Powerful partners of independent retailers and wholesalers

IN SUPPORT OF LOCAL INDEPENDENTS

The IGA is a global retail alliance group that was founded in 1926 to bring family-owned, independent retailers together under the IGA brand, to give them the ability to better compete, while at the same time allowing them to stay true to who they are – local, community-based stores who serve the needs of their unique communities.

UMS is the exclusive partner for IGA in Africa, with the two organisations sharing a common vision to join hands with independent retailers, to build strong and successful businesses. IGA has a brand alliance with over 6 000 independent retailers in more than 30 countries around the world. Shopping local builds a strong, relationship-based local economy, provides jobs for residents and retains more of the money spent by locals in their communities. Independent, community-serving businesses give back to their communities through countless initiatives for those who need it most, benefiting the very people who shop at their stores.

"Our mission is solely focused on the development and growth of the independent family-owned retail and wholesale industry" – ***Jad Pereira, CEO, Unitrade Management Services***

For over 20 years, the UMS group has dedicated its purpose to building the family-owned businesses of independent retailers and wholesalers. Through its wide range of skills and expertise, and the collaboration of progressive independents, this group leads in its vision of a cohesive, effective partnership, bringing independent family businesses to powerful community stores.

From its early beginnings with one member, UMS now has over 400 independent retail and wholesale members that together form a powerful force in the market.

As leaders in independent brands that cover every aspect of FMCG wholesale and retail, UMS provides an infrastructure for its members to compete on equal terms with formal retail. The group, which was established in 2001, has achieved success through strong relationships with its members and suppliers, a committed team of employees, entrepreneurial leadership and heavyweight knowledge.

The UMS model offers marketing, strategy, operational support, financial management, IT, business development and buying power to independent wholesalers and retailers, through personal service, an efficient value chain and strong partnerships.

"The partnership always results in the development of a better business for all," says Pereira.

UMS FOOD TOWN STORES INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED

The entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to retail excellence of two independent South African retailers have recently garnered international recognition, being selected as nominees in the IGA (Independent Grocers Alliance) International Retailer of the Year awards.

KZN-based stores Supersave Food Town Hyper and Take n Pay Food Town Hyper achieved and exceeded a selection of criteria against which hundreds of participating stores from around the world are judged.

As members of UMS, Supersave Food Town Hyper and Take n Pay Food Town Hyper receive ongoing assistance to grow and build their businesses.

The two stores were nominated by IGA in recognition of their excellence in retailing, outstanding housekeeping, first-rate service levels, high standards of service departments and consistent pricing.

Both stores trade in a wide range of categories, including dry groceries, commodities (sugar, maize, oil, rice and flour), canned goods, perishables, cold beverages, dairy, sweets and snacks, baby food and non-food products, toiletries and personal care, household cleaning products, general merchandise, small appliances, stationery, DIY and hardware.

The judging criteria include how the store owner ensures that their store stands out from the competition, drives departmental sales, keeps shoppers coming back and solves specific problems they face in their unique market.

Community involvement is an important consideration for IGA when selecting their nominees for the award.

Co-owners Abu Khatib and Suhail Bayat from Supersave Food Town Hyper and owner Ismail Salajee from Take n Pay Food Town Hyper will join a group of nominated retailers from around the world at the IGA Rally in San Diego, California on 22-24 February 2019, where the winners will be announced.

Unitrade Management Services extends warm congratulations to its member stores and valued partners, Supersave Food Town Hyper and Take n Pay Food Town Hyper, for achieving this prestigious nomination and international recognition of their commitment to retail excellence.

UMS stores Supersave Food Town Hyper and Take n Pay Food Town Hyper have been recognised for retailing excellence by being selected as nominees in the IGA International Retailer of the Year awards.

ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT AT ITS BEST

Independent retailers and wholesalers are case-study examples of entrepreneurship, overcoming challenges through innovative solutions and sheer determination to succeed. UMS recognises this spirit in each of its member stores and works in partnership with every store owner to grow and build their business.

Commenting after last year's IGA International Retailer of the Year awards, IGA CEO John Ross says it is amazing to see the entrepreneurial spirit, sense of pride and creativity of independent local retailers. "While these stores are a clear representation of the diversity of different cultures from around the world, the one thing that is common across all of them is their commitment to the customers and communities they serve."

"Our members provide a great shopping experience and highly competitive pricing to their customers," says UMS CEO Jad Pereira. "We are so proud of the achievements of our two nominees. Their dedication to the well-being of their communities, and their commitment to providing a first-class store for their customers, is truly inspirational."

NEW INDEPENDENT DIY/ HARDWARE BRAND

UMS GROUP PROVIDING JOBS FOR 30 000

Independent retailers and wholesalers in South Africa serve approximately 70% of South Africa's consumers. Many of these family-owned businesses have been part of their communities for decades, with the business being passed on through generations.

The independents have a long history in South Africa, catering for price-sensitive consumers in rural areas, CBDs and outward-bound towns and cities. They have a strong sense of community and build warm relationships with the people who shop at their stores. Independent retail and wholesale has a critical role in the South African economy. In the FMCG space, it is essential that they are able to continue their important contribution by being able to compete with formal retail.

UMS provides an infrastructure for its members to compete on equal terms with formal retail.

"Independent retailers and wholesalers are the backbone of every economy. It is essential that we support the sustainability of their businesses," says UMS CEO Jad Pereira. "The UMS model enables our members to compete on price, service and shopping experience, without compromising their independence and ability to make autonomous business decisions."

Power Build offers hardware retailers a distinctive trading brand, while the store is still able to retain the reputational equity of its original name.

UMS has extended its reach into the hardware category, with its distinctive yellow and blue Power Build brand. The UMS hardware offer includes a team of experienced staff, with the expertise to assist their members with range extensions, category planning, hardware merchandising and loss control. Operational and sales support is also provided, with Power Build members receiving full assistance and follow up on order placement, business development and query resolution. The shopper profile includes DIY customers, owner-builders, bakkie builders and contractors.