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We believe in empowering individuals with the right training, business systems and resources to strengthen their capabilities and achieve success. We believe in innovation,

providing world-class fuels and lubricants, modern fuel payment solutions and the convenience of FreshStop - our competitive retail offering with the proven ability to grow store and forecourt profitability. FreshStop is backed by one of SA's foremost supermarket retailers with the supply chain, logistics and support to deliver a fresh and healthy convenience offer at competitive prices. And finally, we believe in growing our business through a long-term commitment to actively develop our presence in the South African market.

To find out how much value we can add to your business, e-mail us on winwithcaltex@chevron.com to arrange a one on one meeting.



IT'S HOW YOU GET THERE



CALTEX



Excellence in every detail

Brackendowns Freshstop

– from neglected filling station to ‘talk of the town’ with its own Twitter account

Brackendowns Freshstop was revamped in November 2011 and has now become a destination for over 30 000 cars every month.

A dynamic management team has managed to convert the run-down filling station into a destination in Alberton and more than tripled their turnover within only a few months. Every customer is greeted personally and regulars enjoy a personal relationship with the staff whenever they come to ‘fill up and fresh up’.

First impression

The first thing that will stand out to customers when pulling off Klipriver Drive into the Freshstop in Brackendowns is the unique atmosphere among the staff at the filling station. Every single staff member is smiling and doing their jobs with motivation and passion. The management team has introduced unique approaches towards managing their staff as well as their site.

Something different

Aubrey Johnson and his partner, Rodgers Ntumba purchased the Caltex station in July 2011. Before takeover, the forecourt had

Store: Caltex Fresh Stop
Brackendowns

Location: Brackendowns,
Alberton

Size: 2 000m²

Staff: 30

Opening hours: 24hr

Turnover per month: R450 000

By MICHEL MACK

been poorly looked after, staff had very low motivation and the retail offering was down to a bare minimum.

Johnson comes from a marketing background and ran his own advertising agency for 30 years, working with major companies in the business landscape. Instead of retiring, he sought a new challenge. Unbeknown to him, he had been cycling past potential for 11 years. Given the location and scarceness of the retail offering in the area, Johnson immediately realised that the ‘for sale’ sign in front of the Caltex site was a waiting opportunity. Together with Ntumba, he decided to make

use of that potential and drew up a plan to convert the station into the hub it is today.

The station was revamped in November 2011, including the Caltex Freshstop franchise model. They added a car wash, flower bed and also upgraded the municipal bus station with a bench and a thatch roof. The station reopened after the revamp in the beginning of December.

Salt, Pepper & Chilli

The management team pays meticulous attention to detail. Every product in the store is positioned to face the customer and no fresh produce item lands on the shelves without being shined up. Even the bathroom has been decorated with a homely touch – a far cry from the average garage facilities.

“In making the convenience store (C-store) experience unique, all components go together to create a store’s success. Firstly, a brilliant administrator and manager of the people, which we have found in Vishnu Dass,” says Johnson. Dass has been the manager of the forecourt prior to Johnson and Ntumba taking over and has been a vital asset to the station’s newfound success. “We gave Dass the tools to turn



Every day an employee dresses up as the Caltex white rabbit attracting attention at the intersection and handing out sweets to the customer's kids over the weekend.

this operation around so that we could gain back our market share."

"Secondly, it is constant interaction with the customers. The three of us constantly take turns on the forecourt, in the shop and at the coffee bar. Thirdly, it is our micro marketing campaign that sets us apart from other C-stores. Through our constant presence the customers have dubbed us 'Salt, Pepper & Chilli'," laughs Johnson.

Micro marketing

Johnson launched a comprehensive marketing approach for the Freshstop. Next to pole adverts on Klipriver Drive and in-store promotions, he launched an sms campaign to attract customers. "We are one of the very few petrol stations with its own advertising database and surely the only station in the country with its own Twitter account!" he says. They also had a rabbit suit custom-made in line with Caltex's revival of their white rabbit mascot. An employee dresses up as the rabbit every day, attracting attention on the Klipriver intersection and handing out sweets to customers' children over the weekends.

"The station used to be a graveyard over the weekend, but now we have become the talk of town and people come to the station, just because they heard about us

and want to see what we are about," Ntumba comments.

Not just a petrol station

Next to the obvious petrol offering, Brackendowns Freshstop offers a wide range of retail products, fruit and vegetables purchased straight from the farms, a prepared food offering, as well as a selection of fresh nuts. The Pitstop Café boasts a supply of original Italian coffee and its very own bakery. Outside, the customers can find a stand with freshly prepared boerewors rolls for quick lunches, as well as a second-hand book sale on Sundays. The flowerbed and surrounding grass patches are meticulously looked after and customers who are busy having their cars washed enjoy a cup of coffee or a cold drink on comfortable chairs in the shade of a Caltex umbrella. The product prices are kept at supermarket level and add true convenience for the residents.

Reward – don't punish

"In this industry most people take a very punitive approach towards dealing with their staff and we have changed that completely," says Johnson. The team introduced a reward system and at the end of every month where the fuel target is met, all employees receive R200 worth of retail vouchers to purchase items at Freshstop.

Should disciplinary action be necessary, a yellow card is issued to the respective staff member who is then disqualified for the vouchers during that month. "This motivates the staff so much that towards the end of the month they come to me every day, asking how far we are from the target and how many litres they need to sell daily to reach the target," says Ntumba.

Caltex also sends mystery shoppers to all Freshstop franchises, evaluating the whole 'experience', including bacteria swabs to comply with the Consumer Protection Act, and giving them a percentage rating. "Here we have introduced an all-or-nothing approach," Johnson says. When achieving a 100% rating, all staff members receive a R500 bonus on their salary and when achieving four 100% ratings in a row, all staff receives a free trip to Cape Town in order to visit the country's number one Freshstop at the V&A Waterfront. During the last evaluation, the station was graded with 99%.

"All these incentives work unimaginably well. Our staff is absolutely motivated," Johnson comments. The station now employs a total of 30 staff members. "We have taken over the 12 previous employees of the station and everyone started with a clean slate. We didn't take over any old records, but gave everyone a second chance to prove themselves," says Ntumba.



From right to left: Aubrey Johnson, Rodgers Ntumba and Vishna Dass – better known to their customers as 'Salt, Pepper and Chilli' have a very hands-on approach to management and have unique ways to motivate their staff.



The team invested in an additional flower bed and revamped the adjacent municipal bus station with a bench and a reed roof.



Lazarus has worked as a petrol attendant at the Caltex for 14 years and has now been promoted to be the forecourt supervisor. The staff is continuously motivated and receive bonuses every time a target is met.

Petrol attendant, Lazarus has been with the filling station for over 14 years and the team decided to promote him to forecourt supervisor. He now trains the other staff, motivates them and ensures cleaning routines are kept so that the station looks spotless at all times. The 2 000m² forecourt is now found free of any sort of dirt and not a single piece of refuse can be spotted around the whole station.

All staff members live in the close vicinity of the station, which is an ideal situation for everyone, as the station operates under a split-shift system. "The staff has the opportunity to go home and spend time with their families during the breaks instead

of having to wait around for their next shift," Johnson comments.

Thanks to well-trained and motivated staff, as well as CCTV and availability of armed response, the store doesn't face any major security issues and a diligent daily stock system, implemented by Dass and his assistant Elizabeth, controls the shrinkage at a low 1.5%.

Challenging environment

"After taking over the station, our biggest challenge was to regain our market share," comments Johnson. This has been achieved by creating a good quality offering appropriate for the resident LSM 6-8 class and excessive marketing efforts. From 11 000 feet of monthly traffic, numbers have increased to roughly 30 000 cars per month, of which 20 000 drivers purchase items in the store as well. In December, the station sold over 260 000 litres of petrol.

The former Star Mart turnover of R240 000 per month has increased to R450 000 per month in this short period of time. The busiest times for the store during the week are between 5-10am, as well as during 4-9pm, when people leave for or return from work. The weekends are now busy overall.

The team has already initiated plans on giving back to the community. They seek to set up a tent on the premises with basic medical equipment and supplies, where medical help and medication can be administered to the community. More



The team added a car wash and the cleanliness of every car reflects the forecourt team's major attention to detail.

severe cases will be referred for further treatment.

Johnson concludes: "We have strived to create an overall positive C-store experience which draws people to the station. We have great relationships with all our regular customers. Our staff receive training every single day and we lead by example. We even use a mirror during training, so the trainee can 'see what the customer sees'. This really works well in teaching the staff to smile and approach every customer with a friendly attitude." The customers reward these efforts and leave the station with a smile – and a full shopping basket.



The fresh produce offering is purchased directly from the Freshstop at the market and selected as the 'perfect mix' to cater for the customers' needs.