

FreshStop expands reach with Mr D Food partnership

Like most retail businesses, convenience stores (c-stores) have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and have had to adjust their offering to meet the needs of their customers during lockdown.



Developing partnerships with delivery services is one way to safely reach consumers during this time, and FreshStop at Caltex has teamed up with Mr D Food to allow customers to order food, snacks and cool drinks for delivery to their door.

“Our recent partnership with Mr D Food has been the ideal way for us reach the most vulnerable in society. The elderly, and those who don’t have transport, can now order our food and beverages online. We currently have 40 stores listed and we’re adding more stores daily to the online platform,” says Joe Boyle, managing director at FreshStop.



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According to Boyle, it has been beneficial to the industry that many fuel forecourt convenience store brands have upgraded their c-store offering over the last 20 years, with the inclusion of major retailers and franchised brands taking it to a new level.

He says the fact that FreshStop has always offered fresh fruit and vegetables, healthy snacks and smoothies, as well as a range of grocery items has made all the difference over lockdown. "We've been lucky to build on our fresh produce offering during this time and we are focused on introducing a larger range of healthier options.

"We've increased our Grab n Go selection to include prepacked food items such as hamburgers, fried chicken, wraps, etc., which reduces the need for one-on-one customer service. Due to government restrictions, we have had to move more towards a self-service model during this time so that customers can pop in, find what they need and check-out without too much personal interaction, as speed of service is one of the keys to the lockdown objectives."



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Glimmer of growth

While the ban on cigarette and hot food sales have impacted the industry greatly, FreshStop reports that some of its retailers are seeing a growth in sales.

"Despite the fact that approximately 40% of our sales have been negated because we can no longer sell cigarettes, hot foods or coffee, we are very proud that some of our retailers are experiencing a 20% increase in overall sales turnover. In contrast, those stores located within CBDs and industrial hubs have seen a major downswing, but as an essential service we remain open to service the few customers who need us.

"We thank our retailers and staff, who despite the challenges, do their best every day to keep our customers comfortable and aware of staying safe and healthy. A big thanks too to our government, suppliers and the industry who have been there throughout this crisis."

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