

# Sole 365, Italy

In the Italian region of Campania, a new trend is emerging and shifting convenience from temporary to permanent.

# Enough temporary offers ... ... Always low prices!

We interviewed the CEO of AP Commerciale, owner of the brand Sole 365.

## Tell us about the company structure and where Sole 365 fits in?

Sole365, is a partner of the Megamark group (Famila Superstore, Dok Supermercati, A&O convenience shops, Joe Zampetti by L'isola dei Tesori petstores) and a member of Selex.

## What is different about Sole 365?

We offer the concept of Every Day Low Price in Campania, i.e., an attractive offer that focuses on the lowest prices on the market with a year-round commitment. Unlike a discounter, we offer excellent prices but they are delivered to the hard-pressed consumer by offering a quality service experience as well.

## Apparently, your team of management and staff are guided by your Seven Principles. What are they?

- We care about people.
- We select the best products to make your journey better and offer three things ... savings, quality and safety.
- Promotions have an expiry date. Our low prices last for 365 days of the year.



Exterior of the new Sole 365 supermarket, in Nola, where the pay-off line stands out: "La Spesa. Tranquilla," the sentence means ... "Shopping. Don't worry."

This institutional message underlines the intention of offering complete and a serene shopping experience, free from intermittent promotional pressures and reassured by always convenient prices.



The location of Campania within Italy.

- We simplify your choices – no need to collect any points to get a gift (for which you would pay, anyway!).
- We work every day to make your shopping trips more convenient, simplest, safest and most serene.
- Our 'no leaflet' policy results in the annual saving of 3 500 trees, 100 million litres of water, 200 tons of harmful emissions.
- You buy only what you want – no need to buy excessive quantities on 'special offer'.



The opening of the Nola store took place on the occasion of 'International Women's Day' on 8 March, an event that celebrates the economic, political and cultural progress achieved by women all over the world. The eloquent poster celebrates "Women 365 days a year".



# Tired of missing your grocery delivery?

Grocery e-lockers have increased in demand as an innovative solution in the e-commerce industry, revolutionizing the way customers collect their grocery orders. These secure storage units are specifically designed to accommodate the unique needs of the grocery sector, providing a tempered convenient and contactless pickup experience.

## Saved costs:

**2 hrs**

Saved every day with Grocery Lockers compared to previous solution.

**23 min**

Average order fulfillment time when using the grocery lockers.

**7-8 %**

Profit on e-commerce orders by some stores using StrongPoint's grocery lockers.

## Key Features:



### 3 temp. zones

Our grocery lockers come with up to 3 temperature zones to manage all groceries (frozen, chilled and ambient – both controlled ambient and passive ambient). Suitable for your full range of products.



### Age verification

Our lockers come with Yoti's age verification software built-in to create a safe and efficient way of confirming your customers' age in the areas that allow for this technology.



### Built to last

Designed in Scandinavia, our lockers are built to withstand even the toughest weather conditions. The lockers are built with galvanized, stainless steel.



### Customer interaction

Our lockers can come with software to handle all parts of the customer communication. One less problem to worry about.

## Potential Challenges of **Not** using grocery e-lockers:



- Limited Delivery Options
- Time Constraints
- Inconvenience of Store Visits and long queues
- Lack of Contactless Options
- Limited Freshness Assurance



**There are no flyers or loyalty schemes with rewards system?**

We save the consumer money without the gimmicks and rather offer them quality service in an immaculate environment, and they receive excellent prices on a daily basis.

**So is this the end of promotional activity?**

Probably not, but it is the beginning of the end of promotional pressure where price, price, price is the only game in town.

**Is this perhaps an important statement on the lack of confidence by customers that only points or added purchases result in better pricing?**

Not really, but we now offer a valid and decisive alternative, based on the evidence from daily consumer feedback about their preference for convenience, quality and service.

Metaphorically, this commercial policy is identified in the same figurative traits of our sign ... a sun (the Italian word 'Sole') that shines on people's economic resources '365' days a year and thus helps them recover from the challenges caused by inflation, not having to let themselves be seduced by the Spartan flattery of the discounters.

The formula is sustainable, it proves to work, so much so that new supermarket openings are taking place to confirm its validity. It also raises the question whether exporting this same strategy to the areas with a highest per capita income could give even better results, following the different macro-economic conditions and inflationary pressures.



Michele Apuzzo, CEO of AP Commerciale, owner of the Sole 365 brand.

**Is the development focused only in Campania?**

Since the beginning of 2023, three supermarkets have been inaugurated (Nola, Sant'Anastasia and Siano) but several new openings are already planned.

Sant'Anastasia and Nola are two municipalities in the province of Naples (respectively with populations of about 26 000 and 34 000 inhabitants), Siano is instead located in the province of Salerno and has approximately 9 500 people.



Sole 365-Nola ... the starting team, enthusiastic and ready to work.



Above left: The fruit and vegetable department located at the start of the shopping trip is backed up by friendly customer service.

Above right: CX Store Award (established in 2019 by Promotion, a marketing and communication magazine) is an award given to the brand that boasts the largest number of satisfied customers based on the quality-price ratio: 'Sole 365 fruit and vegetables department' won the 2022-23 edition.

Below left: With the principle of "Putting the customer at the centre of everything" as a living policy, all Sole 365 staff are renowned for their friendly service, smiling faces and expert assistance to answer all questions from the shopping public.

Below right: The service counter of the butcher's shop enhances the quality of the meats, with a showcase of cuts and special digital signage for persuasive communication.

Michele Apuzzo, CEO of AP Commerciale (owner of the Sole 365 brand) comments on some issues of a strategic nature, shedding more light on this dynamic and enterprising distribution reality that is starting to stand out in southern Italy.

"To select retail sites, we identify areas that strategically respond to three factors – coverage of the territory, convenience of the shopping experience and accessibility.

"In general, we favour the needs of the local public, considering that most of our customers want to do their shopping close to home, at least after work (near the office), but must be able to experience a moment of pleasant tranquility having everything in our assortment available and accessible parking spaces".

It is undeniable that the success of the shops depends on the position in which they are physically located, but the range of products that are usually offered is no less important ...



“ For us, the choice of local products is central because it responds to very precise purchasing habits of customers, linked to traditions that are rooted in our food culture, in family recipes and in consumer habits that are still the driving force behind the choices of most of the customers themselves. ”

“For each outlet, we identify specific products and producers, known in their local area, to meet the needs of that particular territory. Precisely by virtue of the characterisation we adopt, the percentages on the assortment will vary with respect to the area.

The assortment is guided by the needs of the final consumers: it is they who, with their daily choices, push us to select the most suitable products. “We devote a great deal of attention to the ‘very fresh’ products, which today have a share that is close to 40% of sales.

“In addition to knowing their habits and studying their needs, we know how fresh and very fresh they are crucial for a complete and healthy shopping, so we are very careful to favour local suppliers and to have laboratories in each store that can deal with due care, to prepare the product to put on the tables of our customers”.

What has been said, integrates organically with the rest of the commercial proposal, structured on a historical collaboration:

“Like Sole365, we do not have direct relationships with supplier companies, but we rely on our commercial partner, which is Megamark and the entire Selex buying group. We were born thanks to the partnership with Megamark, which has allowed us to structure ourselves in a streamlined way, focusing on sales and on the development of the model, providing us with its support and its ‘expertise’ in the sector for everything related to purchases and MDD products (private label, meaning over 2 000 Selex branded products)”.

In order to remain genuinely local, ‘localism’ must stand out and consolidate merchandise not too far from the place where it sprouts, in fact the CEO interprets its nature in this way also in relation to the company he has the task of administering ...



Left: In Southern Italy great attention is paid to fish. Almost everywhere it is displayed on counters with sales assistance and the origin is communicated to the shopper.

Below: Delicatessen and Bakery complement each other and the bright colours clearly identify each area for the customer.

their daily peace of mind and the freedom to choose without feeling the pressure of special offers (which inevitably leads to buying products even without actually needing them).

“ For the moment, let’s continue looking to our region for the next openings. We are convinced there is still plenty of room for us in Campania and we intend to continue developing our network here, which has its most vital soul in the territory. After all, each opening creates an induced activity which is an important growth lever for the region, both in terms of recruitment and territorial network. ”

**Continuity in convenience.**

“We had the intuition that the Every Day Low Price model could be a winning idea. And so it was! For us, it is not a mere commercial strategy, but a real philosophy: the belief is that at the heart of our work are the needs of the customers,



“Listening, but above all transparency and trust, come first and all of this translates into concrete actions that make it possible to always keep the sentiment of the customers high.

“Our model is based on total price transparency: the customer knows that he/she has no surprises at the checkout or when shopping even after hours; they will always find the lowest prices compared to the competitors and an assortment that covers all of their most important needs.

Building trust starts from the EDLP model and develops into a communication strategy which, by not offering promotions, discounted offers or collecting points, is entirely oriented towards raising awareness of food culture: it is a concrete commitment that also passes through high-value partnerships, which accompany us to the moment of shopping, the relationship with food and with the territory in a simple and effective way”.

In conclusion, Michele Apuzzo mentions three interesting points of reference, both Italian and foreign, which have provided precious sources of inspiration: “Our ‘muses’ have been the great operators of the EDLP, such as Mercadona in Spain, Colruyt in Belgium and Unes in Italy. We were inspired by them to study the model and then make ourselves independent in building our version.” **SR**



Wine merchandising of the wines, has been laid out by geographical origin and convenience formats.



**Hippo Zourides**, serial entrepreneur and corporate leader, has been involved in the food trade for over four decades and consults to corporates, large, medium and small enterprises on a variety of management and restructuring skills, including the latest ESG requirements.



**Antonello Vilardi**, professional in managing points of sale at numerous commercial signs, editorial collaborator for specialised magazines, consultant and lecturer in university masters. He has written books on large-scale retail trade.

## Who are we?

A trusted source of retail information for over 65 years, our magazine informs and empowers retail business owners to grow whilst tackling current industry topics.

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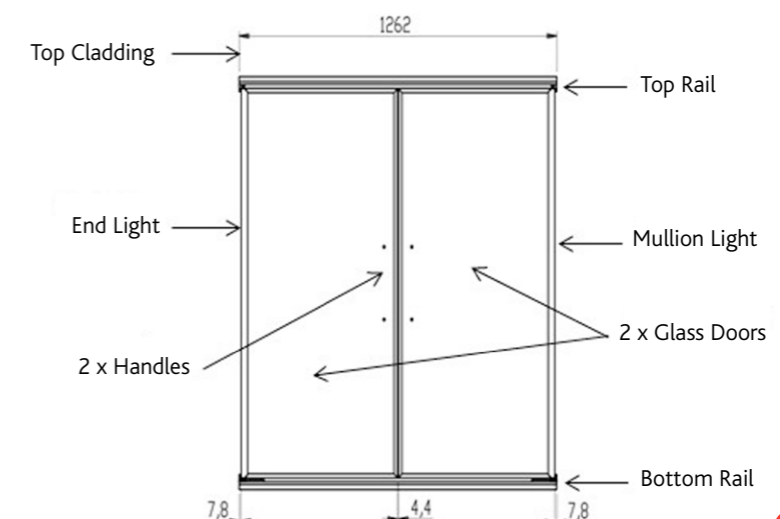
## Close The Case

Designed as a retrofit solution for existing Supermarket display cases, the Glacier Air Shield Glass Doors offer up to a 40% energy saving in an ever-increasing energy cost environment as well as improved cabinet temperatures and product benefits.



## Features and Benefits

- Reduced energy consumption.
- Extended product shelf life.
- Double glazed Argon Gas filled void for superior insulation.
- Optimal product temperatures.
- Spring loaded glass doors.
- Solutions for new cabinets or retrofitted on existing cabinets.
- Less cold air spillage – warmer aisles.
- Optional Mullion LED lights and door hold-open brackets.
- Heated option on our Standard Airshield Doors to suit coastal conditions.
- Integrated (full length) handle option.



## Infinity / Infinity Integrate Glass Doors

The new Infinity Glass Door is designed with edge-to-edge glass and screen print border. This door offers increased visibility and a more modernised look and feel. Glacier has also launched their new Integrated Glass Door which incorporates a full length profiled handle.

### Low Temp Eco Leaf (Energy Saving) Doors Aluminium Frames:

- Heated Door and Architrave
- Natural 15 micron anodized or black textured powder coating (Coating to SABS standards).

#### Glass

- Safety toughened 4mm glass inside and outside standard on all doors. (Toughened to SABS standards).
- All Glass Doors are Argon Gas filled for superior insulation.
- Low temperature doors are fitted with a heated front glass and a clear rear glass, both safety toughened.

### Normal Temp Doors Aluminium Frames:

- Door and heated Architrave
- Natural 15 micron anodized or black textured powder coating (Coating to SABS standards)
- There is a thermal break on the inside of the door frame.
- All architraves are fitted with anti-sweat heaters.

#### Glass

- Safety toughened 4mm glass inside and outside standard on all doors. (Toughened to SABS standards)
- All Glass Doors are Argon Gas filled for superior insulation.
- Normal temperature doors are fitted with Low emission front glass and a clear rear glass, both safety toughened.

#### Lights (LED)

Energy Saving LED 22W, 6000K, LED Light fitted on the inside of the architrave in a closed polycarbonate light diffuser.

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