

Costcutter[©]

STILL OPENING STORES

SAXMUNDEN, SUFFOLK

Danny Pont, store manager



It's not the size of the shop but what you do with it

Costcutter is always happy to welcome a new store to the family but lockdown has created unique challenges for the team to overcome to help onboard new retailers. Store owner Danny Pont experienced this first hand with store at Saxmunden in Suffolk due to have a refurbishment following his move to Costcutter, just before the lockdown began.

“Unfortunately we weren’t able to get the Costcutter shop planners and merchandising guys here before the lockdown started so we haven’t been able to make a lot of changes to the store yet. However, Costcutter have helped us focus on expanding the range of products, especially fresh foods and I can safely say that’s what’s driven our revenue increase.”

Danny says sales at his forecourt store have increased 25% since they joined, all because of the popularity of the Costcutter range and Co-op Own Brand products.

“The decision to join Costcutter was a no-brainer. If you’re going to push merchandise, you need a great range of products, especially fresh food, as well as a strong Own Brand range such as Co-op and that’s what we got. Every single day we get locals saying how much they love what we have in store now.”

“

Costcutter has helped us focus on expanding the range of products, especially fresh foods and I can safely say that’s what’s driven our revenue increase.

”



25%

SALES INCREASE

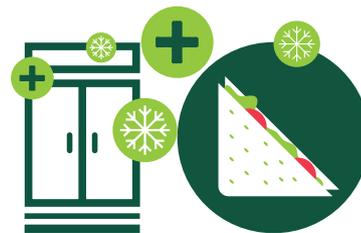


The service station is in a very rural part of East Anglia, just off the A12. That means the shoppers, who are mainly older and financially stable, like being able to buy the local bakery's fresh bread and cakes as well as the eggs from the local farm in store. "They've told us it's been fantastic for them, having us on their doorstep," he adds, "as the only other supermarket is a long drive away."

As well as the lockdown, another challenge has been a lack of available space. "I could do with a store that's twice the size because we're spectacularly tight on space," he says. "There isn't a spare inch in the store or on site for expansion. So it comes down to how we make the store work for us. Every square foot has to be profitable."

Despite the lack of space, Danny is keen to fit in drinks machines for slushies and milkshakes as well as an ice cream, freezer and hot food to go. Eventually, he even thinks they'll find room for an upright freezer and more space for fresh fruit.

"We've always had fairly steady business, with a healthy mix of trade coming in. Not just local people but also the transient trade of builders and commuters on their way to work; holidaymakers too. Trying to tailor a small store to suit all those people has always been a challenge, which is why we're making every foot work for us."



INCREASED RANGE OF CHILLED AND FRESH FOOD

“

We were the first shop in Suffolk with a screen over the counter and we tried to be ahead of the curve by providing face masks and sanitiser gels.

”

Despite not being able to be on site to start the refurbishment work, the team at Costcutter has been providing a wide range of help and support. "We had loads of phone support from our Costcutter business development manager. Whenever we needed advice about what range to introduce, they are always very forthcoming with assistance."

That's included helping with the safety measures needed for social distancing. "We were the first shop in Suffolk with a screen over the counter and we tried to be ahead of the curve by providing face masks, sanitiser gels and the like. As we were very proactive with it, the staff were happy and they felt better coming to work knowing we were taking all available precautions. It took the customers a little getting used to, though, especially having to talk through the screen but now everyone's used to it."