



# How to keep up with change

The world and our town demographics change, which means your customers will change too – customers can never be taken for granted.

To help you keep up with change ask yourself the following questions.

- Are the products that I sell, what customers today want to buy? How do I know this?
- Do I do research or ask for feedback on my product range?
- Are there new products and services that could better meet local people's needs?
- Do I attend trade events or research wholesale information to learn more about new products and trends?
- How do I keep up to date with information? So much information both on local communities, retail sectors and government legislation is on line – do I have the skills to keep informed? Have I made use of free computer access at my local library and free courses through Adult Education, FE Colleges etc?
- Do I make time to do research and develop new products – many retailers spend all their time 'at the coal front'.
- Has new housing or companies brought in new people – could this give new opportunities?

- Rural people are more likely to shop online and use a variety of towns for their day to day shopping – Am I targeting customers in the larger rural area?
- What services can I offer on line?
- Can my customers browse my stock and place orders via e-mail?
- Am I open when today's customers want to shop?
- Can I offer local delivery on phone, fax and e-mail orders to keep customers who can't come in during office hours?

The secret of success for the small retailer... is to offer consumers something different, something better and something targeted very precisely at a particular portion of the market," Kevin Hawkins Director general British Retail Consortium (BRC).