The Retail Context:
A case study of 4 UK KTPs

Harvey Ells
h.ells@brighton.ac.uk
Overview

- Outline of 4 ‘traditional’ 2-year KTPs
- Generic elements and key themes
- Personal reflections on process and activities
- Ways forward/ next steps
- 1:1 interviews with owner managers & executives.
- Review of LMC minutes and associated project plans
- How to define retail? Image problem?
• Translate food and hospitality innovations into a retail setting
• Re-define retail offer in 3 brick and mortar stores
• Re-brand ranges and merchandise stores
• Re-model e-commerce, logistics & export offer
• Increase returns from existing retail activities
• Set up buying/ selling alliances
• Rated ‘A’
• Develop an innovative 24/7 workplace catering offer
• Hot food retail vending concept
• Re-combine existing vending and microwave technologies
• Re-formulate product ranges and specs.
• Optimise packaging for both heating & ergonomic benefits
• Reduce food waste and improve food quality
• Rated ‘A’
Spring Barn Farm no. 7927

- Diversification of existing farm destination/attraction
- New retail business start up: design and build
- Brand extension of existing (limited) retail offer
- Launch successful retail events programme
- Make a social impact (supporting the local, rural community)
- Web site re-launch
- Rated ‘A’
St Wilfrid’s Hospice no. 8985

• Develop an e-commerce model & strategy
• Refine waste management systems
• New customer markets and audiences
• Link to wider community / fundraising agenda.
• Pop-up retail innovations
• Logistics re-model
• Re-define High Street image
• (10 months left to run)
Core Retail Elements

Comments

• “Recognise our unique needs and limitations”
• “Retail adding value to the organisation”
• “Limitations to methods of organic growth”
• “Difficulty translating ideas in to practice”

Knowledge Threshold Template

1. EPoS and scanning systems
2. Merchandising disciplines
3. Marketing Plan
4. Web Site

Strategy:
Six months to embed the basics - Then start on more specialist variable elements unique to the individual project plans.
Balancing Needs

Project Needs

• “for retail offer to be more mainstreamed”
• “well-run retail to sustain and support future growth”
• “more profit from retail element of business”
• “enhance our local presence”
• “more formal approached to retail management”

Retail Associate Profile

• HLST v. Business and Management QAA benchmarks
• Awareness of cultural proximity of alternative Service Sector disciplines
• In tune with organisational values.
• Ability to interpret Servicescapes
• Willingness to ask difficult questions
• Social Media Skills
• Drive
Farm Diversification

- Property Development on farm (e.g., housing, business centre, landscape/environment)
  - Sell
  - Property Development – management role
  - Reduce Farm Holding
- New Business on Farm
  - Run by farmer/member of farm household
  - Not farm related (e.g., mechanic, warehousing)
  - Diversifying into new business activities
- Related to natural resources (e.g., tourism)
- Related to farm production (e.g., farm shop, food processing)
- Off farm employment
  - Agricultural (e.g., consultancy, contracting)
  - Non-agricultural employment, investments (e.g., part-time job, share trading, buy to let property)
- Diversifying the farm business
- Diversification of income

Mc Elwee and Bosworth (2010)
Own(er) Label and Branding

Objectives

• Symbolic of owner/manager but not corporate
• Maintain integrity
• Risk reducing

But....

• Inconsistent in all retail business partners
• No formalised product and range review process

Comments

• “It says about us, who we are and what we do.”
• “It is about professionalism and styling”
• “We need to highlight what makes us different”
• “getting the message over to new customers in different ways.”
• “At the heart of the organisation”
Ways of Working

Relationship Building

• “Active engagement”
• “We trust you”
• “We know the University”
• “You provide fantastic value”
• “We needed knowledge transfer to get things working”
• “We want to extend our regional network”

Instant Results

University of Brighton
School of Sport and Service Management
Retail, KT and the Curriculum

Credit bearing modules
- Retail Consultancy Module: Live Clients
- Student Visits
- Retail Management in Action (assessed KTP Bid)
- PR module (by application due to popularity)
- Retail Volunteering
- Optional Placements
- Dissertation Research

Knowledge transfer mechanisms
- 2 Year KTP
- Short KTP
- Innovation vouchers
- Student consultancy EASE Bright Young Things: £500 fixed contribution
- Standard consultancy through UoB trading company.
Where Next?

- From 2007 we have a well developed internal knowledge base.
- Re-directing of KTP academic expertise?
- Tempted by quicker approval of IV grant/ less paperwork on completion.
- ...but stricter criteria/ limited retail element
- Should this model be adapted for retail?
ESRC investment per year

- Will the nature of the discipline become any clearer?
- How is the national evidence base shaping up?
- What new, fully-informed retail KT policies will result?
- How will this facilitate HEIs engaging further with the retail sector?
- Are retail academics and students an under-utilised resource?
ESRC 2013

• “The UK retail sector is an important part of the economy and has a profound impact on the whole of our society. Valued at over £300 billion, it is equivalent to 20 per cent of UK GDP, accounts for one in 12 companies and employs one in nine working people.”

• ...but I would be cautious about too much focus on ‘big data’ and ‘places’
Maintaining Momentum

Problems with ’big’ retailers

• Problems with ‘big’ retailers

Closing thoughts

• Don’t forget the retail SME sector by company, not collective
• 1 x 2YR KTP (£75K) v. 15 (£5K) innovation voucher equivalents for retailers?
• Quicker and better Returns for UK Plc?
• Readiness for High Street 2020?
• Facilitates wider regional engagement of HEIs?
• More knowledge transfer?
• Enabling more student innovators?
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