

RETAIL QUARTER

July 2015



Welcome to Retail Quarter

I am pleased to send you the first edition of our new briefing, put together by the global Retail team at Squire Patton Boggs.

Together we advise supermarkets, department stores, fashion houses, manufacturers, distributors, logistics operators, property developers, landlords and online businesses. We have a real commitment to thought leadership and working with our partners in the industry, including retailTRUST, Kantar Retail and the Retail Industry Leaders Association in the US.

We plan to keep the content short and cover a range of legal issues and "food for thought" news affecting the sector. If you have any comments or suggestions on Retail Quarter or would like to discuss any of the issues raised here, please do get in touch.

Wishing you a successful summer.

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Domain Names – Navigating the Minefield

The recent launch of the *.sucks* domain name is a new potential headache for retail brand owners considering whether to register their core brand in order to prevent opportunistic registrations by others. The message for brand owners is stark – stump up the registration fee or risk seeing a discussion site (or rather, given the *.sucks* name, a criticism site) set up by consumer activists.

There is no immediate answer to the threat because you cannot cover all eventualities. Even if a company registers "BRAND.sucks", others could register "BRANDreally.sucks" or other variations.

Trade mark owners will have recourse through the usual domain name infringement procedures (such as the URDP), but question whether this will offer sufficient protection. The debate will certainly continue.

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Consumer Trend for Value is Driving Investment Activity

Our Corporate team has advised the shareholders of Poundworld Retail Limited on the sale of a majority stake to the global private investment firm TPG.

Founded in 1974, the business started as a Wakefield market stall and has grown to more than 280 stores through its two brands, Poundworld and Bargain Buys.

Richard Hunt, who led the Squire Patton Boggs team, commented "The retail landscape continues to evolve and there is significant interest in investing in the discount retail sector, which is good news for those businesses that are looking to expand and good news for those customers who are looking for the best possible deals."

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Thoughts on Sunday Trading Extended Hours

Irrespective of our personal beliefs, values and preferences today, Sunday is just another trading day. The presence of omni-channel retailing makes a nonsense of current restricted trading hours. Should stores larger than 3,000 sq. ft. not take "on line" orders on Sundays except between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.?

The key to trading hours is allowing the choice to be that of the consumer whilst taking care to ensure employees are not exploited. Retailers need to focus on the wellbeing of their greatest asset, their staff, and come up with solutions which are fair for all involved.

The need to maximise trading hours is not going away. The process behind how to achieve it whilst protecting staff welfare needs to be high on the agenda for the HR functions in retail.

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Upcoming Events

retailTRUST Workshops:

Managing Mental Health Issues in the Workplace

28 October – Squire Patton Boggs,
7 Devonshire Square, London,
EC2M 4YH

29 October – The Trafford Centre,
Manchester, M17 8AA

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Please [click here](#) to see our Retail Report, prepared in conjunction with Kantar Retail, retailTRUST and British Retail Consortium