and new products, including sushi from Japanese restaurant chain Samsi.

The Spar wholesaler has expanded the range to 34 products – 22 of which are either new or reformulated.

Some 40% of the products have 360 calories or fewer, and 21 contain no pork. As part of the revamp, packaging has also been updated with calorie content and traffic lights moved to the front



The Spar wholesaler has an expanded range of 34 lines

of packs. Three Spar-branded snack salads have been introduced, as well as a new range of fruit pots and two new snack bags.

The new meal deal includes a main, drink and snack for £3.25. The

main covers Spar and Great Northern sandwiches, wraps, bloomers or triples as well as pasta salads, snack salads and sushi. The Express Cuisine halal food range has also been included.

The initial sushi range comprises an eight-piece vegetarian and an eight-piece fish range (rsp: £2); and an eight piece nori-maki with two additional nigiri (rsp: £2.50).

Sales and marketing director Peter Dodding said, on sandwiches alone, the business was worth £10m at retail. +

## Esso sites boost Euro Garages and MRH

Forecourt operators MRH GB and Euro Garages have boosted their estates after snapping up sites from oil giant Esso.

MRH GB, which last week topped The Grocer's Top 50 independent grocery retailer ranking, bought 78 of the 201 sites up for grabs, while Euro Garages bought 104. Rontec acquired 19.

Euro Garages now has nearly 270 sites, while MRH has over 460. All the sites purchased are in the South or South East of England and include a long-term fuel supply



Euro Garages has taken on 104 of the 201 forecourts

agreement with Esso.

Motor Fuel Group, meanwhile, revealed it is to replace the Murco name on its company-owned forecourts.

The Murco name would instead be used for its dealer network. +