

Spotlight on digital trends in retail

What role does the lighting play when food retailers who are willing to experiment break new ground? The shopping experience, digitalisation and sustainability are buzzwords for two retail projects where BÄRO technology puts the spotlight on the latest trends.

Food retailers have generally been very fortunate. While other retail sectors suffered losses during the Covid-19 pandemic, supermarket sales rose steeply. But keen observers have noticed that times are also changing here: although the share of online sales in the grocery sector was still a low single-digit figure in 2021, it has more than doubled since 2019 – and delivery services such as Flink, Gorillas and Getir are an increasingly common sight in cities. Farsighted retailers are therefore putting a lot of thought into the future of bricks-and-mortar retail and developing concepts to ensure that supermarkets remain attractive places for customers to shop. Megatrends that have been around for some time are being manifested in specific projects. For example, the trend to convey added value to retail customers over and above the actual products through experiences. The demand for contactless payment methods induced by Covid-19 is just one aspect of the huge increase in digitalisation being seen in retail: even in 2019 two thirds of retailers reported that they were increasing their IT budgets (Source: EHI). And the topic of sustainability has now moved from the eco and organic niche to mainstream society. Quality of experience, sustainability, digitalisation: three aspects of retail concepts where lighting can make a specific and relevant contribution – as demonstrated by two practical examples of innovative shop concepts.

"kUEchenwerk" event area, EDEKA Ueltzhöfer, Heilbronn-Sontheim: Creating special experiences with smart light

Time and again, individual member companies of Germany's major retail associations stand out as particularly innovative. EDEKA Ueltzhöfer from Heilbronn is one such example. In 2019 owner Steffen Ueltzhöfer won the nationwide EDEKA Supercup in the category "Independent retailer over 2,000 square metres". The successful businessman's latest retail venture is the modern event location "kUEchenwerk" at the headquarters in Sontheim. Describing the concept, Ueltzhöfer says "kUEchenwerk is the centre and the expression of our food philosophy, a place where people come together and a forum for exchange. The focus is on communicating our values." In addition, the company uses the premises as a kitchen for experimentation and production of its own brands made from regional products.

Scene change via an app and Bluetooth Low Energy

On the upper floor of the supermarket on an area of around 100 m² there is a state-of-the-art, open kitchen, a well-stocked bar and a large rustic table for communal dining. And the change of scene from concentrated food preparation to relaxed enjoyment is effortless at the touch of a tablet or smartphone as BÄRO has equipped the room's suspended track system with Bluetooth Low Energy-enabled Ontero IC spotlights. They can be individually controlled and networked wirelessly via the Casambi app. This digital technology enables the lighting atmosphere to be adapted and varied to meet the requirements of different events – quickly and easily: from cooking classes, theme nights and tastings to dialogue with producers and training sessions.

Vertical light defines the room

The warm white light colour 830 used throughout is the creative template for the various components of the lighting concept. Groups of Ontero IC spotlights illuminate the kitchen block and the large table, while wallwashers from the same design line accentuate the boundaries of the room with vertical light. Individual dimming of the luminaire groups change the character and atmosphere of the room and put the focus on the different activities such as cooking or eating. The directional light shows the materials such as the light wood of the furniture or the bar in a natural stone look to best advantage. The black tracks and spotlights are unobtrusive on the black ceiling and with their clear design language they blend into the modern interior design of the event location.

Digital mini-market tegut... teo, Fulda: All the essentials – fresh and sustainable

With "teo", the "first digital and sustainable mini-market" according to the operator tegut..., the supermarket chain is taking a completely new approach. A scalable answer to the question of how bricks-and-mortar stores can move closer to their customers again – even in places where larger stores would not pay off. The concept has won several awards since it was launched in November 2020 on Lindenstrasse in the city of Fulda. Thanks to digital sales technology, teo is open around the clock and with more than 900 products on 50 square metres it is well stocked. Self-scanning checkouts and the specially developed "tegut... teo" app enable simple payment: teo is designed to meet the needs of today's society.

Modular and variable

BÄRO developed a comprehensive lighting concept for the prototype in Fulda and further teo sites comprising accentuating product lighting, indirect cove lighting and exterior lighting – like the entire concept with a focus on sustainability. The modular supporting structure made of domestically grown wood features a green planted roof and the transportable body can be erected in just a day. The staggered, variable product displays and the clear arrangement give customers a good and quick overview of all the products on display – aspects supported and emphasised by the lighting concept.

Light colours differentiate the room

Two tracks run parallel through the segmented interior. They carry white Ontero IC spotlights with a beam angle of 25° to accentuate the products. The main room is illuminated with the warm, colour-intensifying "PearlWhite" LED spectrum, while the separate, transparent walk-in cooler is illuminated by "BeColor", which also intensifies

colours but has a cooler effect. The spotlights have a connected wattage of just 23W. They are supplemented by warm cove lighting above the wall shelving, coordinated with the wooden surfaces. As a final touch, when the store had been completed and fully stocked, BÄRO technicians carefully focused the spotlights. Services like this and the expertise they entail are not taken for granted and are highly valued by clients in the food retail industry.

Outlook: The future is networked

Both projects show how the right lighting literally makes new retail concepts visible and creates a truly sensory experience. Intelligently deployed, energy efficient LED technology makes an important contribution to sustainability. Furthermore, thanks to wireless interfaces, lighting systems are increasingly closely networked with digital building services and the merchandise management systems used in the retail industry. Systems where luminaires become part of the communication infrastructure in supermarkets and carriers of sensor technology have already been presented by BÄRO at trade fairs and are on the verge of a market breakthrough. They will enable complex scenarios to be realised with elements such as dashboards, heat maps, remote monitoring and predictive maintenance. This gives innovative retailers both the technology and the design tools to continue offering their customers an attractive and emotionally appealing shopping experience in retail stores in future.

About BÄRO

BÄRO is a leading specialist in the fields of retail lighting and clean air technologies with global operations. The medium-sized family business based in Leichlingen is managed by the married couple Dr Sandra von Möller and J. Manuel von Möller. With the slogan "Fresh Light for Fresh Products" BÄRO offers professional lighting solutions for all formats in the retail world. Furthermore, in 1994 BÄRO launched its Clean Air Technologies division and offers integrated solutions for the restaurant and catering industry, canteens and the food industry. The careful use of energy and social responsibility are important to BÄRO here. As a signatory of the "Diversity Charter" the company is committed to diversity and cultivates a culture of respect for every individual. In addition, BÄRO supports the charity KIDsmiling that was founded in 2003 as a private initiative by Dr Sandra von Möller to help socially disadvantaged children.

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BÄRO

Retail
Lighting

Spotlight on digital trends in retail: Eventlocation "kUEEchenwerk" and "tegut... teo", Photos: BÄRO



01: On the upper floor of his EDEKA supermarket in Heilbronn-Sontheim, Steffen Ueltzhöfer has created the "kUEEchenwerk" event location.



02a, 02b, 02c: The atmosphere of the room can be changed with individual switching and dimming of the luminaire groups and the focus can be directed to the different activities such as cooking or eating.



03: An effortless change of scene – for example from concentrated food preparation to relaxed enjoyment at the touch of a tablet or smartphone.



04: The innovative concept of "tegut... teo" is also expressed in the holistic design of the exterior and interior lighting.



05: The glazed end faces offer a look inside the illuminated interior.



06: The interior lighting consists of two components: warm cove lighting above the product shelves and the actual product lighting with Ontero IC spotlights.

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07: The main room is illuminated with the warm, colour-intensifying "PearlWhite" LED spectrum, while the walk-in cooler separated by a glass wall is illuminated with "BeColor", which also intensifies colours yet appears cooler with a correlated colour temperature of 3,500 K.



08: The iconic and organic architecture makes "tegut... teo" personal and sustainable. Additional services such as a tool station for cyclists enhance the premises.