

Game reveals innovative new retail concept in Gauteng

Game has launched its first 'future-ready concept store' at the Mall of Africa in Johannesburg, the first store of its kind to be transformed as part of the African retail giant's turnaround strategy. The reimagined retail space now offers free Wi-Fi and a kids' play area, and incorporates innovations such as self-checkout counters, price check booths and QR codes on products that link to Game's online store.



According to Game, the new store has undergone a phased approach of upgrades designed specifically to address customer needs over the past year.

The store, which will be officially celebrated through a ribbon cutting ceremony on 23 September, is a physical manifestation of Game's revitalised strategy in merchandising, marketing, supply chain and operations.



QR codes allow shoppers to purchase online and have goods delivered.

"Our new store concept goes beyond a providing a modernised look-and-feel, and rather encapsulates the direction we are moving in towards our broader turnaround as a business," says Andrew Stein, vice president of Game.

"We have consulted with a number of key role players across the business, conducted extensive market and customer

research and internally reviewed Game's relevance in the African retail landscape. We also took the time to look at local and international best practice and emerging trends to create an experience that puts customers at the centre of our stores."



Andrew Stein on how Game is rediscovering its retail mojo

Lauren Hartzenberg 31 Jul 2020



In-store innovations

Innovations piloted at the Mall of Africa store include self-checkout counters, price check booths, sampling vending machines, electronic shelf labels and free customer Wi-Fi in store.



Vending machines housing free samples

Furthermore, the store will feature a children's play area, digital touchscreens that allow shoppers to access information on Game products and product ranges, and interactive demonstration zones across the various store categories where consumers can test products such as prams, children's bicycles, and electronics.

"Game is changing the way we operate within our stores, our store layout, our product ranges, category propositions, and customer service."



Improved operational efficiencies

“The concept of ‘Retail Reimagined’ is about transforming and improving the customer experience as a whole. We prioritise creating a better life for our customers, as well as saving them time and money, so we spent time investigating specific customer pain points and looking for ways in which to combat these.

"Considering the current pandemic, this has never been more important, as consumers look to experience a safe and seamless shopping experience, spend less time in store, avoid waiting in queues and shop less frequently," says Stein.

"Innovations in our Mall of Africa store such as intuitive floor design that makes store navigation easy or the self-checkout counters that allow our shopper to skip the queues at the regular till points, for example, are designed to provide an improved shopping experience for all our customers," he adds.



In terms of improved operational efficiencies, additional technologies are being introduced, including:

QR Codes: These allow customers to scan QR codes to access information on the product, as well as the option to purchase the product online and have it delivered to them.

ESL: This technology provides staff with information on factors like rate of sale, days of stock cover and location of stock in the stockroom.

Smart Labels: These labels make it easier to track and manage stock in stockrooms.

Trackmatic Phase 2: This technology not only allows Game to track trucks carrying stock, but provides the retailer improved visibility on the type and volume of stock being carried.

Smart Camera Solution: This allows Game to manage queueing time for customers in stores, as well as secure its stock receiving bays.

Stein adds that Game has also made a recent move to the SAP S4/HANA system, which substantially improves the retailer's data analytics capabilities, business process efficiencies and integration with their online store. "This also means we will be able to ensure an optimised assortment of products according to individual consumer demographics in each of our stores," explains Stein.



Game begins roll-out of Stylessentials clothing offering

13 Aug 2020



Expanded categories

Game is also introducing new and expanded categories as part of its turnaround strategy – all of which will be available in the Mall of Africa concept store – including clothing, party solutions, parenting, children's books bestsellers, home security and wellness. The retailer is also going to partner exclusively with Massmart private labels for its DIY section, such as Fired Earth, PowerWorxTM and LightWorxTM.



Game's newly introduced Styleessentials offering

“While we are piloting the Game reimagined format with the Mall of Africa store, we plan to roll out two more future-ready stores by the end of the year. Along with our other strategic plans, such as the phasing out of Fresh and Frozen from 65 stores by November and the introduction of [our clothing range, Styleessentials](#), into all Game stores by 2021,” concludes Stein.

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