

Spotlight

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THE MAGAZINE FOR RETAIL, PROPERTY AND THE ARCHES COMMUNITY



Market Leader

Vinegar Yard brings an original vibe to London Bridge

Hot shot barista

Costa star wins national title

Fringe benefits

How Edinburgh prepares for the festival



Setting out their stall

Marketplaces and multi-use venues like Vinegar Yard provide an excellent mix of attractions and sit well near stations and in archways

Our property portfolio includes a range of flexible spaces that suit the pop-up drinking/dining/shopping experience which has exploded in popularity in recent years.

One such space is the archways beneath Glasgow Central station, which have been transformed into a multifunctional venue.

Billed as the Argyle Street Arches, they are home to Platform, a Friday to Sunday street food market with a rotating line up of vendors. Chefs cook up a storm in the mobile stalls, while an on-site brewery ensures visitors don't go thirsty.

Alongside Platform, Argyll Street Arches hosts private functions and events. Barry Halfpenny, director of the Argyle Street Arches, said: "We're an independent company and to stay in the game you have to offer a bit of everything."

Another business offering variety is Real Food Markets. It champions sustainable and ethically-sourced producers and has three sites across London, including one outside King's Cross station.

It runs Wednesday to Friday and has built a strong following among commuters, the local community, as well as attracting day trippers and tourists.

Fabio Diu, director of



Barry at Platform

Real Food Markets, said: "It's an amazing venue in a really great location. We feel lucky to be able to trade in such a busy location, allowing us to help support a lot of fantastic independent, small producers, which is very important to us."

Real Food Festivals were invited by us to hold pop-up markets in Waterloo and Charing Cross before being offered a permanent pitch as part of the King's Cross Square redevelopment. The partnership has been mutual, with the station providing excellent footfall while the market has helped boost the outlying station community.

Fabio added: "We've developed a thriving market which we believe has helped bring the square back to the people. And that's what markets are for – community spaces that bring people together."



Fabio Diu, director of Real Food Markets

GOING GREEN

Costa bravo

A bustling coffee shop is brewing up a new campaign to persuade people to recycle more paper cups.

Costa Coffee already has a nationwide policy of collecting and recycling containers, including those from competitors. But the company's efforts are being redoubled north of the border thanks to a new collaboration with environmental charity, Keep Scotland Beautiful.

This month, the Glasgow Central branch will pioneer Cup Movement, a city-wide campaign aimed at transforming people's attitudes. "Paper cups were very much a single-use product, but they can all be recycled now," said store manager Brian Simpson.

"There are a lot of people who don't understand that. This campaign is all about education, to let people know things have changed."

Visual messaging and campaign branding will be in all Glasgow Costa branches for three months, reinforced by local press and posters. Brian hopes it will inspire people to emulate regular customers who gather used cups from their workplaces to bring to Costa. "It doesn't matter what it is, we'll be able to recycle it," he said.

> IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Barista wins big

Customers who find themselves at Guildford station and in need of a caffeine hit could do a lot worse than stopping by Costa Coffee, "second home" of barista extraordinaire Ruggero Barlaba.

The 23-year-old knocked out stiff competition to be crowned Costa Coffee's 2019 UK and Ireland Barista of the Year. He went on to compete in the global championships, taking home an impressive second place. "I'm definitely going for the win next year," Ruggero laughed.

The passionate barista juggles an acting career with a full-time position at Costa Coffee. While at face value, the two roles have little in common, Ruggero points out a strong crossover when it comes to skills and development. "My role as a barista is an amalgamation of so many different positive attributes I can be working on. Character development, people skills, hand-eye coordination, memory; all are so transferable to acting."

Being global runner-up in the prestigious competition is no mean feat, with contestants facing a panel of six judges – four sensory and two technical. Each had to present four cups requiring contestants

to tackle the tricky precision of latte art. Sixteen flawless drinks were expected in 35 minutes, before a specialty round tested creative flair.

"We had to create our own drink, one which we felt best showcased the Italia blend that Costa represents," explained Ruggero. "Mine was called

Morning Sunshine. I grew up in Bermuda and every morning I would have orange juice. My family, being Italian, would have espresso, so it reminded me of home. I thought what better way to combine these two worlds than to make a drink that was both orange juice and coffee. The drink also epitomised my personality because it was really light, bright and kept you sprightly – positivity in a cup!"





Finding your feet

Moving into a new area can be challenging, but there are many tools – both traditional and original – to help build a customer base

Making its patties in an in-house butchery and cooking its rosemary chips fresh everyday has helped establish Honest Burgers as a restaurant that's a cut above. But the business doesn't just rely on its signature dishes when opening in a new location. It goes a step further to ingratiate itself by collaborating with neighbouring producers to create new dishes, exclusive to that specific community.

For their latest opening at London Bridge they worked with suppliers to whip up a bespoke burger and cocktail, named after nearby streets.

Adam Layton, head of brand collaborations, said Honest relishes the chance to discover, and collaborate with, local producers. "It means we can deal direct with suppliers, we get to know them, and they come to invest a bit more in our

"We can really champion new suppliers to help them get to the next stage."

ADAM LAYTON

team," he added. "It's been very successful – people notice the effort."

The Tooley Street burger stacks an Honest patty with taleggio cheese, mayo, tomato, rocket, pickles and Nduja sausage made by Crown and Queue, a cured meat supplier a stone's throw from the station.

Adam said: "I went to Maltby Street, which has got lots of great suppliers, and one of the doors I knocked on was Crown and Queue. It's a really premium product that uses British rare-breed pork."

Drawing on Bermondsey's history of gin distilling and beer brewing, the team was also keen to create some bespoke tipples

and found the perfect partners in the Bermondsey Mixer Co and brewers Partizan. The Bermondsey Mixer Co's grapefruit tonic is among the ingredients in the Bermondsey Spritz – the restaurant's twist on the traditional Aperol spritz – while Partizan's pale ale, IPA and fruity saison beer also feature. "People have really responded to the Bermondsey Spritz. It's been so popular we've decided to roll it out across the group," Adam said.

He described working with local suppliers



"We did very well over the first two weeks, much better than expected."

ANAMARIA RAITA

as a "virtuous circle". he added: "We can really champion new suppliers to help them get to the next stage."

Traditional promotions – such as leafleting and offering samples – are tried and tested methods of attracting customers. And leafleting is one of the ways the team at Pure in London's Liverpool Street station have been drawing in the crowds since opening in July.

During the opening weeks team members handed out discount cards offering customers money off during their first three visits.

The simple promotion has paid off, said manager Anamaria Raita. "We do this for all our store openings, it's about bringing people in and letting them know you're here," she added. "It's worked because we've started to get regular customers."

The discounts – and Pure's healthy offerings – have proved so popular with customers the new branch has already smashed sales targets.

Anamaria added: "We did very well over the first two weeks, much better than expected. We have targets that we needed to hit in the first three months and we've almost already beaten it in three weeks.

"It's a really good start for us." ■

On social media

twitter.com/Spotlight_NR

Making your brand known

Network Rail's marketing team shares their top tips to help tenants and retailers establish their brand:

SOCIAL MEDIA SUPPORT

Every station has a social media account and champion who can share your posts and promote local offers.

RETAIL DIRECTORY

A great way to let customers know where you are, your contacts and opening hours. Search 'retail directory' on our website.

DIGITAL SCREENS

As a retailer you're entitled to a discounted rate to advertise on our JC Decaux screens, which can be found in most of our major stations. For more email UKSales@jcdecaux.com

CUSTOMER INFORMATION POINTS

These are printed display boards in stations that provide a cost-effective way of sharing promotions. For more information email Thomas.Dunn@ukmedia.co.uk

WASHROOM POSTERS

Advertising within our station washrooms is managed by Admedia. Contact Enquiries@admedia.co.uk for more details.

CALENDAR EVENTS

There's a national day for near enough



everything – from coffee to cats. If your brand aligns to certain days it's a great opportunity for some timely promotions. And don't forget annual events such as Easter and Christmas.



GETTING IN TOUCH

The marketing team is on hand to help. If you'd like to discuss any of the above or marketing opportunities generally email marketingenquiries@networkrail.co.uk

In the next issue...

We're talking all things festive – and we want to know your top tips! What do you do over the Christmas period to promote your brand? Have you got some tried and tested methods of drawing in

Christmas shoppers? Or will you be trying something new in 2019?

Send us your tips, with your name, job title and location to spotlight@abcomm.co.uk



Photos: Lenny Warren

Matthew Lafferty
Pret a Manger

Tom Burns
JD Wetherspoon

Setting the stage

Edinburgh's world-famous Fringe festival annually attracts close to half a million people. And Waverley station provides the opening curtain to many visitors' Fringe experience

As the world's largest arts festival, the Edinburgh Fringe draws more than 400,000 people to the city's historic streets. And many of them choose to arrive by train, meaning the team at Edinburgh Waverley has to be ready for their arrival. Preparations begin months in advance of the festival's launch in August as the station team stocks up on consumables.

Lifts, escalators and cleaning machines are serviced in readiness and extra cleaning, security and customer service staff are brought in. But the payoff is working in an "extraordinary" atmosphere, said station manager Juliet Donnachie. "A few years ago an elderly American couple described the atmosphere like being in [children's TV show] Fraggie Rock - I couldn't stop laughing as they were, and still are,



Heather McMillan and Natalie Toshack
M&S

absolutely right!" she added. "Nothing is unusual and everything is extraordinary."

The station team works to support retailers to make the most of the additional crowds - with footfall tripling during festival weekends and 15% up on weekdays.

Juliet said: "Creating a welcoming atmosphere for festival visitors and commuters alike is really important."

This year, the team at M&S - led by store managers Heather McMillan and Natalie Toshack - held food tasting sessions and created a display of Scottish products.

Heather said: "It's like Edinburgh's Christmas really. During the festival we take around £150,000 - £170,000 a week."

Natalie added: "We reviewed where products are located based on previous years' sales and we've put more on the shelves of what customers bought in previous years. We also change our rota and put in a night shift to ensure we're fully available first thing,"

"Everyone's having fun and getting along with each other - it's a wonderful atmosphere."

MATTHEW LAFFERTY

Making the most of Scottish products was a big push this year, and they were displayed prominently in front of the store's Edinburgh Castle wall vinyl.

"We want people to walk into Edinburgh station and feel they've walked into Scotland," Natalie said.

At nearby Pret a Manger, staff put in extra time to serve festival crowds, opening until 11pm. But the "buzzing" atmosphere carries colleagues through.

Team member Matthew Lafferty said: "Everyone's having fun and getting along with each other - it's a wonderful atmosphere. Being in the station, you get to meet a lot more people." Festival footfall is "incredible", he added, with a normal weekday feeling like a very busy weekend.

It's the same story at The Booking Office, the recently opened JD Wetherspoon pub.

Tom Burns is one of 13 managers at the pub, which champions local produce, serving all Scottish-brewed ales. He said: "It's about 1.5 times what we'd usually do during a busy week. It's great fun and you meet people from all walks of life." ■

Safe spot

Difficulty finding secure parking for his bike led **Callum McPherson** to open a first-of-its kind motorbike storage business. And Edinburgh's railway arches proved to be the perfect location for Moto Stable, which is revving up in popularity



The premises, located in three arches, provides secure parking for more than 30 bikes alongside workshop space so owners can tinker with their machines. The site is monitored inside and out by 24-hour CCTV and bikers gain access via a PIN pad.

Callum first thought of the Moto Stable concept three years ago but finding the perfect site proved tricky. He explained: "I've got a bike, I live in the centre and didn't have my own garage. I looked at individual lock-ups and they were all pretty expensive and had no security, no power, no water.

"I thought I could do this cheaper if I got an industrial unit and got a few people together, and it would work as a business.

"It took two years to find a location. It was pretty difficult because I needed an industrial unit with roller shutting doors, it needed to be central and to have power.



"When I came across these arches it was more or less perfect - the size and shape of them was ideal, they're dry and there's no windows." Since launching in January 2018, Moto Stable has



Callum McPherson
Moto Stable

quickly become a hit with Edinburgh bikers, as well as visiting petrol-heads. It's so popular, Callum is keen to expand into two neighbouring arches to provide more parking and develop the workshop into a hub for the biking community.

Moto Stable has also provided an innovative solution to a prevalent problem in Edinburgh.

Callum said: "More bikes are stolen than sold new in the UK and it's bad in Edinburgh. Tourist bikes get stolen daily in Edinburgh.

"Some people probably didn't have a bike because they had nowhere to keep it, but now they've found out about us and are going back to it. This has opened the door for a lot of people to get a bike."

Hitting the target

While some businesses are facing the chop, life is bang on for indoor axe-throwing venue Hatchet Harry's, which recently opened at Arch 18, Forth Banks in Newcastle.

Joint owners and managing directors Jack Beadle and Richard Bridge are determined to be a cut above the competition and chose to open the business at the Arches because of its central



location and availability of parking. Axe throwing has become hugely popular in recent years and the duo decided now was a good time to take advantage of the interest.

"We wanted something a little different," said Jack, who previously ran an activity centre. "A lot of axe throwing venues make reference to the Vikings, but we wanted to stand out from other places and Hatchet Harry's makes for a stylish brand."

Although they've not leased a commercial building before, the pair found the process straightforward and are delighted they took the plunge. "I was expecting to have to jump through a lot of hoops, but [commercial estate manager] Derek Brace made it easy. We were in a rush to get the keys and he did everything in his power to get them to us when we needed them."

Initially, the business saw lots of couples and small groups, but there has been a big increase in larger groups, from stag parties to corporate clients looking for fun team-building exercises.

"It's a scalable business and we'd like to open more venues in more cities," Jack added.



COMPETITION

Sweet treat!

Readers are in for a treat this issue as we're giving away a hamper from Hotel Chocolat.



To win, answer the following question: **When did Bristol Temple Meads open?** Tweet your answer to [@Spotlight_NR](https://twitter.com/Spotlight_NR) by 11 November and keep your eyes on the feed where we'll announce the winner.

Martin Scrafton
Hatchet Harry's
manager