

Petrol PLAZA

PetrolPlaza Podcast: The arrival of smart stores

From hybrid stores that allow service stations to serve customers 24/7 to fully unmanned stores that cater to EV hubs, smart shopping is one of the industry's hottest topics. With new smart store formats popping up every week, we sat down with three experts - Lekkerland, Juxta and Professor Sabine Benoit - to discuss this exciting field.



Mehmet Tözge

Based in Germany, Mehmet Tözge is the Director of Smart Store Development at Lekkerland SE - Rewe Group. He brings experience from previous roles at real.digital and Carrefour Turkey, where he was Director of e-Commerce. He currently leads the smart store revolution for the German wholesale giant.

"Between unmanned and staffed stores, at Lekkerland we've seen that the hybrid approach will be part of the ecosystem. There is a big opportunity for gas stations - most of them have an existing shop they can modify to make it hybrid. That way they could make the store 24/7 with less labour costs."



Sabine Benoit

Sabine Benoit is a member of the Department of Marketing and Retail Management at Surrey Business School. She is also the Director of the Competence Center for on-the-go consumption funded by Lekkerland GmbH & Co.KG, a leading wholesale company in Europe. She has taught and teaches courses in Marketing, Services & Retail Marketing and Research Methods on Bachelor, Master, MBA and Ph.D. Level.

"Smart stores have shown a tremendous growth over the last four years. At the moment stand-alone

stores in rural areas where the next manned c-store is far away work best. That reduces the barrier of having to check into a store for clients."

"We found that what hurts retailers is the idea of verification. At Amazon Go you would receive the receipt for the basket they captured hours later in some cases. Consumers want to see what retailers have recorded and what they paid for."



Jake Patton

Jake Patton is the Head of Sales, North America at JUXTA, an autonomous-micro retail technology start-up company under Gilbarco Veeder-Root. Prior to JUXTA, Jake led the sales efforts for Invenco, who was acquired by GVR in 2022. With over a decade of experience in the fuel, convenience, QSR, and energy retail sectors, Jake brings experience working on the retail side as well as the vendor side.

"With our format the idea was to remove as much of that labour problem as possible. We expect around 45 minutes to 1 hour a day of stocking and cleaning."

"The traditional c-store format has been bound to the car-based journey. We are trying to decouple that idea and bring convenience closer to where consumers are today – smaller communities and mixed commercial-residential applications."

This podcast was recorded during **forecourtech 23.*