

Value-added offerings available at BP Louis Botha include a jet car wash, dedicated 24-hour security on-site, convenient petrol accounts, premium petrol products (Unleaded 95 and soon Diesel 50), as well as accepting all major credit cards.

BP's success IN THE forecourt business

By LAURA DURHAM

BP was voted South Africa's top petroleum brand in the Sunday Times Top Brands survey for the 10th consecutive year and came second in the forecourt category at the 2010 Times and Sowetan Retail Awards. *Wholesale Business* takes a look at one of the sites that is doing the BP brand proud.

The BP brand

Two years ago, with the impending Soccer World Cup, BP South Africa decided to connect back to its roots. "We wanted to bring back the heritage of South Africa with our brand," says Tristao Abro, BPSA's brand and insights manager. And this has been successful through the rebranding of the forecourts and advertising campaigns. Abro attributes the brand's ongoing success to its superior product offering, strong and deep-rooted heritage in SA and ongoing high service delivery at its forecourts. "Being voted top petroleum brand again tells us that customers are happy with our formula of good food, great service and high quality fuels. The findings further entrench BP's standing in the fuels marketplace, which is a real win for us," he says.

Louis Botha gets the edge

BP Louis Botha is one of the sites that has been built in accordance with the vision

of the BP brand and the Wild Bean Café inside the C-store boasts the "new look and feel," explains Marlene Naudé, food service specialist at BPSA.

The forecourt's location on a busy main road and surrounded by a residential area means that the C-store is constantly busy – even at night. Gianni and Isabel Gatti started BP Louis Botha 12 years ago with just three petrol pumps and no C-store. In 2003, BP bought adjacent property and the site was completely rebuilt, complete with a C-store, car wash and Wild Bean offering.

Bean gone wild

Last year, the Wild Bean Café in-store was revamped with the prominent red colour that has become so familiar and welcoming for the brand. This was in accordance with the international standards across the Wild Bean brand and the very red and very bold look has reaped excellent results, says Naudé.

"The new look of Wild Bean has definitely attracted more customers and I do 30% more business because of it," says Isabel. Coffee and pies are by far the best sellers and the Pieman's pies are baked every three hours. "I run a tight baking schedule and every pie is only allowed a three hour shelf life," she explains. The aroma and quality of coffee has made Wild Bean a destination in the store and regular customers come in for



breakfast and lunch. Isabel says the C-store has 2 000 people go through it each day. "Actually, the shop is busier than our forecourt!" says Isabel.

Managing a successful C-store

The Gattis employ 40 staff members with 15 working in the store and their management style is very hands on. "Either my husband or I are around all the time and I think this really makes a difference to our staff and customers," Isabel says.

Customers like to know that a manager is always around and that they will be assured personal attention. "We've become friends with so many people around here and really feel part of the community," she says. "I've seen kids grow up," she adds.

"Our staff is really excellent," Isabel says. It's all about selecting the right people and getting them trained up to perform their duties to the best of their ability. The Gattis also lead by example. "I never ask them to do anything I won't do myself – I put in petrol, man the tills and serve coffee too," she says. BP sends a 'mystery shopper' to all its sites to do a service quality test and BP Louis Botha recently received top marks.

Securing the site

CCTV, an armed response company and visible community patrol service ensure that staff and customers always feel safe at BP Louis Botha. "We also encourage police and other security companies to come in for coffee to further increase the security presence," Isabel says.

Value-added offering

Like all BP Express stores, BP Louis Botha makes use of BP's preferred suppliers and

Forecourt storewatch

this ensures a standard offering throughout BP South Africa. "Even at Wild Bean, it is important to have the same packaging, taste, presentation and quality every day," she says.

The regular offerings at a BP forecourt are a BP Express C-store, Wild Bean Café, Indoor ATM, as well as Ultimate Unleaded 95 and Diesel 500 at the pumps. Value-added offerings available at BP Louis Botha include a jet car wash, dedicated 24-hour security on-site, convenient petrol accounts, premium petrol products (Unleaded 95 and soon Diesel 50), as well as accepting all major credit cards. "We are not just a garage, we want to be the best," she says.

Wake up and smell the coffee

Nearly 90% of consumers polled by coffee chain, Wild Bean Café, said they drink mainly cappuccinos which they purchase en route to work early in the morning.

Just 12% of overall respondents purchase their coffee over lunchtime or in the



The new look of Wild Bean attracts more customers to BP Express stores with its offering of freshly made coffee and take-away meal options. For BP Louis Botha, the revamp of Wild Bean has brought in 30% more business.

evening, according to the Wild Bean Café that sold 4.2 million cups of coffee last year. And only 2% like their coffee short and black (espresso) – and most of these are men, with women preferring lattes.

The survey also found that the majority of forecourt purchases are made by men, and an astounding 65% of them purchase hot chocolate as opposed to only 34% of women.



Gianni and Isabel Gatti started BP Louis Botha 12 years ago. Their management style, with store manager, Dorothy Ditle, is very hands on and they are present at the forecourt throughout the day.

Marlene Naudé, food service specialist at BPSA says: "Over 60% of those polled said they preferred Wild Bean Café coffee due to its rich flavour and the convenience of driving onto a forecourt to get it."

"Busier lives mean that consumers are optimising their time by filling up their cars with fuel, and simultaneously nipping into the BP Express Stores, to purchase their daily Wild Bean Café caffeine fix," she adds.

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Trade Enquiries:
continental brands

T/A Continental Biscuit Mfrs. (Pty) Ltd.
Email: Info@tastytreats.co.za
Tel: (011) 494-3618/9 Fax: (011) 494-2304

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