



Engen gets reinvigorated

Through its Programme Reinvigorate, Engen is giving its sites a makeover in order to consolidate the brand and create an even more convenient customer refuel experience for both their tank and tummy.

By LAURA DURHAM

An easily identifiable, strong and consistent brand. That's the aim of Engen's retail branding makeover under Programme Reinvigorate that will see another 100 sites revamped by the end of the year.

The goal

"We are creating a consistent brand look that consolidates the Engen brand into a single brand look rather than the many sub-brands that are diluting the Engen mother brand," says Pierr Roodt, Engen retail marketing manager. For example, Engen On-the-go convenience sites are being converted to mainstream Engen Quickshop sites and Zenex sites are being rebranded as Engen ones.

"Developing a strong brand image calls for creativity and hard work. Our customers appreciate the crisp, clean look and feel of our forecourts, which is very much the response we have in mind for the reinvigoration," said Vukile Zondani, GM of Engen sales and marketing.

Bright design

A reinvigorated site is easily identifiable by its bright silver and blue look, starting with a prominent sign depicting the Engen logo and the offers available at that site. The new

look canopy incorporates a prominent Engen blue curve on the shorter sides of the canopy, a redesigned pump island with a valet unit housing a washing bowl for windscreen cleaning, battery water, a refuse bin, etc.

"Our new Engen Quickshop design represents the most significant change in the new look and feel," says Roodt. Customer convenience is the backbone of the new store layout and the aisles are positioned for easy shopping with a natural category flow. "We are using silver vein gondolas to complement the store colours and layout in line with new retail design trends and our gondola ends have been designed to showcase our promotions or Quick Save bargains," he says.

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The till point has also been redesigned to include a typical supermarket impulse unit to ease queuing at the till point and to house key impulse lines to entice consumers for that extra purchase. The back of the till point has been redesigned to include the Engen blue arch and Quickshop logo, as well as a newly redesigned cigarettes unit that also houses over-the-counter products.

Engen has introduced a new flagship sub-brand to their suburbia sites, Engen 1-Plus. This C-store offers a Corner Bakery with Equatorial coffee and meal solutions via one of the fast food outlets or Woolworths Foodstop.



The offering

Every site's offering is chosen based on market dynamics and location. Through its joint venture partnership with Woolworths, customers are able to buy ready-made pre-packed meals that can be warmed up on-site in a customer microwave. Partnering with fast food outlets, Steers and Wimpy also broadens customers' takeaway options. The standard Corner Bakery offering offers meal solutions, such as pap and wors/vleis, rice with accompanying stews, rotisserie chicken, burgers, bunnies, etc. Again, depending on location and market dynamics.

The Quickshop's key categories are the 5 Cs: cold beverages, chips and snacks, confectionery, cigarettes and cellular airtime. Of course, to complete the concept of a 'mini mall', customers can also browse the aisles for basic groceries, health and beauty aids, perishables and a magazine and newspaper rack.



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There is also a range of value added services available; including airtime, lotto, prepaid electricity and Axxess uncapped ADSL vouchers. Customers also have the option of using their Woolworths cards for payment at the Engen Woolworths' sites or paying for fuel using e-bucks.

"We've positioned ourselves as a one-stop shop for the convenience customer from food for now to food for later covering all their meal needs i.e. morning, lunch, supper and late night plus basic essentials," says Roodt.



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Looking back

The C-store concept of today has changed vastly since its early days as a simple fuel dispenser to passing motorists.

"The typical Engen service station sold fuel to motorists and operated a workshop on site to cater for motorists needs. Over time a little tuckshop where one could buy basic essentials such as bread and chips was introduced," Roodt recalls.

Today a typical Engen Quickshop is a full-blown convenience store operating as a neighbourhood store or a transient store. "Following European and American trends the Engen Quickshop has evolved into a 'mini-mall' offering consumers a host of fresh produce, dry goods and meal solutions through its various joint ventures," he explains.

Catering for everyone

Engen's customer base ranges from LSMs 5 to 10 and covers both motorists and foot traffic. "We have on average 500 000 convenience store customers daily through our doors," says Roodt. The busiest times are mornings, midday, late afternoon and dinner time, depending on site location.

The transient market is served via the 1-Stop network, which offers convenience to the long distance traveller. "Here, one will find a well-stocked Quickshop, toilets, ATMs, tourist information bureau and a sit-down fast food restaurant with a play area for the kids while the parents take a break," explains Roodt.

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one of the fast food outlets or Woolworths Foodstop. Customers can even rent a movie for the night at the DVD rental concept – Moviestop – that offers the top 100 movies.

"Although the overall look and feel of the 1-Plus service station is largely the same as that of the standard Reinvigorated Engen C-store, the offers available at each site cater for the needs of the consumers in that area. Thus offers at both major highways and suburbia will differ based on market dynamics."

The power of promotion

Engen uses all forms of media to market the offers within the C-store, as well as on-site point of sale that are placed on the forecourt and on the glass windows for maximum visibility. Ongoing quarterly value promotions – Quick Save – are very popular. Recent major promotions include the Engen Free* dog collection which customers have dubbed "the Engen puppy promotion".

C-store challenges

Roodt says although South Africa is showing good signs of recovery, it will still be a while before customers get back to their normal habits. "Although the industry benefits from both foot traffic and motorists, it is the latter that still represents the bigger portion of the consumers who walk through the C-store doors and thus the current political unrest in oil producing nations does not bode well for our consumers and our dealer network," he adds.

"But Engen continues to look for innovative ways to generate traffic into our convenience stores through key promotional programs that benefit the consumer and our dealer network." **WB**