

By Antonello VILARDI,
adapted by Hippo Zourides

“ The British brand has earned a global reputation, with superior quality products at affordable prices – its model stands out for consistency and considerable attention on private labels. ”

Waitrose Well-being at the centre!

Waitrose's market share in the UK remains below 5% (4.6% to be precise), far below that of giants such as Tesco (27.1%) or Sainsbury's (14.8%). The data analysis company Kantar Group has recently defined these percentages, which includes Waitrose, the supermarket chain based in Bracknell (in Berkshire), founded in 1904, controlled by the John Lewis Partnership Group, with a turnover of around 7 billion pounds (€168 billion).

The workforce operates with pride

Beyond its size, in a landscape complicated by inflation and the consumer crisis in the United Kingdom, what stands out most is the involvement of the employees within the company.

They consider themselves 'owners', as they like to call themselves 'partners,' and aspire to share knowledge and passion for 'quality food' when approaching their customers. In institutional communications, this message is also highlighted ...

“ Welcome to Waitrose. Here, we're more than employees – we're owners. That's why we're called partners. And that's why we all go above and beyond to share our knowledge and passion for quality food with people who matter most – you, our customers. ”



Entrance to Waitrose at the Stratford City Shopping Centre.



Waitrose & Partners, more commonly known as Waitrose, in the sign that stands out on its shops, with its green characters.



Large windows, at the frontline, stimulate the passing shopper's interest in what is available inside.



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Waitrose is effectively controlled by the John Lewis Partnership, which is an employee-owned company.

However it is worth remembering that many chains in Europe, while accentuating their products, prices, services and operating methodologies, also reinforce the overall importance of people.

There is a sort of 'personal matter', which exists and tries to reinvigorate the business, encouraging an ethical depth, which does not seem dissimilar from certain advertising announcements in, say, Italy, such as those of Conad ('people beyond things') or 'you are Coop' (Coop Italia).

In all countries in truth, certain ideal forms, do not disregard the importance of 'people' – that is, those who surpass objects and processes, who transcend 'products', 'services' and 'methodologies' assembled to serve.

We speak more and more often of a 'customer-centric approach', we perfect ourselves in approaching customers by making the essence of the products stand out.

Waitrose, on this crucial point, has built a precise identity, now recognised and appreciated, ready to stand out even at an international level.

What people living in the UK think about Waitrose

Consumers use Waitrose to do selected shopping as they don't go there to do the weekly fillup – in essence, they buy those quality and organic products that are not easily found at Tesco or Sainsbury's.



Customer, carrying out a 'self scanning' operation (ScanPayGo, which can be carried out with the use of the 'my Waitrose' loyalty card).



Checkout station connected to the 'ScanPayGo' self-scanning system.

Waitrose, aspiring to offer better product assortment, has higher prices than the competition and prefers to consolidate relationships with 'wealthy' customers. It is probably no coincidence that one often finds Waitrose outlets in the wealthiest areas.

The brand makes space available for 'niche products', such as a typical Canadian organic honey or Spanish biscuits such as those of Ines Rosales (in 1910, she began to prepare and sell cakes together with other women and, over a hundred years later, she has left a business based on traditional recipes, very attentive to the quality of the ingredients).



ScanPayGo: Area used for picking up equipment for shopping with the 'self scanning' method (if in possession of a loyalty card) ... an activity that simplifies time, reduces queues, increases productivity and contains costs.

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SCAN ME

Our clients include Retail Stores, Hospitality, Repair Shops, Pawn Shops, Hire/Rental/Loan, Beauty Salons, Car Wash.

Some of the headings of the Waitrose Partners benefit programme include:

- Basic pay
- Bonuses (based on the partnership's performance and profits)
- Discounts
- Pension and life assurance
- Holiday and extended leave
- Subsidised meals at work
- Cycle to work
- Support for working families
- Health and overall well-being
- Free time
- Give as you earn
- Travel
- Flexible working
- Equal sharing parenthood
- Parental leave.

The 'customer service' is polite and always available, both in the official reception areas and along the service departments – equally appreciated is the practical impact of digitisation in-store.

The 'Essential Waitrose' brand

The product cornerstones of the private label are eight – meat, chicken, fish, milk, eggs, fruit and vegetables, tea and coffee. All are united by clear provenance information and healthy processing methods.

Beef and lamb are strictly British and come from farmers who share a clear commitment to animal well-being.



Demos and good advice in a number of sales floor locations adds to the customers' product knowledge and encourages trial and purchase.



The welcome message to Waitrose stands out, with reference to their employees who feel they are 'owners' of the company and who are called 'partners'.



BBQ PINEAPPLE PAVLOVA
Waitrose online recipe ideas ...
Mallowy meringue pairs perfectly with charred pineapple and sour passionfruit in this impressive pud, perfect for balmy summer evenings.



Overview of some of the best-selling 'Waitrose Essential' products.



Waitrose Wild Garlic & Herb Lamb Burgers received an award at the @guildofflinefood Great Taste Awards 2023.

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Chicken (fresh, frozen or prepared) which comes from animals reared according to carefully prepared and controlled standards.

Pork (including sausages, bacon and ham) originates from UK farms, where pigs are born outdoors and have plenty of room to roam.

Fish (fresh, canned, frozen or sticks) comes from responsible sources, while fresh fruit and vegetables are grown in an environmentally friendly way.

Tea and coffee are Fairtrade. That is, of certified origin, based on the fair payment of farmers and workers.

Milk is drawn from cows that have spent more than half of the year in open pastures.

Eggs are laid by hens that have been given plenty of room to peck, perch, and move around.

These products have very clear traceability, they spread the name of the brand and its values by being stocked, in addition to supermarkets, at the various Little Waitrose shops on the UK motorway service areas and the **Welcome Break** outlets. The articles are exported to over 50 countries, including destinations as far away from northern Europe as Singapore, Mauritius, Ghana and even at Food Lovers in South Africa.

'Waitrose' branded groceries arrive worldwide as a result of relationships with food and beverage specialists and distributors.



On a hot Bank Holiday weekend, the Waitrose farmer team makes sure the free range pigs keep cool in the heat.



Counter with butcher's service, with reference to the quality of the meat, in respect of animal welfare (Waitrose is the No.1 supermarket for animal welfare).



Packaged cured meats at the self-service perishable line.



BREAKFAST MUFFIN. Waitrose online recipe with homemade muffins, peppery sausage, melted mozzarella, vibrant pesto and their No.1 Longstock Gold Free Range Eggs, these breakfast muffins are worth getting up for.



View of part of the fruit and vegetable display.



The green plastic crates, usually used to build mass displays, lend themselves here to keeping the bulk stable in the gradient exposure of the display counter.

The first overseas store was opened in Dubai in 2008. Now there are 14 stores operating under license in Dubai and Abu Dhabi – a home delivery service was even launched in the United Arab Emirates in 2020 through the website www.waitrose.ae.

The collaboration with Foods of Europe, based in Hampshire, has the aim of exporting Waitrose products to Asian countries (among the most important of which Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and the Philippines stand out).

Thanks to the relationship with Caribbean Trading, Waitrose groceries are stocked by Massy's Supermarkets on many distant islands including Barbados and Trinidad.

The relationship (since 1998) with ParknShop, in Hong Kong and in southern China, makes available typical products such as muesli, candies and canned tomatoes to the Chinese market.

In the partnership with Shell, on the other hand, Waitrose follows the environmental commitment and aspires to install 800 recharging points

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Apples and pears: Even for fruit (loose or packaged), the green plastic crates lend themselves to containing the product, favouring its gradient visibility.



Display counter dedicated to the variety of potatoes (a very popular food in the United Kingdom).



nisable), to implement a good general presentation (with adequate visual appeal and packaging), to prepare different and innovative features to complete the product range already existing on the network.

Waitrose is the largest retailer to sign up to the Organic Potato Pledge. The supermarket will stop the use of copper-based fungicides on its organic fresh potatoes.

for electric vehicles in the areas surrounding some well-placed stores by 2025.

Attention to regional demand trends is exercised through an appreciation of local producers (small as they are sometimes), local variety and the sense of community their products bring to the shops.

The features of Waitrose have been designed to distinguish them from the competition through aspects such as eco-sustainability, the impeccable quality of the raw materials and the correctness of the production processes. In accordance with this, Waitrose specifies that its suppliers, in order to be able to collaborate, have an ongoing obligation to ensure very high standards of preparation, to use quality ingredients (simple and recog-



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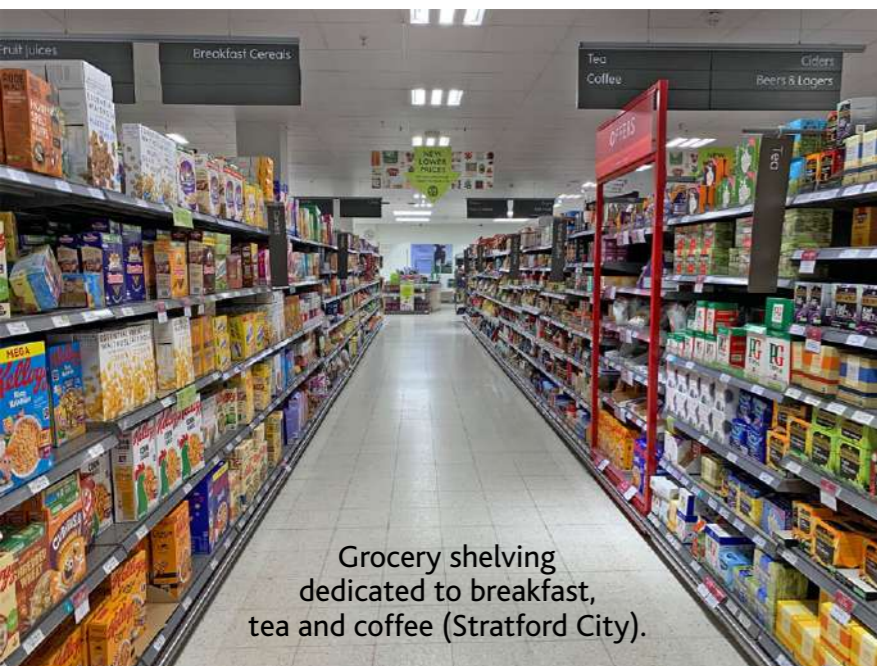
Display of refrigerated products, of Italian origin.



Rich display of foods and beverages of a 'healthy' nature.



Aisle (cleaning aids) dedicated to toilet paper and dishwashing products (Stratford City).



Grocery shelving dedicated to breakfast, tea and coffee (Stratford City).



Display of specialised products, appreciated by Waitrose's target customers, including tofu.



Wine section: In this area, French wines have the greatest visibility, suggesting the prestige that British consumers attribute to them.



Fish market stall (Stratford City).



Area intended for 'sushi' (Stratford City).



Small bread display (Stratford City).



Animal Welfare App

Much has been invested in the brand's image by marketing. Continuous commitments to consistency are undertaken daily in the branches of the network as well as in the operational strategies of the central management.

In particular, what stands out is the way in which technological innovation has been used, not to produce more profit for the immediate future, but to consolidate the simplicity and more reassuring usability of meat.

Corporate marketing has built an identikit on the concept of animal 'well-being', which should be continuously improved. Now a pioneering app has even been tested to measure how farm animals feel. This technology, featured in the BBC's Countryfile, was designed to help understand and recognise how animal behaviour is linked to emotional well-being.

Ultimately, the data will improve their quality of life and raise their standards of well-being.

"Physical health is vital to well-being, but there is a clear consensus in the scientific community that animal well-being is driven by factors such as enjoyment, contentment and positive arousal. They play an equally vital role in ensuring an animal has a good life," says F. Wemelsfelder, lead scientist and researcher at Rural College Scotland, who developed the app.

The scholar adds that, "It is essential to recognise farm animals as sentient creatures capable of experiencing a series of positive emotions and experiences."



The Waitrose Duchy Organic brand was founded by King Charles in 1990 when he was HRH The Prince of Wales, and since the very first Duchy Organic Oaten Biscuits were made from wheats and oats organically grown on the Highgrove Estate some 30 years ago, what has been set in motion since then is an incredible story of food and farming that Waitrose is so proud to be part of. Image credit: Ian Jones/PWCF



Aquaculture on the west coast of Scotland. Wrasse Cleaner fish can live in the pens with Waitrose farmed Atlantic Salmon and help keep them healthy.



Sweetcorn season! Waitrose's long standing supplier, Barfoot Farms, shows us how the harvest is looking ... it's good!



Waitrose Duchy Organic eggs were the first to be sold in a box made from a mixture of rye grass and recycled paper, using 60% less water and 50% less paper pulp than standard.

So welfare evaluators, who visit around 1 800 Waitrose farms, use the first-of-its-kind app to record how animals express their emotions through behaviours such as being relaxed, tense, playful or anxious.



“It’s a huge development for the industry, as it’s the first time a retailer has explored welfare measures based on the concept of an animal’s freedom to express positive emotions” says James Bailey, executive director of Waitrose. The top manager adds ...

“ In some countries, farmed animals continue to be considered as food production systems that need to be managed. This is wrong and in order for the UK to maintain its leading position in animal husbandry standards, it is vital that we recognise farm animals as sentient creatures capable of experiencing a range of positive emotions and experiences. ”

The app (launched in February 2021) has already been awarded at the 2021 BBC ‘Food & Farming Awards’, as winner in the ‘Farming for the Future’ category.

Waitrose is also the holder of the European ‘Best Retailer’ award for ‘Compassion in World Farming’, which it has won three times in a row.

Probably, it is no longer enough to proclaim meticulous attention in the control of the supply chain and spend money to announce (with images, testimonials and posters) how healthy and respectful the products placed on the counters are – everyone does this by now ... the competition, after all, lives on imitation and levels everything (in quality as in prices). Basically, there is no certainty of actual coherence in the publicised processes. To stand out, new, effective, practical ideas are needed, to be progressively consolidated.

How many use technology to experiment with initiatives aimed at achieving truly healthy and environmentally friendly purposes (including animals), guarantors of absolute levels of quality and ethical products? In this question, Waitrose is today ahead of the race.



Innovative Farmers is a network of farmers, advisors, researchers and businesses working together on finding solutions that work with nature. It is part of the Duchy Future Farming Programme, which Waitrose co-founded with the Soil Association, and is funded by the Prince of Wales’s Charitable Fund.



On David Homer’s farm in Wiltshire, the cows graze on lush, green grass, lying down to chew the cud and, from time to time, lift their tails to help David out with a supply of fertiliser. ‘Back in 2016, David’s cows featured in a television advert for Waitrose, highlighting their grazing promise. “We keep an eye on the weather and the ground conditions, and how much grass is available, but they’re usually outside by the beginning of March,” says David. “They’ll graze through the summer into the autumn, and we won’t bring them indoors until it gets cold and wet, around the first week of November.”



As well as plenty of cows there are also two sunflower paddocks. Not only do these look beautiful but they help to increase biodiversity on the farm and provide a habitat for plenty of nature.

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In fruit and vegetables, a dramatised corner dedicated to flowers (Stratford City).

Pot plants: Floral theatre encourages impulse sales.



Sometimes, all it takes is a random act of kindness to bring sunshine to someone's day. With some quick thinking, Tom and Cathy from Waitrose Sandbach were able to stop their flowers from going to waste by hand-delivering them to residents and staff at local care homes. The blooms may have been on their sell-by date but, while they couldn't be sold any more, the beautiful bouquets could still brighten everyone's day!



Waitrose farmers grow a special variety of tomatoes that stay green when they are ripe and sweet.



Harry Hall, with dog Cora, supplies Waitrose with seasonal strawberries, raspberries and blueberries on his LEAF-certified farms.

Several years ago, Hall Hunter farms had trouble pollinating their blueberries because they relied too heavily on a honeybee population that didn't become active until at least the end of May – or later if the weather was cool.

Harry came up with a detailed plan to encourage better natural pollination, including introducing bumblebee colonies that would help pollinate before the honeybees took over. Not only do bumblebees start earlier in the season, they work industriously long days, starting earlier and finishing later than honeybees.

Hives were placed in the middle of blueberry crops, and the volumes of bumblebees were adjusted according to the point in the season and the weather. It has proved to be a natural and mutually beneficial arrangement for both farmer and bees.





**Waitrose
FOUNDATION**
Southern Africa

can contribute positively towards the future of food and farming, building more resilient supply chains, enabling progressive global development and better lives for people.

The Waitrose Foundation is aimed at improving lives and transforming communities around the world. Since the Foundation was established in 2005, Waitrose, along with its importer, exporter and grower partners have invested to improve lives in farming communities across South Africa, Ghana and Kenya. Key to the success is the proactive involvement of these partners in shaping the activities and direction of the Foundation. Working together



Waitrose Foundation celebrates Cami successes at Groep 91 / Kaross Foundation, November 2022. Sharing from their post on Facebook: "Our first ever prize-giving for Cami learners! Jack Malungana, the Cami manager at Vhulakanjhani Primary school, evaluated learners in Gr 3, 4 and 5 to determine those who achieved the highest score and showed the best improvement."



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.



The Waitrose Foundation-SA congratulates grower partner Auldearn Farm on being 55 years young! Wishing the whole team only the best for the way forward.



An example of how skills training and entrepreneurial education have very positive outcomes, with a sustainable business model, is at Groep 91 Uitvoer in the Letsitele region of the Limpopo Province. This family-owned citrus producer's

Kaross Foundation is responsible for the comprehensive management of social development projects related to their businesses and its community. With regards to creative outlets, it has become designer and producer of world class hand embroidered textiles. An inspiring team of entrepreneurs in action!



In August, a two day training course was held at Goudini Spa, near Rawsonville, presented by Waitrose Foundation CEO, Kobus Visagie. This is a programme rolled out in various regions across Southern Africa, for the benefit of Waitrose grower partners and specifically focused on management skills for line managers. The programme content includes ...

The Line Managers' role in People Management; Line Managers and their Worker Communities; Developing one's own Management Style; Motivation; Productivity; Job Design; Managing the Job Environment of Subordinates; Managing their Job Content; Management by Objective; Job Satisfaction; Performance Management; Management of Underperformance; and Leadership vs Management.

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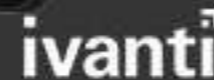
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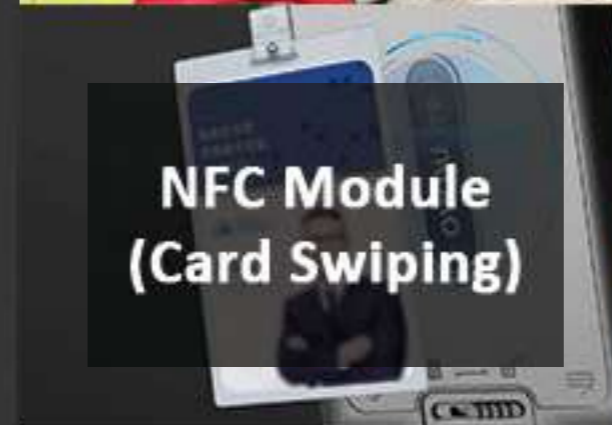
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