

-Week Ending 11/26/10-

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Thanks to MNB
for this selection of
articles.

Brookshire's Gets FRESH

In Tyler, Texas, the *Tyler Paper* reports that as Brookshire's prepares to open a new FRESH store there early next year, they have drafted a group of residents as an advisory board, "made up of a diverse cross section of the community with a love and passion for food ... to offer insight into the planning of the new FRESH store."

The store is targeted at local residents who, research found, have been driving up to several hours on a reasonably frequent basis to find better fresh foods; the store will include a strong local produce selection, juice and fruit bar, sandwich bar and a taco bar, and 37 feet of prepared food, from meatloaf and mashed potatoes to seared tuna.

"I think that FRESH is a great example that people locally are tuned into the international movement of a healthy lifestyle and healthy living," Courtney Lowery, a member of the advisory board, tells the *Paper*.

Walgreens Joins Electric Car Charging Movement

Cnet reports that Walgreens will test a program beginning early next year that will offer "rapid-charging EV stations at 18 Houston-area stores next year, through a partnership with power utility NRG Energy."

According to the story, this is part of broader charging program being created by the eVgo Network, which also will include so-called convenience stations that "will be hosted by retailers in their parking lots and remain open for the duration of the retailers' business hours. Those stations will consist of DC rapid chargers and offer an option to recharge for 30 miles of range in 10 minutes ... NRG will also offer a 'home-and-away' subscription service that will give customers unlimited access to any of the network's public stations, in addition to having a Level 2 fast-charging station installed at their home.

Sansolo Speaks: "The Sum of the Parts"

by *Michael Sansolo*

For many MNB readers, Monday's sports update had a glaring omission. Kevin forgot to mention Jimmie Johnson winning his fifth consecutive NASCAR championship. It's a moment we shouldn't let pass too quickly because in many ways, Johnson and NASCAR provide better business lessons than nearly any other sport.

I'll be honest: I'm not a big NASCAR fan. While I've watched races and can name more than a few drivers and teams, I don't come close to exhibiting any of the passion the sport inspires in its followers. My awareness is largely based on two incidents.

First, I was flying out of Florida in early 2001 immediately after Dale Earnhardt's fatal accident at Daytona and I was stunned at the level of grief I saw from his fans. The connection these spectators had to man they never met convinced me that something about NASCAR was special beyond belief. It still amazes me.

The second was when I stumbled into a news story about the amazing

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Jimmie Johnson suffering a bizarre injury while celebrating his first championship. Apparently, Johnson was riding on the roof of a golf cart and a man who easily controls a car at 200 mph fell off and broke his arm. Because I love irony, I immediately started following Johnson.

But the lesson of his championships provides an excellent discussion for business people. People who know NASCAR far better than me say there are three key aspects to a winning season and they are in order of importance: car, crew and then driver. It's a wonderful metaphor.

Johnson would obviously be nothing without the car, just as any business must have the basics down to compete. The car has to be fast and tuned to the track in NASCAR, just as in business the basics of location, facility and logistics must be sound. Without those, you simply cannot compete.

The crew is more complex. In auto racing, the team performs a mind-numbing set of tasks in just a few seconds to make certain the car is back on the track as quickly and as capably as possible. More than a few races are lost in the pit area where the crew works. Johnson actually encountered a number of crew issues this year and at one point swapped crews with his teammate Jeff Gordon.

In so many ways, it's just like the teams many of us lead. Those teams need the same understanding of purpose that Johnson's crew has, the same cohesion and the same chemistry to make them successful. A big part of that is the leadership of the crew chief, much as it is with middle managers who have to make sure everyone stays on task and focused. Just as in NASCAR, a lot of competitive battles in retail can be lost in the back room with sloppiness or inattentiveness to the customer. There is no small or unimportant job in either the crew or the retail team.

Johnson may get the glory and it's heavily deserved because he too has an enormously challenging job. His ability to win year after year is testament to his skill as a driver and a competitor in a sport where so many things must go right to win even once, no less dominate for five years of nearly weekly racing. Say what you will about racing vs. other sports, the bottom line is that Johnson's life is at stake every time he gets behind the wheel.

But without those other components in place, Johnson wouldn't sit at the top of the pyramid. Without the necessary elements of the car or without the strong leadership of the team, it's virtually impossible to think he would have won one race let alone five championships. It's a model of synergy that anyone from a chief executive officer to a small team leader should appreciate.

Simply put, the whole can only be more than the sum of the parts when they all work together.

Michael Sansolo can be reached via email at msansolo@morningnewsbeat.com. His new book, "THE BIG PICTURE: Essential Business Lessons From The Movies," co-authored with Kevin Coupe, is available [by clicking here](#).

Just-in-Time Purchasing Becomes A Consumer Imperative

The *Wall Street Journal* reports that "for over two decades, Americans bought big, bought more and stocked up, confident that bulk shopping, often on credit, provided the best value for their money. But the long recession - with its high unemployment, plummeting home values and depleted savings accounts - altered the way many people think about the future. Manufacturers and retailers report that people are buying less, more frequently, and are determined to keep cash on hand ... Executives peddling wares from canned goods to cashmere say the shift in consumption habits is prompting them to change how they produce, package, price and deliver their goods.

The impact is measurable.

"The new shopping behavior is having a big effect on club stores, the ultimate pantry-filling destinations, which offer low prices but require bulk purchases," the *Journal* writes. "Some, including Costco Wholesale Corp. and BJ's, have reported increased shopping-trip frequency and decreased transaction sizes. To adjust, some discounters are rethinking their businesses.

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"BJ's, based in Natick, Mass., began courting new customers two years ago to expand its membership, including smaller households and empty-nesters. It began shrinking its package sizes, in part to lure shoppers more interested in weekly purchases than monthly stock-ups. Now, the chain of 191 stores sells cartons of 18 eggs, instead of only five-dozen egg packages. It offers two containers of margarine of nearly two pounds each instead of only five-pound buckets.

"The margarine change alone resulted in 46% more members who bought margarine, the company says. BJ's credits the shift to smaller package sizes with driving an increase in membership fees of 6% in the quarter ended Oct. 30.

'This concept that club stores are only for the stock-up visit—I don't think that's true anymore,' says Bruce Graham, BJ's senior vice president of food."

Stop The Presses. Study Says Parents Influence How Their Kids Eat.

Reuters Health has a story about a new study from University College London suggesting that "school-age children whose mothers tightly control their diets may be prone to overeating, while those with moms who pressure them to eat tend to be fussy about food."

According to the story, "The findings, published in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, do not necessarily mean that parents' mealtime strategies cause their children to overeat or become picky eaters. In fact, the researchers say, it's likely that parents who pressure or restrict are often reacting to their children's eating habits."

Reuters Health goes on, "In general, experts recommend that parents try to get their kids interested in healthy foods from an early age -- by having them, for example, help with shopping and preparing meals. With young children who are fussy eaters, the American Dietetic Association suggests regularly offering them colorful foods, and making the eating environment pleasant but without any mealtime distractions like TV.

"A number of studies have also suggested the importance of parents acting as dietary role models: If parents regularly eat their fruits and vegetables, kids may be more willing to do it too."

7-Eleven Introduces More Private Brand Wines

C-store giant 7-Eleven has announced that it is broadening its private brand wine selection, introducing a new label - Cherrywood Cellars - a mid-tier-priced wine (\$7.99 - \$8.99 per bottle) that is available in three varietals - chardonnay, cabernet sauvignon and merlot.

Cherrywood Cellars, according to the company, is designed to appeal to millennials, and is positioned between its Yosemite Road label, priced at an entry-level \$3.99 per bottle, and Sonoma Crest, a premium wine comparable to a \$15 bottle, but value-priced at \$9.99.

FastNewsBeat

- GMDC, the non-profit trade association that represents large and small retailers, wholesalers and consumer product goods manufacturers, joined several industry associations, including the Consumer Healthcare Products Association, the National Association of Chain Drug Stores and the National Grocers Association, last Friday when they called upon the U.S. Congress to reverse a provision within the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. The provision, also known as the Cough and Cold Tax, prevents consumers from using flexible spending accounts (FSAs) to purchase over-the-counter (OTC) medicines without a prescription, and is scheduled to go into effect on January 1, 2011.

"The new FSA restrictions will add additional confusion, expense and eliminate a benefit many consumers have come to depend upon to cost-effectively purchase medicines they need," stated Dave McConnell, President and CEO of GMDC. "Consumers depend on OTC medicines as a first line of defense for their families' healthcare needs, and retail stores are in the business of providing remedies in an accessible, consumer-friendly way. Eliminating OTCs from FSA eligibility is counterproductive from the overall goal of healthcare reform."

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Executive Suite

- Linda M. Doherty, President and Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Food Council (NJFC), was elected Chair of the Food Industry Association Executives (FIAE) during their Annual Convention at the TradeWinds Island Resorts on St. Pete Beach, Florida on November 12, 2010. Dan Shaul, State Director of the Missouri Grocers Association, was elected as Secretary/Treasurer. Joe Williams, Vice President of the Texas Retailers Association, was elected Vice Chairman and Brandon Scholz, President and CEO, of the Wisconsin Grocers Association, will serve as Immediate Past Chairman.
- *Dow Jones* reports that the Reckitt Benckiser Group PLC, the manufacturer of Airwick air fresheners and Clearasil acne cream, has hired former Tesco and Unilever executive Liz Doherty as its new chief financial officer.