

# Trade Centre Boksburg

## “Where the price is right”

BY ANELLE HAMILTON

SHOPPERS AT the Trade Centre in Boksburg are in for a few surprises this year, as the store is getting ready to implement a number of plans to grow its business in 2008.

“We have achieved phenomenal growth year on year and we hope to build on that this year by executing a four point strategy,” says general manager Louis Hoffmann.

Although the store already participates in national promotions and advertises extensively in local and national newspapers, it will focus even more on increasing its marketing and advertising activities. “Our promotions are always very successful and a major drawcard for customers,” says Hoffmann. It will also aim to expand its banner groups, Viva and BuyRite, and grow sales in its extensive general merchandise department. “We are going to increase our focus on the hospitality industry because it has major potential for us,” he adds.

Hoffman says because they are situated close to Johannesburg International Airport, they can supply a service to their clients where they package and export items to countries such as Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mozambique.



Trade Centre in Boksburg has a multitude of food and non-food products and its customer base consists of spaza shops, corporates, pubs, clubs and catering companies.



### Cheaper prices

The store opened for trade in July 2000 and has a good mix of retail and wholesale customers.

“We are very competitively priced. We have compared prices, trolley for trolley, with our three biggest competitors in the area and our store was the cheapest,” says Hoffmann.

The store is 13 500m<sup>2</sup> and consists of a food department, general merchandise and a liquor department. Its wholesale customers are made up of spaza shops, pubs, clubs, corporates and catering companies. “Our liquor department is popular as it is very competitively priced and offers a delivery

The liquor store is doing well and offers competitive prices and a delivery service.

service for big orders, as well as cooler boxes and ice for functions," he says.

The confectionery section is the star department in the store and consists of biscuits, chips, beverages and sweets. "This area is clearly marked with a 'Sweet Street' banner and is popular with both the public and our wholesale customers," says Hoffman.

#### Power to the people

The store has suffered huge losses as a result of power outages and has invested in a large generator that will power the whole store and the fridges. "It is a major capital investment but definitely worth it. The store also has a huge skylight that provides enough light even when the power is off," Hoffmann explains.

He says that inflation is starting to play a role in customer' buying decisions. "Food inflation and the rising petrol price are certainly having an affect on customers' pockets."

The store also believes in giving back

and is involved in a number of charities on a national level, but will focus on expanding these activities in 2008.

## Food inflation and the rising petrol price are certainly having an effect on customers' pockets.

Nearly 300 staff members work in the store, consisting of permanent staff and roving staff from suppliers. Trade Centre does training in conjunction with an outsourced company, while on-the job training is a continuous process. The suppliers are responsible for training their own staff.



The store has house brands including 'Bakers Choice,' which is very popular with the public and spaza shop owners.

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## Challenges

Hoffmann says his biggest challenge is to have stock available consistently and to stay competitive. He has been involved with the Trade Centre Group since its inception in 1986 and worked at Trade Centre Springs and Trade Centre Hillfox before joining the group on the East Rand. "Retail is my whole life and

Trade Centre is the Hyper Wholesale division of the Metcash Group and was established in South Africa in 1986.

Trade Centre now has 12 stores in Southern Africa and the average size is 12 000m<sup>2</sup>. The format differs to the traditional cash 'n carry in that it offers more than 25 000 branded products, including groceries, hi-fi's, music, sporting goods, D.I.Y, outdoor, office equipment and stationery, appliances, butchery, kitchenware, glassware, toys and jewellery.

For access to these massive stores, customers require an access card. To get their free card, customers apply on-line or in-store.

Each Trade Centre also has a fully operational liquor store attached, named "Liquor World." Liquor World offers an extensive range of local and imported liquor, as well as ordering, delivery and free party services. No card is required to shop at Liquor World.



The confectionery aisle is clearly marked with a 'Sweet Street' banner. It is the star department in the store.

I get great satisfaction from dealing with people every day," he says.

forming personal relationships with your customers. ■

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He believes that the secrets to success are maintaining excellent customer service, staying competitive, keeping costs low and

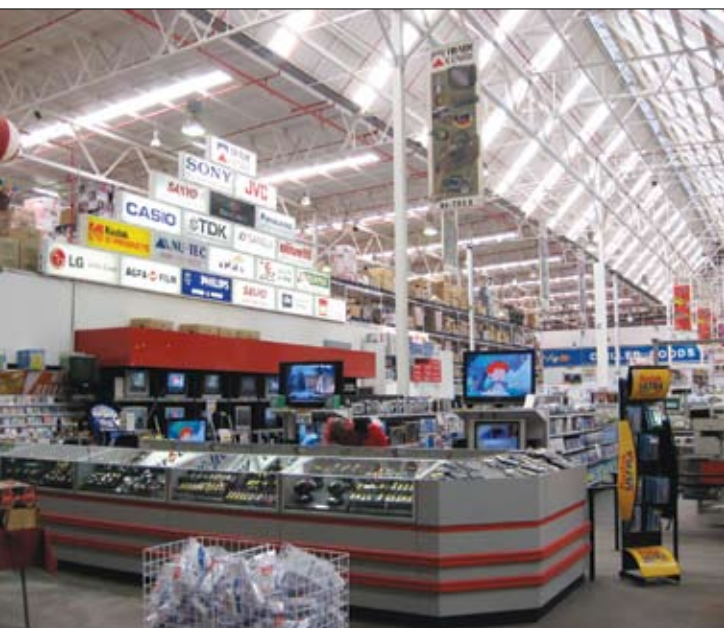
## Trade Centre Boksburg fact file

**Size:** 13 500m<sup>2</sup> (Total area)

**Departments:** Food, general merchandise and liquor

**Staff:** 300

**Trading hours:** Mon-Wed and Friday 08:30 – 17:30, Thursday 09:00 – 17:30, Saturday 08:00 – 16:00, Sunday 09:00 – 13:00



The store offers big brand names under one roof.



A sign above the tills in the general merchandise section reminds customers to visit the liquor store. The two stores are linked and shoppers can easily move between the two.