

Select launches standalone trial

Shell UK is leaving its oil company roots behind and entering into convenience retailing proper with the launch of a standalone Select c-store. The 24-hour 160 sq m store is due to open as a pilot site in the Strand near Shell's London head office in late May or early June. Shell said it has no plans as yet to roll out further standalone c-stores. Further details on the store will be announced later.

A spokesman for the oil company said the Select brand was now strong enough to compete against other convenience stores. It is investing £350 million developing its service station network, of which £140 million is being spent on Select. Last year Shell UK launched its 'Night Time Convenience Shopping and the



Shell UK is set to open a pilot standalone Select store on London's Strand

24 Hour Society' report which highlighted that more people are convenience shopping than ever before. The report showed that in 1994, 73 per cent went convenience shopping; today it is 92 per

cent and 98 per cent for young people. Next month Shell is set to unveil its new Select-branded delivery trucks. As part of the £100 million Hays Distribution deal – Shell is to get 90 trucks.

Don's Smart writ

Shell UK is being sued for allegedly breaching copyright on the idea it used to create Shell Smart Card, its loyalty programme. John Donovan, managing director of Don Marketing UK, has issued the High Court Writ alleging that the current Smart scheme operated by

Shell is based on a proposal that his company disclosed to the oil company in confidence. The writ also alleges breach of contract.

In 1989, Donovan's company presented the idea of a multibrand loyalty card scheme to Paul King, who at that time was Shell UK's

national promotions manager. In July 1990, Shell took the option.

Further discussions between the two companies continued between 1990 and 1994, however, in February 1994, Shell said that there was no further point of discussion and launched the programme later that year.

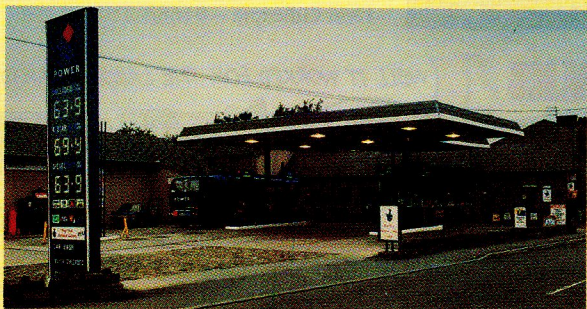
Meanwhile, Shell is about to roll out the Smart Card multi-company loyalty programme nationwide.

Powerful alliance

Power Petroleum, part of Total Oil, has amalgamated with two other brands – 3D Petroleum, situated in the East Midlands, and Phoenix Retail situated in East Anglia – to bring the three brands under one banner.

According to Nigel Beedham, Power Petroleum's regional manager, the amalgamation will be able to offer a specialist unit geared to give advice and to help dealers within the market.

"We are delighted to have two such well respected dealer brands to add to the portfolio. The amalgamation will mean that we are creating a significant force in a rapidly changing market," said Mr Beedham.



Post box deal

A new full postal service, which will run alongside the Royal Mail, has been launched into the forecourt market by Postal Facilities. The company's scheme involves advertising-fronted post boxes, which are emptied by Royal Mail personnel. Letters are then processed and delivered through the normal channels.

Postal Facilities, which is looking to have between 4,000 and 6,000 post boxes on forecourts over the next five years, has signed agreements with a number of oil companies including BP, Shell, Texaco, Elf, Save and Repsol.

"The petrol companies have been generous in their support of the service and will benefit through the attraction of more visitors to the rapidly growing petrol and convenience store sector," said Nigel Mills, Postal Facilities' commercial director. "The scheme is beneficial to everybody who posts letters as petrol stations are conveniently located."

BFL set to buy UK

British Fuels was on the brink of purchasing UK Petroleum Products from Powell Duffryn as *Forecourt Trader* went to press. The deal was expected to be signed on May 1 and would add around 720 sites to BFL's 200 if it goes ahead. David Houliston, md of British Fuels, confirmed that the two companies were in talks. He also stated that the two companies had common interests including depot sharing and rationalisation. British Fuels has continued to acquire small and medium sized dealer business, despite ever-competitive times. Last year it acquired the Peva brand and added 14 sites to its estate.

P&H's showstopper

Palmer & Harvey McLane has predicted a record attendance at its ProRetail show. Speaking on the first day of the three-day show, Paul Hagon, P&H's sales and marketing director, predicted that more than 10,000 retailers would attend. More than 3,500 retailers visited the show on the first day. With a number of product launches at this year's show – from Nestlé Rowntree, Ginsters, Duracell and Pork Farms Bowyers to name but a few – Mr Hagon says ProRetail confirmed its reputation as the "major UK launchpad" for what is new in convenience retailing.

Sarnie show

To coincide with British Sandwich Week – May 11-16 – Europe's first ever trade show, dedicated to the sandwich and snacking industries, will also take place. The Total Sandwich Show will be held on May 14 and 15 at The Business Design Centre, Islington, London. For more information call 01707 661332.

Murco's valet deal

Murco is investing more than £500,000 on new car washing and vacuum equipment. Over the next 12 months, the oil company will install 40 AIB jet washes, 50 car vacuums and 10 Istobel rollovers at its company-owned stations.

"Car valeting – if operated correctly – can provide a valuable source of non-fuel income at station level. This investment will go some way to achieving this and at the same time provide an improved level of service to our customers," said Jeremy Clarke, Murco's marketing development manager.



Forecourt directory

The third edition of the Forecourt Trader Supplier Directory will be available from July. Free to 7,000 independents, the directory is the definitive guide to the UK petrol and convenience retailing sectors. Whether you want the name of suppliers of services to forecourts, from drainage and petrol pump systems to confectionery and car accessories, the Forecourt Trader Supplier Directory has it all. This year's Directory contains more service companies than ever before. To benefit from a 10 per cent pre-publication discount call Carol Turner on 01293 610292.

