

*Dedicated to helping independent operators turn greater profits*

**MAY/JUNE 2012**

**C SQUARE**

**MAGAZINE**

# SUMMER SURGE

Capture the most  
from summer selling

## **GAS FORECAST**

Gloomy predictions for  
summer drive-time

## **AHEAD OF THE GAME**

Showcase pride for business success

# STOCK-UP MAY JUNE REBATE OFFER

**TASTES LIKE  
REAL  
BREWED  
TEA  
BECAUSE IT IS**



**Earn a \$10 Rebate\* when you stock up  
on Lipton Pure Leaf Iced Tea products.  
Plus, qualify for a chance to WIN  
a Coleman Grill!**

Simply purchase a minimum 5 cases of 18.5 oz. Lipton Pure Leaf Iced Tea products on a single invoice from May 1, 2012 through June 30, 2012 and get a \$10 rebate (*maximum one (1) \$10 rebate per store*).

**PLUS, automatically be entered to WIN  
a Coleman RoadTrip Grill LXE with  
Wheeled Carry Case!**

*All 18.5 oz. Lipton Pure Leaf Iced Tea flavors, both regular  
and diet, count toward your qualifying purchase.*

\*Rebate Information: Consolidated Buying Company will issue the incremental rebate for those sites that qualify by buying 5 cases of qualifying Lipton Pure Leaf products.



Powerful, portable, propane grill. 285 sq. in. cooking surface area. Matchless lighting and fully adjustable burners, perfect for outdoor cooking. Operates on 16.4oz. propane cylinder (not included) or adaptable to 20 lb propane tank (tank and hose not included). Folds to compact size with easy to pull handle and wheels. 46"L x 18"W x 35"H. With Wheeled Accessory Case. #7874/7494 • Retail Value: \$269.95

## COMPLETE THE INFORMATION BELOW FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
(PLEASE PRINT NEATLY OR TYPE)

BUSINESS NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PROVIDE STREET ADDRESS; UPS® IS UNABLE TO DELIVER TO P.O. BOXES

*All entries must be received by 7/31/12. Entry forms received after 7/31/12 may not be processed or acknowledged.  
Rebates will be reflected on your rebate check. Any questions please call 248-322-5450.*

**Mail or fax completed form along with a copy of your invoice to:**

**LIPTON FULFILLMENT CENTER**

40 W. Silverdome Industrial Park • Pontiac, MI 48342 • Phone: 248-322-5450 • Fax: 248-322-5454

## REQUIREMENTS

\$10 rebate and drawing entry for one Coleman RoadTrip Grill LXE with Wheeled Carry Case is subject to verification and confirmation of invoice submitted.

Multiple invoice purchases will not be accepted. Entry will not be processed without the proper invoice as a support document.

All qualifying entry forms must be received by July 31, 2012 for drawing to be held on August 15, 2012. Entry forms received after July 31st do not qualify for rebate or drawing and will not be processed.

Limit one entry per store location.  
Maximum one (1) \$10 rebate per store.

#PC756/PCDELE

# NEW PERSPECTIVES



C Square is published by:



P.O. Box 5287  
Oak Brook, IL 60522-5287  
(630) 455-0175  
(630) 455-5946 fax

**VICE PRESIDENT,  
RETAIL DIVISION**

Pamela Romeli

**EDITOR**

Renee Pas

**ART DIRECTION**

Jennifer Parquette  
CSP Information Group

**FOR ADVERTISING  
INFORMATION:**

Please contact  
Pamela Romeli at  
(866) 455-3411, ext. 113.  
e-mail: [info@cbuying.com](mailto:info@cbuying.com)

**FOR EDITORIAL  
INFORMATION:**

Please contact  
Renee Pas at  
(630) 455-0175 ext. 140

C Square is a quarterly publication produced by CBC exclusively for C-Buying, Citgo Buying group, eMpowered Buying with Marathon and Max-Buying members. All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce in whole or in part. Copyright 2012.

**Postmaster:**

Please send address changes to CBC,  
P.O. Box 5287  
Oak Brook, IL  
60522-5287.

There is always so much to do. Especially in the 24-7 business that is convenience/gasoline retail. Being an independent seems to magnify the pace even more. Then summer hits and business really kicks into high gear.

While I'm betting that no one reading this is actually looking forward to a quiet summer at their business; there is the possibility that the predicted record-busting cost of gasoline will keep people off the roads and out of the stores. So we're setting out to steer you in a better direction in this issue and maintain your in-store customer base. And to make sure your c-store thrives off summer business.

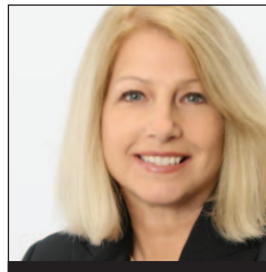
Regroup on doomsday-like predictions by imagining a more optimistic summer. Think about why customers choose your store to begin with. They can basically purchase gasoline anywhere; the same holds true for most c-store items. Ask yourself: why should they choose to buy at my store?

## A c-store thrives off summer business and suffers without it.

If you are not sure about the answer, it's definitely time to find out. Maybe you're providing a loyalty program. Or your restrooms are pristine? Figure it out and promote it so you can build repeat business and have some hook to hang your hat on this summer.

Read the first two stories for inspiration. Our cover story has some great new thoughts on forcing yourself out of the same routine (see p. 8) and the subsequent story about gas prices offers some hard data on understanding your gasoline customer better (see p. 14).

Round out your reading with our experts, who stress the importance of clean restrooms (see p. 6) and promoting fountain (see p. 28). By the end of the issue we hope you are ready to hit the ground running and start to work on your own new take on summer



Much success,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Pamela J. Romeli'.

Pam Romeli  
[romeli@cbuying.com](mailto:romeli@cbuying.com)  
Vice President of Retail Division  
CBC



**8**

COVER STORY

**Create Your own Summer Surge**

By Kathryn Barnack

Shaking things up at your store this summer may prove the ultimate win in compensating for a lack of drivers hitting the road. Higher gas prices might scare them away from long road trips, but they don't have to bypass your store. Surprise and delight them by adding a new twist at your store. You'll keep customers coming back all summer long.

**FEATURES**

**22**

**Ahead of the Game**

By Renee Pas

A friendly, professional staff and a clean, well-organized store keep Remon Yassa's Handy Mart running smoothly. His pride and enthusiasm for the business put him in a league of his own. Learn his tips on operating a highly efficient business.

**14**

**Summer Gas Predictions**

By Renee Pas

Get the scoop on the likely consumer fallout from higher gas prices. Find out what leading market research company The NPD Group is predicting. Then tap into some great ideas on continuing to drive customers to your store. A few constants remain consumer draws.

**DEPARTMENTS**

**3 Inside View:** *Pam Romeli*

**6 Community:** *Tom Terrono*

**26 Featured Supplier:** *Unilever*

**28 View From the Field:** *Terry Lambert*

**30 Action Items**



Classic.

SOUR.

Natural.



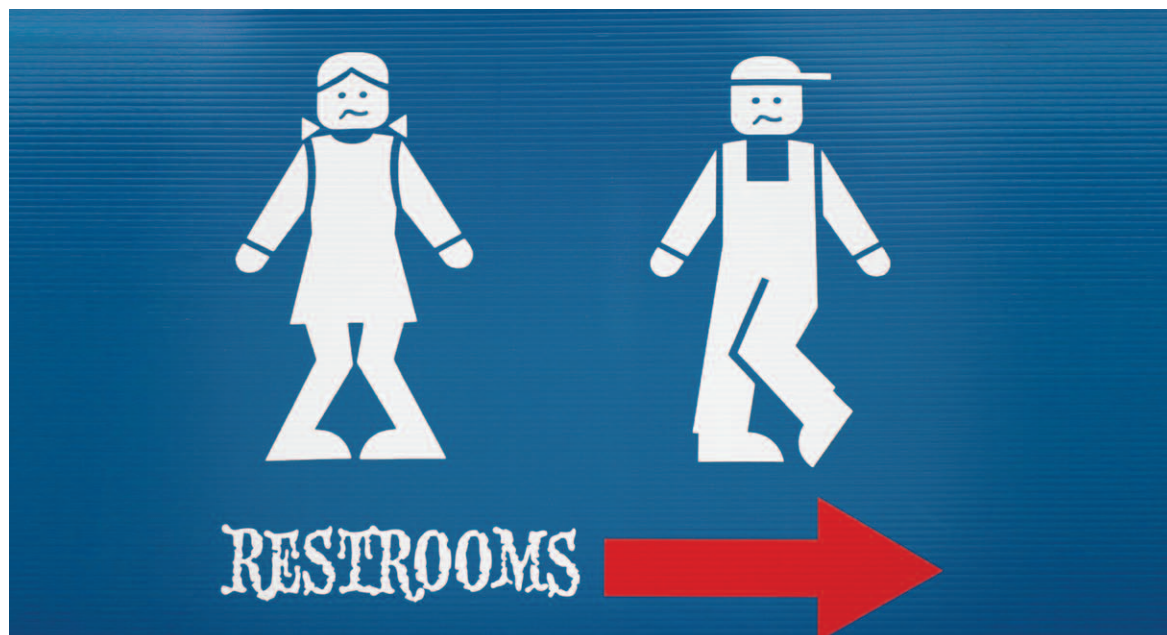
Whatever the candy craving – sweet or sour, straws, bites, or twists, even all natural – American Licorice™ delivers. We produce our crowd-pleasing flavors in every pack type imaginable, from theater boxes and peg bags, to count goods and the iconic tray. American Licorice™ Company – a flavor for every craving, a pack type for every purpose.

### 3% Member Rebate

Contact your Buying Group Representative for rebate and program information at 866-455-3411 or visit [www.myCsquare.com](http://www.myCsquare.com)



[AmericanLicorice.com](http://AmericanLicorice.com)



# POTTY TALK



**TOM TERRONO**  
CBC Learning Center  
Instructor

Terrono@  
cbclearningcenter.com

Tom Terrono's operational and financial management expertise stems from more than 42 years working in the convenience store industry as a manager, owner and consultant.

If there is one thing that turns customers off more than anything else it's a dirty restroom. Restrooms send a big impression.

Think about it. If the restroom is dirty and not kept clean, what does that say about how you keep the rest of the store?

Flip that around by maintaining spotless restrooms and you will reinforce to customers that the entire store is kept neat and clean. That is especially critical for stores selling foodservice of any kind. A sparkling clean restroom gives customers confidence that the prep area for doughnuts, coffee and any other food item they buy is being kept in ultra-sanitary conditions as well.

Customers make huge judgments about the rest of the store based on the cleanliness of restrooms.

## STAY REGULAR

Make sure your restrooms remain spotless by establishing a regular quick clean program. Employees should be monitoring and cleaning restrooms at least hourly. Constantly reinforce to your team the importance of clean restrooms.

Use a checklist system to make sure nothing is missed. Post the checklist right onto an easy-to-grab

bucket of cleaning tools so employees can go through the list each time they check the restrooms. It takes all the guesswork out of what should be accomplished.

Specifics to include on an hourly restroom checklist (download the complete checklist at [www.myCsquare.com](http://www.myCsquare.com) under the Resources tab):

- Thoroughly clean and sanitize all toilets and urinals.
- Thoroughly clean behind the toilet.
- Thoroughly clean and sanitize all sinks.
- Thoroughly clean and sanitize all paper towel holders.
- Restock all toilet paper.
- Restock all paper towels.
- Restock all soap dispensers.
- Wipe down mirrors and fixtures.
- Sanitize all door handles.
- Sweep the floor.
- Mop the floor.
- Provide air freshener.

Being diligent about restroom cleanliness will pay off. Clean restrooms help build repeat business from parents who know they can rely on your store for a fast, clean pit stop for their children.

**C Square's Community page connects ideas and talking points between C Square Magazine and [www.mycsquare.com](http://www.mycsquare.com). Visit us online in the Community section to share your thoughts.**





CUSTOMERS LOVE OUR  
**PERMANENT**  
COMMITMENT TO **QUALITY**

*And our permanent commitment  
to you is to lead profits and sales  
at your register.*

**.02¢**  
per lighter  
member rebate

up to  
**2X**  
TWICE THE  
LIGHTS  
vs. the next leading brand\*



**BIC**

*Lighter*

BIC® Lighter offers several lines of exclusive designs, like our **Traditional Tattoos Series**.

[biclighter.com](http://biclighter.com) | 1-800-546-1111 ext. 2461 for more information



Find us on Facebook  
[Facebook.com/bicflickers](https://www.facebook.com/bicflickers)



**BIC**

*More for your money...Always!*



*Create Your Own*

# SUMMER

# SURGE

**Capture extra rays of summer selling with fresh marketing and promotional ideas**

By Kathryn Barnack

Don't sit back resting on your laurels this summer waiting for the increased traffic flow from summer drivers to arrive. It might not happen. There is a real chance that ultra-high gas prices may deter many from their usual summer roadtrips. (See related story p.14) Instead of relying on that old standby, become your own biggest summer booster by shaking things up a bit.

## **“Get out of cruise control,” recommends c-store expert Richard Parker. “It is easy to keep doing the same things over and over again. Break out of your comfort zone.”**

Parker is president of Diomo Corp. in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., and author of *How To Buy A Good Business At A Great Price*.

Parker's tips on boosting business after first acquiring a c-store double as the perfect recipe for boosting summer sales. Two must-add ingredients: co-promoting with other local merchants and making the store more of a family affair.

### **TEAM UP**

Parker believes co-promoting has huge potential for independent operators. “I fundamentally believe it is a large opportunity,” he said. “And a missed one.”

“I would venture to say that 90% of businesses in a single-store operator's area are just like them—local businesses with a small marketing budget.” He cited local dry cleaners and neighborhood restaurants as prime examples.

“Open the door to cross promoting by stopping in at one of these neighborhood business,” Parker suggested. “Note the stores you already stop at on the way to your store. Is there a local dry cleaner in town? Restaurants? Ask the name of the owner of the

store and introduce yourself. Explain that you are interested in advertising their business at your business—and vice versa. Cross-link the stores.”

One approach to get things started is to simply display business cards at each other's stores, said Parker, or go one step farther by offering a discount. For example, the c-store owner offers dry cleaning customers 3 cents off per gallon or a 10% off inside sales coupon while the owner of the dry cleaner would reciprocate by offering c-store customers a percentage off dry cleaning.

“People don't always notice coupons when they are busy, but if it's local it attracts attention,” noted Parker.

### **EMBRACE FAMILY**

Take that idea of marketing locally more intrinsic by promoting your store as a family-owned business. Even if you don't have family members actually working at the store, making the connection for cus-





## KEEP UP WITH CLEANING

Itemized checklists, like this one for the pumps, keep employees on top of cleaning details. Download this checklist (and others) at [www.myCsquare.com](http://www.myCsquare.com).

- Fill paper towel holders
- Fill windshield cleaning fluid
- Clean all squeegees and put them in place
- Empty all trash receptacles
- Make sure that all fueling positions are working
- Check that pumps produce receipts for credit card purchases
- Wipe pumps down. Rotate through each location so that one pump a day receives a top-to-bottom cleaning. Don't forget to clean nozzles, splash-guards and hoses.
- Clean up any oil and fuel spills immediately
- Sweep entire area
- Check that pump top-pers are up-to-date
- Every week, check that all displays and lights are operational

tomers that the store is a family business can make a difference, according to Parker.

"People admire businesses with family," Parker said. "The repeat customer would much rather support a family when buying their gasoline than a nameless, faceless gas station. They like knowing a family is at stake."

For stores that do have family members floating in and out, especially in the summer months, Parker suggested purchasing a store shirt for them. "Even an 8-year-old stocking shelves should be wearing that corporate shirt," he said. It reinforces the family connection while at the same time boosts the child's pride at being a part of the team.

Stores can also reach out to area youth groups during the summer, such as the local high school band or cheerleaders looking to raise funds. "It's very easy to train kids to wash windows for customers while they fill up. What a difference that makes,"

said Parker. It can add liveliness to the store and can be a free service for customers, with the option for customers to donate to their fundraising efforts via tips. That kind of activity instantly builds excitement at the store.

### THE ONE MUST

There is one additional item that should be on everyone's summer prep plan. It quickly rose to the top when we pulled together summer to-do ideas from CBC Learning Center instructors Tom Terrono, Terry Lambert and Bill Sawyer. They all agreed on this absolute: clean, clean, then clean some more.

Glamorous? Not so much.

Effective? Absolutely.

Start outside and work your way in, said Sawyer. "You have to have an inviting location and the pump islands are the highest traffic location at the store. It needs to be clean around that area."

Establish a daily (or every shift) checklist for the



# fizz power candy

## PROMOTION

### \$2.00 OFF PER BOX

**Your Profit: \$12.08** (per box)

**Gross Profit: 45%**

**up to 6%**  
member rebate

Zotz Strings/Pack 48 per box

Regular box cost: \$8.64 • Your net deal

cost: \$6.64 • Suggested Retail: 39¢

## PLUS \$2.00 OFF PER BOX

on the following items:

First ship: May 1, 2012 - Last ship: June 30, 2012



## PLUS our convenience store rebate program

| Unit UPC Code:<br>070650 - | Pack | Size   | Item # | Product Description                           | Cost    | Unit Cost | McLane # | Core-Mark # | Eby-Brown # | HT Hackney # |
|----------------------------|------|--------|--------|-----------------------------------------------|---------|-----------|----------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 00008-8                    | 48   | .7 oz  | 0500   | Zotz Strings - Cherry, Apple, Watermelon      | \$8.64  | 18¢       | 404137   | 017533      | 70528-5     | 1458090      |
| 00009-5                    | 48   | .7 oz  | 0505   | Zotz Strings - Lemon, Orange, Grape           | \$8.64  | 18¢       | 404061   | 758490      | 70527-7     |              |
| 00009-5                    | 48   | .7 oz  | 0520   | Zotz Strings - Blue Raspberry                 | \$8.64  | 18¢       |          | 871772      |             |              |
| 00410-3                    | 3/24 | 1.6 oz | 0410   | Honees Rack Pack                              | \$40.32 | 56¢       | 479436   | 724377      |             | 1458918      |
| 00000-2                    | 24   | 1.6 oz | 0400   | Honees Honey Filled Drops                     | \$13.44 | 56¢       | 479402   | 724401      |             | 1458900      |
| 00001-9                    | 24   | 1.5 oz | 0401   | Honees Milk Drops                             | \$13.44 | 56¢       | 479477   | 724419      |             |              |
| 00002-6                    | 24   | 9 ct   | 0402   | Honees Menthol Drops                          | \$13.44 | 56¢       | 647859   | 304584      | 838029      |              |
| 00003-3                    | 24   | 9 ct   | 0450   | Honees EnergyPlus Drops - Honey Filled        | \$18.00 | 75¢       | 647875   | 304618      | 838037      |              |
| 00004-0                    | 24   | 9 ct   | 0451   | Honees EnergyPlus Drops- Honey Filled Caramel | \$18.00 | 75¢       |          |             | 837989      |              |

## Making the connection for customers that the store is a family business can make a difference.



### CSQUARE HAS MORE!

For additional ideas and solutions visit [www.myCsquare.com](http://www.myCsquare.com).

Ideas for merchandising seasonal products can be found by clicking on Retail Tip: Seasonal Products.

Be sure to also check out Retail Tip: Curb Appeal to learn what makes customers stop and take notice of your store instead of just driving by.

pumps, Sawyer suggested. Include items such as cleaning all squeegees, wiping down pumps and sweeping (see sidebar). Go the extra mile by setting aside time to actually greet customers at the pumps, he added.

"I think it would be great to have the owner or manager go out and actually greet people right at the pump islands," said Sawyer. "Make a personal connection." Simple greetings such as "I'm glad you stopped in," and "I'm the manager here, thanks for coming," let customers know you care and set the expectation for friendly, efficient service inside the store as well.

### SET YOUR CALENDAR

Create a summer marketing calendar for your store, said Terrono, to help hone in on key periods and promotions for summer. He shared some ideas that work for other retailers that are worthy of adapting:

- **Customer appreciation days.** Schedule a day where every customer that comes into the store receives a free carnation. May Day (May 1), Mother's Day (May 13), or the first day of summer (June 20) all offer great tie-ins.

- **BBQ.** Even if you don't have a food offering inside your store, setting up picnic tables and a grill for hot dogs and burgers is a simple summer lunch fare that draws in customers. Don't have the time or staff to execute it yourself? Events like this offer another chance to recruit local groups looking for fundraising dollars.

The end goal is to create a few special deals, events or promotions this summer to boost business. Following through on even one new initiative can help customers see the store in a new light and keep you shining all summer long. ■

# FIRE YOUR ATM.

**With its habit of missing work, if your ATM were human it would be gone by now.**

Because whenever your ATM is down, so is your income from transaction fees and impulse purchases.

Don't put up with downtime. Switch to the ATM provider whose 99% uptime rate beats everybody else in the industry, including the large banks: Nationwide Money Services.

You'll collect up to \$1.75 on every transaction—supported by a complete program that makes owning and operating an ATM hassle-free.

Find out why Nationwide Money Services is trusted by over 5,000 convenience stores, financial institutions, and corporate chains throughout the country. Get all the details in the Marketplace at [www.myCsquare.com](http://www.myCsquare.com) or contact your Buying Group Representative for program information at (866) 455-3411.





# SUMMER GAS PREDICTIONS

By Renee Pas

Forecasted high gas prices are likely to leave customers out of cash. All is not lost, however, if you unearth the hidden opportunities that remain.











High gasoline prices are undoubtedly going to be a challenge for retailers—and consumers—this summer. Prices continue to rise and speculation is endless about how high they might go.

“If we get above \$4 per gallon (national average), c-store retailers are going to feel it inside the store and will see it at the pumps as well,” said David Portalatin, executive director, industry analysis, for The NPD Group. “Consumers will accelerate efforts to cut back on gas purchases.”

Looking at past history, consumers spent 24% more total dollars in 2011 to buy nearly 2% fewer total gallons, according to The NPD Group. The Port Washington, N.Y.-based market research company is a leader in studying consumer purchase behavior in the convenience/retail gasoline industry.

Essentially, the data shows that people cut back on driving to consume less fuel, explained Portalatin. The lingering problem, which could prove a substantial one in 2012, is that “we cannot cut back enough driving to offset the share of wallet shift into the gas tank,”

## CHANGE IS NOW

At the time this article was written, the national average for gasoline had not yet hit \$4 a gallon. Many believe that we will see that pricepoint—and higher—this summer.

Experts expect prices to spike around mid-May. If we have yet to reach that rare above \$4 high when this magazine lands on your desk, know this: Consumers begin to modify their behavior well before prices reach the peak. According to data from The NPD Group, they foresee the higher prices coming and start making changes in their spending choices way beforehand.

**Best bet for retailers:** Any change in marketing strategy should come before gas prices hit its highpoint.

he said. “Something has to give ... by and large that money is coming from c-store purchase occasions.” That may not come as a big surprise to retailers, who understand that when customers spend all their money at the pumps, there is nothing left to spend inside the store.

But, that is only part of the story. Understanding more about how consumers use gasoline/convenience stores can help retailers better hone in on offerings and marketing programs. The first step is realizing that consumers view that stop for gasoline different than the stop for something inside the store.

## TALE OF TWO PURCHASES

“Retailers have to realize that the gas purchase oc-



# Our Smokin' Sales Are Heating Up.



**3%**  
member rebate

## C-STORE SUCCESS IS AS BIG AS OUR FLAVOR.

Our hardwood-smoked flavor, no added MSG, gluten free meat snacks have front-end register presence within America's #1 food retailer. This means America's favorite Snack Bites are exposed to over 20 million consumers weekly.

# 24%

- Old Wisconsin® dollar sales in C-stores has grown 24% (\$3.2mm) in the last 2 years.

- Since last year, Old Wisconsin has jumped up 2 spots making us the #4 brand in C-stores.

- Since 2010, Old Wisconsin has grown in both dollar sales and units.

- In 10 major markets, Old Wisconsin ranks among the top 5 brands.

[oldwisconsin.com](http://oldwisconsin.com)

Contact your sales representative to learn more about the full line of Old Wisconsin C-store meat snacks, or call 1-800-558-7840 to place an order.

Source: Nielsen® C-store Channel 52 Weeks Ending 3/19/11  
© 2012 Carl Buddig & Company  
Nielsen is a registered service mark of CZT/ACN Trademarks, LLC.







**People buy gas when the tank is empty. They buy food and drinks when they are hungry and thirsty.**

casion and the in-store purchase occasion are really two different purchases,” said Portalatin. They do, however, sometimes happen at the same time.

Here’s the breakdown from The NPD Group looking at the total universe of store traffic:

- 45% of customers are gas-only customers
- 30% of customers only shop the c-store
- 24% of customers do both: purchase gasoline and shop the c-store

Slicing that another way, if you look solely at gasoline purchases, only 12% are also purchasing something inside the store on that same purchasing occasion, said Portalatin. “The reality is that gas-only purchasers are coming back and making c-store purchases on other occasions,” he said. “Just because they come on your site and buy gas and leave, does not mean they are lost customers. You still have a chance to establish habitual purchase behavior from that customer ... It might even be later that same day.”

Keeping in mind the two different purchase occasions is important, noted Portalatin: People buy gas when the tank is empty. They buy food and drinks when they are hungry and thirsty.

#### **GETTING POSITIVE**

Examining the c-store side of the purchase occasion can lead to some new ideas and initiatives operators could try.

Mark Hagler, owner of Mark’s Service Center in Joliet, Ill., took a leap of faith and tried something new

### **THREE WAYS TO CREATE VALUE**

Today’s consumers are very value-driven, according to The NPD Group. Three ways to deliver it to them:

#### **Price.**

Offering the least expensive price on a product is the simplest form of value.

#### **Deals.**

Promote items in a way that customers feel they are getting more for their money. For example: 2-for-1 soda specials.

#### **Quality.**

Offer something that is a better quality at the same price. For instance, organic pretzels priced the same as unbranded pretzels.





**JUNE REBATE OFFER**

# ROCK THIS HOUSE



**Earn a \$20 Rebate\* when you stock up on Rockstar products. Plus, qualify for a chance to WIN an iPod Touch Package!**

Simply purchase a minimum 10 cases of 16 oz. Rockstar products on a single invoice from June 1, 2012 through June 30, 2012 and get a \$20 rebate (maximum one (1) \$20 rebate per store).

**PLUS, automatically be entered to WIN an Apple 8GB iPod Touch & SOUL by Ludacris High-Def On-Ear Headphones Package!**

*All 16 oz. Rockstar flavors, both regular and diet, count toward your qualifying purchase.*

\*Rebate Information: Consolidated Buying Company will issue the incremental rebate for those sites that qualify by buying 10 cases of qualifying Rockstar products.

**Apple 8GB iPod Touch & SOUL by Ludacris High-Def On-Ear Headphones Package**  
The world's most popular portable gaming and music device is even more fun with SOUL headphones.  
#3016/8228 • MSRP: \$479.90



**COMPLETE THE INFORMATION BELOW FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE PRINT NEATLY OR TYPE)

BUSINESS NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PROVIDE STREET ADDRESS; UPS® IS UNABLE TO DELIVER TO P.O. BOXES

*All entries must be received by 7/31/12. Entry forms received after 7/31/12 may not be processed or acknowledged. Rebates will be reflected on your rebate check. Any questions please call 248-322-5450.*

**Mail or fax completed form along with a copy of your invoice to:**

**ROCKSTAR FULFILLMENT CENTER**

40 W. Silverdome Industrial Park • Pontiac, MI 48342 • Phone: 248-322-5450 • Fax: 248-322-5454

## REQUIREMENTS

\$20 rebate and drawing entry for one Apple 8GB iPod Touch & SOUL by Ludacris Headphones Package is subject to verification and confirmation of invoice submitted.

Multiple invoice purchases will not be accepted. Entry will not be processed without the proper invoice as a support document.

All qualifying entry forms must be received by July 31, 2012 for drawing to be held on August 15, 2012. Entry forms received after July 31st do not qualify for rebate or drawing and will not be processed.

Limit one entry per store location. Maximum one (1) \$20 rebate per store.

#PC758/PCDELE

in March when he agreed to take part in a local “Cash Mob” promotion.

The promotion was loosely modeled after the flash mob idea, where a group of people suddenly appear in a public place to do something silly or unusual. An example cited on Wikipedia is where 200 people showed up in a hotel lobby one day for a few minutes of synchronized applause. Flash mobs are generally organized via social media, such as Twitter.

In the case of the Joliet cash mob, it was a local businesswoman who organized the event to boost local businesses. Hagler rewarded cash mobbers by offering free fountain drinks for anyone buying gasoline during the event.

Hagler said he did not see a huge bump in traffic from the event, but was glad to have participated. He admits he is not heavily into promotions, but was happy to be a part of it.

“It was on a Friday afternoon, where we generally get people coming in anyway,” Hagler said. “But a lot of people saw the write-up in the local paper and continue to mention it when they come into the

store, so that’s good.” The promotion goes hand in hand with something Portalatin believes is critical to understanding today’s consumers: they are very value driven. And that does not necessarily mean the absolute lowest price.

“Consumers can define value as the least expensive or feel like they got more for their money, like a 2-for-1 deal,” Portalatin said. “Or they want quality. If they perceive it as a better quality for a comparable price, they will respond to that. Regardless of which of the three, they are definitely looking for value in their convenience purchases—in all purchases.”

Winning retailers will find something that represents a value to today’s economically conservative consumers. Focus on what your store is good at—beverages, coffee, foodservice—whatever it is, present it as a value to customers to keep them coming back for more this summer and beyond.

“That is the positive,” said Portalatin. “Enhance how consumers perceive value in the offering. There are opportunities to be relevant to the market and still grow business.” ■



*Ingredients: water,  
natural flavorings, &  
**UNTOLD WEALTH.***

**Now you can make every element of your c-store much more profitable. Learn how—by tapping into the only online community of successful c-store operators, experts, and suppliers from around the country. C Square, the town square of C-store resources. And here’s an ingredient you’ll really like: *your membership is free.***

Find out more at ***myCsquare.com***

**C SQUARE**



# STOCK-UP MAY REBATE OFFER

# PEPSI NEXT IS HERE.

## DRINK IT TO BELIEVE IT.



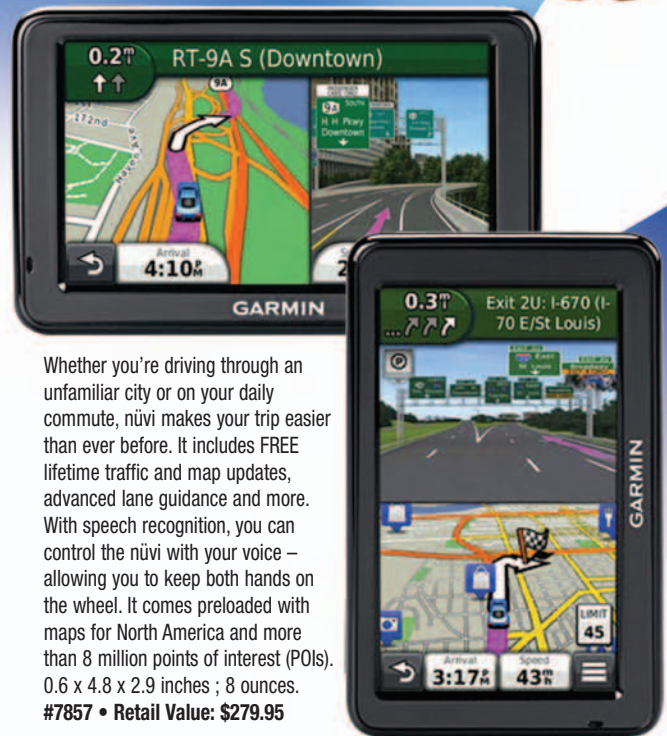
**Earn a \$10 Rebate\* when you stock up on Pepsi Next products. Plus, qualify for a chance to WIN a Garmin GPS with Lifetime Maps!**

Simply purchase a minimum 5 cases of Pepsi Next products on a single invoice from May 1, 2012 through May 31, 2012 and get a \$10 rebate (maximum one (1) \$10 rebate per store).

**PLUS, automatically be entered to WIN a Garmin nüvi Bluetooth GPS with Lifetime Maps!**

*Pepsi Next 2 liter bottles, 20 oz. bottles and 12-pack cans, count toward your qualifying purchase.*

\*Rebate Information: Consolidated Buying Company will issue the incremental rebate for those sites that qualify by buying 5 cases of qualifying Pepsi Next products.



Whether you're driving through an unfamiliar city or on your daily commute, nüvi makes your trip easier than ever before. It includes FREE lifetime traffic and map updates, advanced lane guidance and more. With speech recognition, you can control the nüvi with your voice – allowing you to keep both hands on the wheel. It comes preloaded with maps for North America and more than 8 million points of interest (POIs). 0.6 x 4.8 x 2.9 inches ; 8 ounces. #7857 • Retail Value: \$279.95

### COMPLETE THE INFORMATION BELOW FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE PRINT NEATLY OR TYPE)

BUSINESS NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PROVIDE STREET ADDRESS; UPS® IS UNABLE TO DELIVER TO P.O. BOXES

*All entries must be received by 6/30/12. Entry forms received after 6/30/12 may not be processed or acknowledged. Rebates will be reflected on your rebate check. Any questions please call 248-322-5450.*

**Mail or fax completed form along with a copy of your invoice to:**

**PEPSI NEXT FULFILLMENT CENTER**

40 W. Silverdome Industrial Park • Pontiac, MI 48342 • Phone: 248-322-5450 • Fax: 248-322-5454

### REQUIREMENTS

\$10 rebate and drawing entry for one Garmin nüvi Bluetooth GPS with Lifetime Maps is subject to verification and confirmation of invoice submitted.

Multiple invoice purchases will not be accepted. Entry will not be processed without the proper invoice as a support document.

All qualifying entry forms must be received by June 30, 2012 for drawing to be held on July 15, 2012. Entry forms received after June 30th do not qualify for rebate or drawing and will not be processed.

Limit one entry per store location. Maximum one (1) \$10 rebate per store.

#PC757/PCDELE



# Ahead *of the* Game





# Efficiency and professionalism keep this independent retailer at the top of his game

By Renee Pas

Buy wisely, organize well and above all else, keep your staff motivated and happy: that is the sage advice of Remon Yassa, owner of a BP-branded Handy Mart in Christianburg, Va. Prior to owning Handy Mart, Yassa was a software engineer with Corning. The now successful 10-year convenience industry veteran has learned many sure-fire ways of staying profitable in convenience retailing.

Yassa buys wisely by taking full advantage of buydowns. He readily participates in vendor's special offers, such as Pepsi's annual summer promotional lineup. On top of that, he works to maintain a showcase store. "The store is very organized, remains fully stocked and stays clean," Yassa said. "Customers need to be able to find what they want in 10 seconds."

Maintaining the highest level of organization and cleanliness is clearly a source of great pride for Yassa. Another is the level of professionalism of the staff.

## KEEP 'EM MOTIVATED

"You have to have friendly, well-trained staff," said Yassa. "That is number one." He expects his team to know—and promote—whatever products or services the store is currently suggestive selling.

"We find customers are often surprised when cashiers share a good deal with them that the store is currently offering," said Yassa, such as a 3-pack cigarette deal.

Cashiers are trained to market to the customer. For instance, if a customer comes to the counter to

purchase two packs of cigarettes, a cashier would automatically suggest the 3-pack promotion and explain how they will be getting a better deal by purchasing an additional pack.

Cashiers are also expected to be friendly and professional at all times. They strive to greet customers a minimum of three times each visit: A quick "Hello!" as the customer heads to their destination item, a second greeting during the transaction, plus a "Have a good day" or other goodbye as the customer leaves the store.

## HOW HE DOES IT

Yassa relies on frequent training sessions to get new employees up to speed and keep existing employees motivated. Newcomers receive close one-to-one attention for their first three months of employment, with constant encouragement and retraining throughout that time.

When things do not go as well as he would like with an employee, he gives them a warning. Up to three warnings before taking further action. "With



## EVERYONE'S FAMILY

Remon Yassa and wife Therese Gerges, pictured here with their kids Renata (left) and Renard Mercurius, maintain a high level of professionalism at their Handy Mart while keeping an all-in-the-family approach to the business.

## STORE STATS

### LOCATION

Christianburg, Va.

### STORE HOURS

5:30 a.m.  
Monday through Friday

6:00 a.m. — Midnight  
on Saturdays

7:00 a.m. — Midnight  
on Sundays

Open 365 days a year  
*No change in hours for summer*

### NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

5 full-time

1 swing employee, who shifts between full-time and part-time based on store needs

### BUYING GROUP WINS

A BP buying group member, Yassa takes advantage of special buying periods, such as the Pepsi promotions for summer



#### FAST AND FRIENDLY

Customers know they will find what they need quickly and efficiently at Yassa's Handy Mart.

#### YASSA'S LIST

Remon Yassa's key list of what keeps his store successful and efficient:

1. A friendly staff
2. Competitive prices
3. Buying at good deals
4. Organized store
5. Showcase deals

new employees, I keep watching, explaining, working through corrective action for 30 days. If they don't 'get' it after 30 days, I stop wasting my time and theirs. It just won't work. Employees are a reflection of customers and the image of my business. They are a key component to the store."

Yassa does, of course, experience his fair share of turnover issues. He generally says he knows within the first month if a new hire is going to work out. "If they are not good, they don't last more than 30 days," he said. "If they last longer than 30 days, they stay." Yassa says the full week of paid vacation he

Making the time for frequent conversations goes a long way toward keeping that employee-employer bond tight as well, said Yassa. "I talk about what they like about the store and listen to them as well." He relies on his team to relay what customers tell them about the store and reminds employees that customers are a key component to their paycheck.

"I tell employees that as long as we keep the customers coming in, they keep getting their paycheck," said Yassa. "Our team cares about the money and the job. The more they understand the business, the better."

He strives to give employees all the hours they need, which has meant a primarily full-time staff at the store: five full time employees and one swing employee that sometimes does full time shifts and other weeks works part-time. There are no permanent part-time positions.

Yassa and wife Therese Gerges are a stable force at the store as well, adding even more hours in the busy summer months. Yassa relies on AGK Soft back office software to keep daily operations running smoothly. An avid tech fan, he uses the system to track everything at the store.

#### SUMMER SELLING

Busy summer months bring an extra focus on promotions. Store deals are emphasized via banners outside the store, special signage inside the store and by cashiers suggesting items.

Two-for specials are promo staples, said Yassa,

## Making the time for frequent conversations keeps that employee-employer bond tight.

offers employees helps keep them motivated.

The current team has a range of seniority, from five years all the way down to just eight months in the store. Because the store operates in a college town, many employees simply move on when they graduate.

#### FAMILY FEEL

Even more important to employees may be the fact that Yassa treats everyone like family. "We consider our staff part of the family and treat them that way," he said. "We want the idea to also extend to customers ... everyone should feel like they are at home."

with beverages topping that two-for lineup. The store also adds an ice-down cooler for summer, housed near the front door.

Bagged ice is also a house specialty, bagged fresh at the store each day.

While summer selling means stepping up the retail game for promotions, Yassa is quick to point out that he maintains year-round promotions and a constant high level of professionalism in all areas of the operation. And that is what continues to drive his success. ■



# 2 Flavors 1 Pack You Decide

**mentos**  
The Freshmaker

## NEW Striped Red Strawberry/ Starmint UP2U gum

UP2U gum is the first gum to offer two different flavors in one slim wallet pack. It offers consumers a choice of flavors during the day.

Mentos Gum displays will stimulate the impulse purchase at the checkout. Red, white and blue display is perfect for extra patriotic punch for summer!

### Order NOW!

24 ct Mentos UP2U Striped Red Strawberry/  
Starmint Counter Display #73782

Approximate Display Cost: \$21.36

### +BONUS

Receive an additional 2% rebate on all of your Perfetti VanMelle purchases through your buying group.\*

\*Purchase from a buying group approved wholesaler for your purchases to be tracked for the rebate.

Up to a **12%**  
member rebate





# NOVELTY ICE CREAM DRIVERS

Consumers who see novelty items are more apt to buy them.

Impulse sales are the lifeblood of convenience stores and product placement is a key component. Placing novelty ice cream items where customers see the product is a proven way to increase sales with summer selling season.

Ice cream is a high margin category for c-stores, right up there with candy and fountain drinks. This summer, capitalize on ice cream's potential with point-of-sale materials that direct customers' eyes to the product.

the cash register and high-volume c-store product segments, such as confectionary. An additional way to drive sales is to place points of sale at key touch points to help trigger ice cream awareness. These touch points include attracting people at the door, directing them to the freezer and reminding them at the counter. That is also reflected in the supporting POS materials.

New point-of-sale materials can be requested from your ice cream supplier, which helps ensure your cus-

## When people see ice cream, they want ice cream.

Simply getting customers to look at ice cream can raise their intent to purchase. If people see ice cream, then they want ice cream.

Unilever's 2009 Ice Cream Shopper Study shows that 50% of impulse purchases at c-stores happen because shoppers see the freezer. That is why freezer placement is so important. Freezers placed within what's called the "impulse triangle" can drive 19% more purchases than freezers placed at the back of the store, according to Unilever's study.

The impulse triangle is the area inside the door,

tomers see the ice cream before they even get to the freezer section. Having a freezer cabinet in the front of the store also helps incite impulse purchases.

### IN TIME FOR SUMMER

New novelties for summer include Reese's Peanut Butter Ice Cream cup and Popsicle Sour Patch Kids bars. Also being unveiled is a new line from Ben & Jerry's—Greek Yogurt pints. Place an extra emphasis on these fun new items to increase impulse buys and add to the bottom line. With ice cream margins near 40%, it is a not-to-miss opportunity. ■







# MAGNUM

## BITE INTO PROFITS FROM A \$1 BILLION BRAND

Finally, our biggest ice cream brand is in the world's biggest ice cream market



- Magnum is Unilever's #1 ice cream brand
- Made with Belgian chocolate and silky vanilla bean ice cream
- Metallic packaging brings premium appeal to your freezer and excitement to your customers
- Embossed "M" on Magnum Classic shell brings sophistication to indulgence
- Millions of dollars in ad and promotions support will drive consumers to freezers



## Your Favorite Candy's Now an Ice Cream

# Reese's

PEANUT BUTTER ICE CREAM CUP



**.50¢**  
per box  
member rebate

PEANUT BUTTER ICE CREAM WITH A REESE'S® PEANUT BUTTER  
SWIRL DIPPED IN A MILK CHOCOLATE FLAVORED COATING

REESE'S® trademark and trade dress, the Peanut Butter Cup Design and Orange Background color are trademarks used under license. ©2012 Unilever

# Summer Power Promotion: FOUNTAIN



**TERRY LAMBERT**  
CBC Learning Center  
Instructor  
Lambert@cbuying.com

Terry Lambert is a CBC Learning Center seminar instructor as well as an active convenience retailer, operating two suburban Chicago locations and a jobber partnership.

Terry is 100% focused on helping retailers just like you overcome today's business challenges by learning how to identify and embrace opportunities.

The one summer promotion I continually go back to at my store is a fountain special. Starting May 1 and running through Sept. 1, customers can buy any size fountain drink for 99 cents.

It's a guaranteed lift for fountain sales at my store. Yes, it does lower gross profit a bit, but the noticeable increase in sales more than offsets the gross profit dip. And, most of the time, that fountain drink customer is adding a bag of chips or some other incremental sales item to the purchase.

That 99 cent price point is actually going to mark a 10 cent increase in my usual flat-rate summer fountain promotion. In past summers, we have ran that special at 89 cents.

Why the change? Well, I believe 99 cents still marks a great value for customers. Normal fountain prices at my store are 89 cents/16 oz.; 99 cents/20 oz.; \$1.09/32 oz.; and \$1.19/44 oz. Watching what's happening with fountain drinks at fast food outlets, notably McDonald's anytime \$1.00 fountain, points to single price fountain drinks becoming the mainstay.

If our 99 cent summer promotion is going strong, I will extend it beyond Sept. 1 and possibly keep that

price point all the time. It is a driver to get people from the pumps into the store.

## FLAVOR EXTENSION

Syrup flavors are another way to add a new twist to fountain. It has proven an inexpensive, fun way for my customers to customize their drink. It also extends the flavor line-up at the store.

Take a standard 8-head fountain program. By adding a flavor shot program, the fountain selection now grows to a 12-head option. Customers can add a cherry flavor shot and turn regular Pepsi into Cherry Pepsi, for example.

Our customers have found it to be fun and it was an inexpensive add-on. We use International Delight, which is a small unit that does not need to attach to the fountain. Talk to your wholesaler to find out what options are available for your store. It's just another way to give fountain some extra oomph.



## WANT MORE?

Check out Terry's Retail Tips on [www.myCsquare.com](http://www.myCsquare.com). Simply click on Retail Tip Videos and choose from 20 different episodes.



A FRESH MAKEOVER IS

GOOD

A more attractive partnership is even better. When you team with CITGO you get an unmatched commitment to building your business. We've got a bold, dynamic new look. But what hasn't changed is our unprecedented service and support. From marketing programs you can tailor to your local markets, to a spirit of open dialog and idea sharing, we're driven to help you succeed. To learn more about how CITGO can make you look even better, email us at [cmktsales@citgo.com](mailto:cmktsales@citgo.com).





#### MAKE A NEW FRIEND

Cross promote your store with another local business. Work toward that “Keep it local” theme, which tends to attract attention.

**MORE ON P.10**



#### TAKE A FAMILY PHOTO

Reinforce that your store is family owned and operated by posting a picture of your family. Also, hand out corporate shirts to your kids if they help out at the store. People tend to choose to support a family over nameless, faceless corporations.

**MORE ON P. 11**

#### SHAKE SOME HANDS

Make like a politician and greet customers at the pumps. A simple “Glad you stopped in” goes a long way in forming the kind of personal connection that brings people back again and again.

**MORE ON P. 10**



## ACTION ITEMS

#### 99 CENTS

Consider a flat-rate fountain promotion this summer. The slight dip in gross profit can generally be countered by incremental sales of snack items. Plus, fountain prices are trending toward 99 cents as a mainstay.

**MORE ON P. 28**



#### BATHROOM LOSSES

Dirty bathrooms are the quickest way to lose customers. 94% will not come back if the store’s bathroom is undesirably. Use an hourly checklist to keep yours sparkling clean.

**MORE ON P. 6**

#### BUYERS BE WISE

Take advantage of buydown offered from vendors. It’s an effective way to keep the bottom line in tip top shape..

**MORE ON P. 23**



Hello!

Nice to see you again

See you next time!

#### THREE’S A CHARM

Independent owner Remon Yassa strives to have each customer greeted three times during their store visit. Customers feel welcomed and appreciated by the gesture.

**MORE ON P.23**



# NEVER RUN OUT. EVER.

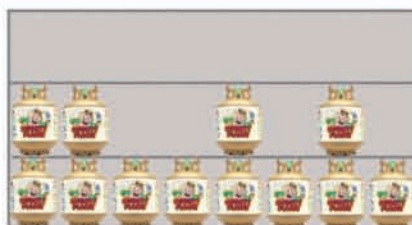


Put the MIGHTY FLAME Brand to work on your property.

Since 1986, MIGHTY FLAME has been recognized as one of the most influential and energizing forces behind the American Propane Cylinder Exchange industry.

MIGHTY FLAME continues to break new ground in Product Research and Development for its retail partners — designing innovative merchandising programs and profitable, streamlined retail POS controls.

## First, with the Replenish Point Guarantee.



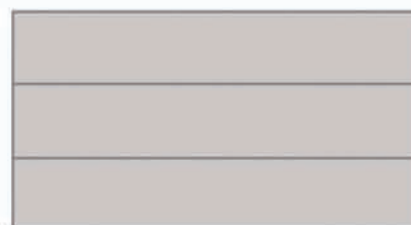
MIGHTY FLAME propane cylinder inventory never falls below 40% - 50% full. Delivery is automatic.

MIGHTY FLAME retailers don't think twice about their cylinder inventory because they never run out, ever.

US

VS

THEM



BRAND X allows cylinder inventory to drop to nearly empty or empty, requiring a call for a delivery.

MIGHTY FLAME PROPANE CYLINDER EXCHANGE | 1.877.438.6444 | [www.mightyflame.com](http://www.mightyflame.com)

\*Contact your Buying Group Representative for rebate and program information at 866-455-3411 or visit [www.myCsquare.com](http://www.myCsquare.com)

Find us on



Follow us on



# Don't Leave Your Customers Stranded



**Essential restroom products. Exceptional Cintas service.**

Cintas' restocking service ensures your restrooms have full and functioning dispensers and the highest quality hand care and paper products.

**5% member rebate available**

Contact your Buying Group Representative for rebate and program information at **888.380.7283** or visit **[www.myCsquare.com](http://www.myCsquare.com)**

