

LOOKING OUT FOR BUSINESS

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RAN Retail Association of Nevada

NEVADA NEWS

THE HEART AND SOUL OF NEVADA'S ECONOMY

By Mary Lau, RAN CEO

NEVADA'S RETAILERS ARE OFTEN RECOGNIZED AS THE TRUE ECONOMIC

engine of our State. Obviously, Gaming gets most of the credit as a single industry generating 17.4 percent of our revenues and the mining industry generated 5 percent. Not all gaming are strip properties, local smaller properties are vital too, and are often discounted.

There are a couple of other line items that contributes to the General Fund revenue, but the retail segment of our economy generates 29.0 percent of our general fund budget. The federal government contributes 33.9 percent to the overall budgeted with a few other items as well. It should be highlighted that the amount of sales and use tax the State retains is only 2 percent. The other part collected is used by schools and designated local options. These percentages were from the 2018 Economic Forum. If one is curious the Guinn Center has an excellent summary on the web. https://guinncenter.org/photo-essay/nevada-budget-overview-2019-2021/.

In 2015 the Nevada Legislature passed Governor Sandoval's bill (SB483) and created the Commerce



Mary Lau

Tax, which now represents 4.9 percent of General Fund income and retailers were included in that bill with a \$4 million threshold before taxes due and .0111% of gross revenue tax rate over that amount. In determining how retail was defined Governor Sandoval used the NAICS code categories, which are included in Sector 44-45 Retail Trade. These categories cover 66 different business "types". (North American Industry Classification System)

Now, that's where this gets interesting. Quick and dirty version — if you collect sales tax, you are a retailer. But that doesn't mean that all retailers within those industrial codes are cut from the same cloth. Yes, we all are familiar with the Amazon, Walmart's, and Target

stores along with Smith's, Whole Foods, etc., but when you think retail, you should also think of your local small business retailers that are within our own communities and neighborhoods. How many small business retailers come to mind with just that thought? Examples would be local RV dealers, convenience store owners, fast food franchisees, motorcycle shops, floor covering stores, furniture stores, window treatment, small general merchandise and hardware in rural areas, florists, gift and novelty, pet supplies, art dealers, cannabis retailers,

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# ORGANIZED RETAIL CRIME HARMS SMALL BUSINESS

By Bryan Wachter

**WHILE WE ALL KNOW NEVADA HAS A LONG**

history with organized crime, it's not something in the past; today's Nevada gangsters aren't Busby Segal with a machine gun and pin-stripe suite, they are in the business of product theft, fraudulent returns and cheap knockoffs putting our families and our small businesses at risk.

Organized retail crime (ORC) differs from shoplifting because it is organized. According to the Loss Prevention Foundation, ORC "involves the association of two or more persons engaged in illegally obtaining retail merchandise in substantial quantities through

both theft and fraud as part of an unlawful commercial enterprise."

So how does it work? Typically, these shoplifting teams are made up of several people. There is an organizer who is making sure there is a place to sell the stolen goods, often through an intermediary, called a "fence". There may be several people in the store, looking out for security or asking employees questions to move them away from the targeted products. Finally, you have the person taking the product and passing it to a mule who gets it to the vehicle.

ORC is a growing threat in our state because these criminals are exploiting the current



Bryan Wachter

laws that were written to address shoplifting and do not adequately cover the scope of ORC or penalize the extent of the crime. The first problem is that not all participants in ORC are committing shoplifting, making it difficult to build a case against those planning the theft and distributing the stolen property. Second, there is a growing national trend to make felony prosecutions of shoplifting more difficult, in turn, opening the door for ORC to commit higher dollar thefts without increasing sentences.

As the stakes are lowered for criminals committing crimes against retail businesses, the frequency of these crimes only stands to increase. Businesses will have no choice

but to increase prices to stay open, negatively impacting the wellbeing of our communities and force some hard-working local stores to close their doors.

It's easy to pretend organized crime is a problem of the past or that it only impacts the biggest businesses, but that's not true. Criminals are looking for the easiest ways to accomplish their crimes, and our small, local businesses are their targets. Why would they steal product from businesses with cameras and security guards when they can target a shop with one employee juggling all the roles? Why would they target a cargo container when they can simply pick up a delivery left on a doorstep?

Nevada has a long history with organized crime, so this shouldn't come as any surprise that it's still alive and well, but instead of taking place in smoke-filled casinos, it's targeting small business, the backbone of America and Nevada's workforce and economy. ■





# HEALTH CARE COST AND CONCERNS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

By Liz MacMenamin

## I WAS ASTONDED WHEN LOOKING INTO THE CHALLENGES

small businesses face when providing healthcare benefits to their employees. Many employers offer health insurance as one of the benefits of employment — and its noteworthy that the employee receives the benefits tax free.

This system of employer provided health insurance has been

Employers are having to re-evaluate and modify their roles as providers of employee health care benefits in response to the inflated cost of health care.

Most small employers still want to provide these health care benefits for employees but are having to ask the employee to take more responsibility for maintaining and improving their health while at the same time contributing more to the cost of their coverage.



Liz MacMenamin

costs by offering new hires reduced benefits, increasing the cost sharing of current participants, and utilizing vendors that can pool risks or reduce costs.

When an employer is implementing new measures in health care cost containment the key to being successful is to communicate clearly with your employees. This communication should be ongoing and not just upon renewal.

Small business owners are now offering more consumer directed health plans. These programs require some effort from the employees to become better stewards of their health care consumerism. As well, these plans require healthier choices on the

employees' part by offering education and wellness programs in which they can participate in, thereby taking more responsibility over their own health care decisions. The employee then needs to be engaged and encouraged to make good health-conscious choices to produce optimal savings.

Information regarding health care programs for small businesses is available, and the choices are many. However, the small business owner is busy just trying to keep their business viable during pandemic times and doing this type of research, as I found out, is time consuming and daunting.

Many chambers of commerce are now offering health insurance programs to assist the small business owners by doing research for them.

I would recommend reaching out to your association or chamber if you are looking for directions in obtaining a cost-effective policy for your employees. ■



utilized for many years. However, with economic changes in recent years, this system has become unsustainable for many small employers.

There are many approaches available to a small business owner today. Small business owners have attempted to contain health care



# KNOWING WHAT PEOPLE WANT AND HOW MUCH THEY WILL PAY IS THE SECRET SAUCE

By Andy Peterson

## EVERY BUSINESS HAS CHALLENGES. SOME BELIEVE

small businesses have more difficult challenges than big businesses. In some ways this might be true. However, their challenges are similar though they may vary in size. The biggest challenge facing any business — large or small — is to know what the customer wants and what he or she will pay for it. Once that equation is figured out — and at times it can be a moving target — the rest is seemingly easy whether one owns and operates a large or small business.

To be sure, large established businesses are further down the path to success. They have specialized employees who attend to purchasing, marketing, logistics

and so forth. Witness Target, Walmart, Lowes, Home Depot, or even Amazon. They've figured out the desire/cost paradigm and have capitalized upon it as they've grown into brands we know and embrace. A few have gone further and figured out online algorithms which have buttressed their market share. One would be hard pressed to argue these retailers didn't know what customers want and what they might pay in order to attain it.

While it seems large retailers' control most of the market, the reality is that many small retailers have figured out the desire and cost paradigm as well. Many are making a living and employing people. We tend to overlook these businesses due to the fact they rarely advertise on traditional



Andy Peterson

media channels where we see larger businesses build their brands, inspire people to shop at their stores, and work to maintain market share. Yet smaller retailers are critical to our everyday lives. They provide us with many of the goods and services we utilize day in and day out. If one reflects upon where we frequently do

business it becomes much clearer that we likely frequent more small businesses than we do large ones. Auto repair, restaurants, dentists, insurance agents, garden centers are just a few of the thousands of small retailers we do business with each and every day. Many, while seemingly less sophisticated than larger organizations, have figured out the desire/cost paradigm and know what people want and what they will pay to get it.

Discovering the secret sauce — the desire/cost paradigm which is unique to each business — often times remains elusive to the non-business owner or operator. But we can all be thankful that business owners and operators whether large or small have figured it out on our behalf. ■

## HEART AND SOUL *Continued from page 1*

restaurants, ice cream shops, well — you get the picture.

These brave entrepreneurs most often invest their life savings, mortgage their own assets (including homes) and take out loans to create a business that will sustain itself, grow and provide security for themselves and their families. These aren't "Comers," these

are the up before dawn and last to leave people. They also employ others and struggle to provide fair wages, benefits and consideration for their own employees. Quite often, those employees become like family even if there is no "after hours" socializing. They do all of this while having to jump through legislative, regulatory,

bureaucratic and mandate hoops.

I myself am a partner in a small business and am constantly amazed at what our managing partner is required to know, do and develop. She's amazing. Elected officials just don't seem to get it. They look for bright shiny objects and contributions not at core values.

Look around and really absorb how many small businesses there are. Look at what the 2% accomplishes for the State of Nevada and the other amounts for your local school and governments. Small business makes big differences in our Nevada way of life.

Thank you for your hard work and risk taking. ■



# RETAIL CARGO EXPECTED TO SET RECORD IN AUGUST AS MERCHANTS MOVE FROM BACK-TO-SCHOOL TO HOLIDAY PREPARATION

## NRF

**I**MPORTS AT THE NATION'S LARGEST RETAIL CONTAINER PORTS SHOULD hit yet another record in August as consumer demand continues to stretch supply chains and retailers shift from the back-to-school season to the peak shipping season for winter holiday merchandise, according to the monthly Global Port Tracker report released today by the National Retail Federation and Hackett Associates.

"Back-to-school supplies have been hit by the same supply chain disruptions and port congestion that have affected other products this year, but retailers are working hard to ensure that school and college goods are where they need to be," NRF Vice President for Supply Chain and Customs Policy Jonathan Gold said. "Strong consumer demand has outpaced supply chain operations since late last year and could remain a challenge as the holidays approach. The continuing lack of labor, equipment and capacity has highlighted systemic issues and the need to create a truly

21st century supply chain to ensure resiliency against the next major disruption. Passage of infrastructure legislation currently pending in Congress is a key step in that direction. We need continued focus by the administration to help address these issues as well." "The strain of the continuing economic expansion is putting considerable pressure on the logistics supply chain," Hackett Associates Founder Ben Hackett said. "We're seeing a lack of shipping capacity combined with port congestion as vessels line up to discharge goods from both Asia and Europe. Delays are stretching to landside as port terminals struggle with space shortages, and labor challenges are affecting ports, railroads and trucking companies alike. This part of the recovery is not a pretty sight."

U.S. ports covered by Global Port Tracker handled 2.15 million Twenty-Foot Equivalent Units in June, the latest month for which final numbers are available. That was down 7.8 percent from May but up 33.7 percent from a year earlier, when many stores were closed because of the pandemic. A TEU is one 20-foot container or its equivalent. Ports have not reported July numbers yet, but Global Port Tracker projected the month at 2.22 million TEU, which would be up 15.7 percent from the same time last year. August is forecast at 2.37 million TEU, which would be up 12.6 percent year-over-year and top May's 2.33 million TEU for the largest number of containers

imported during a single month since NRF began tracking imports in 2002. August is the beginning of the "peak season" when retailers stock up on holiday merchandise each year. Many retailers are moving up their shipments this year as part of their risk mitigation strategies to ensure that sufficient inventory will be available during the holidays. September is forecast at 2.21 million TEU, up 4.9 percent year-over-year; October at 2.15 million TEU, down 3 percent for the first year-over-year decline since July 2020; November at 2.07 million TEU, down 1.5 percent, and December at 2.02 million TEU, down 4.1 percent. The first half of 2021 totaled 12.8 million TEU, up 35.6 percent from the same period last year. For the full year, 2021 is on track to total 25.9 million TEU, up 17.5 percent over 2020 and a new annual record topping last year's 22 million. Cargo imports during 2020 were up 1.9 percent over 2019 despite the pandemic. ■





# Nevada Notes

## LAS VEGAS HOME TO OPTUM FRONTIER THERAPIES

Welcome to Nevada: Las Vegas is now home to Optum Frontier Therapies, a specialty pharmacy dedicated to treating people with rare diseases. The new headquarters and flagship location is located at 6425 Santa Margarita Street in Las Vegas. The company opened a state-of-the-art pharmacy that will be serving patients in all 50 states with rare disease conditions.

The facility will provide customized pharmacy and patient services distributing and dispensing specialty medications for the 30 million people (about the population of Texas) in the United States that are affected by a rare disease. This company also has a second specialty care facility in Flint, Michigan.

*Drug Store News*

## STATE REFUNDS UNCONSTITUTIONAL TAX

Nevada has issued an initial round of

refunds totaling \$30.6 million to business taxpayers after a Supreme Court ruling in May that found a tax bill passed by the 2019 Legislature was unconstitutional.

The total, which includes court-ordered interest, was disbursed to 22,621 taxpayers who overpaid the state's modified business tax based on an extension of the tax lawmakers approved in 2019. The refunds cover the period from July 2019, when the extension took effect, through March 31.

Another round of refunds is scheduled to be issued in September, the state Department of Taxation said in an advisory notice on Tuesday.

*Editor's Note: RAN participated in the lawsuit challenging the tax.*

*LVRJ*

## LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MARSHALL RESIGNED

Nevada Lieutenant Governor Kate Marshall will be stepping down from her position to accept a job in the Biden administration as the White House's senior

advisor to governors.

Marshall is a first term Lieutenant Governor and previously a two-term state treasurer.

She also ran unsuccessfully for Congressional District 2 in 2011.

Under Nevada law, the Lieutenant Governor's office could remain vacant, or Governor Steve Sisolak could appoint a replacement, something that he may do prior to calling an anticipated special session this fall.

While numerous names have been floated as a replacement, no decision has been made yet from the Governor's office.

*MacDonald Carano*

## GOVERNOR SISOLAK NAMES YVANNA CANCELA CHIEF OF STAFF

Governor Steve Sisolak named Yvanna Cancela as his new chief of staff, replacing Michelle White, who has served as chief of staff since the beginning of his administration in January 2019.

Cancela, 33, a former Nevada State Senator, will join Governor

Sisolak's administration on September 1, 2021.

As previously announced, Chief of Staff White will stay on for a period of time to ensure a smooth transition, and will conclude her service in mid-September.

Cancela returns to Nevada after serving as Principal Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services. Prior to serving at the federal level, she represented District 10 in the Nevada State Senate from 2017 to January 2021, becoming the first Latina to serve in the Nevada Senate.

Before joining the Legislature, Cancela was political director for the Culinary Union, representing tens of thousands of hospitality workers across the state of Nevada.

Cancela was born and raised in Miami, Florida. She holds a bachelors degree in communications from Northwestern University and recently earned her Juris Doctor from UNLV's Boyd School of Law.

*Governor Sisolak Website*



# National Notes

## 15 FASTEST GROWING E-COMMERCE RETAILERS IN 2021

Here are the top 10 U.S. companies with the biggest growth in e-commerce sales growth, as ranked by eMarketer:

- Walmart--26.4%
- Amazon--24.9%
- Wayfair--19.4%
- The Home Depot--18%
- Kroger--14.1%
- Macy's--13%
- Target--12.5%
- Lowe's--12.1%

*Chain Store Age*

## WALMART: NEW PREMIUM PRIVATE LABEL WINES

Walmart has launched a series of premium wines under its Winemakers Selection private label, Jason Fremstad. The Winemakers Selection Reserve series features five wine varietals sourced from around the world, including an Argentinian Malbec, Italian Pinot Grigio and French Rosé, for \$10 a bottle. This as grocers are trying to gain digital market share. The Winemakers Selection Reserve Series is available at stores across the U.S. and can be ordered for grocery pickup or delivery where allowed by local and state regulations.

*Grocery Dive*

## WALMART LAUNCHES EVERY DAY HEROES

Walmart launches efforts to celebrate everyday heroes, and this includes Walmart associates who serve the community day in and day out. This in the face of a worldwide pandemic in which associates served the public through the ups and downs of the crisis. Bentonville, Ark.-based Walmart operates more than 10,500 stores under 48 banners in 24 countries, and e-commerce websites, employing 2.2 million-plus associates worldwide.

*Chain Store Age*

## CONSUMERS LIKELY TO RETURN TO PRE-PANDEMIC BACK-TO-SCHOOL SHOPPING

Consumers show signs of returning to stores for back-to-school shopping. This according to the third annual U.S. Back-to-School Consumer Sentiment Survey from Sensormatic Solutions, part of Johnson Controls, three-quarters (76%) of consumers plan to shop in-store this year. The survey reveals a return to pre-pandemic shopping habits for the 2021 back-to-school season.

Seventy-four percent of respondents expect their children to return to fully in-person classes this year. As a result, 34%

plan to start their back-to-school shopping (both in-stores and online) in July, compared to only 17% of consumers in 2020 and 39% of consumers in 2019.

*Chain Store Age*

## WALMART PAYS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Walmart will cover 100% of college tuition and book costs for part-time and full-time associates.

Previously, associates who participated in Walmart's Live Better U (LBU) education program paid \$1 per day to participate in the program. All and still, Walmart is using the move to attract and retain employees and as a means to provide associates a path to increased opportunities.

Associates can seek degrees and certificates in business administration, supply chain and cybersecurity.

Institutions participating in the program are: Johnson & Wales University, the University of Arizona, the University of Denver, Brandman University, Penn Foster, Purdue University Global, Southern New Hampshire University, Wilmington University and tech skills-focused online education provider Pathstream, and ESL training platform Voxy EnGen.

*Chain Store Age*

## HOME DEPOT INVESTS IN GREEN ENERGY

Home Depot aims to dramatically reduce its carbon emissions and has set a goal to reach 100% renewable electricity for its facilities by 2030, as it works to extend its efforts to improve the environment through cleaner energy.

The Home Depot's renewable energy goal was released in its 2021 Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) report, which details the company's environmental, social and governance initiatives and progress made in 2020.

Electricity use in Home Depot's U.S. stores fell more than 14% last year due to the installation of LED lighting, the use of building-automation systems and the addition of energy-efficient heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems.

*Chain Store Age*

## WALMART OFFERS TECH TO HELP OTHER RETAIL BUSINESSES

Walmart will begin providing some of its own technologies to other businesses and brands seeking to better serve customers as they shop more often at both digital and in-person.

Walmart has teamed with Adobe to integrate

*Continued on page 11*



# ELECTION ISSUES AND RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYERS

By Josh Hicks and Lindsay Knox



Government Affairs & Advocacy Group

## RECENT ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN MORE

divisive than ever. Nonetheless, casting a ballot is one of the greatest responsibilities we have as Americans. The results of elections shape our future and can have significant impacts on our families, health, and economy.

Employers have a unique opportunity to encourage employee participation in the election process.

Some employees may not know how to register or the options available to them to cast a ballot. Some employers may have concerns about how to communicate election related information to employees. This article is intended to provide employers with some basic information and resources on both issues.

### Registering to Vote

Nevadans interested in voting in the primary or general elections 2022 have several options to register to vote. To participate in the primary

election on June 14, 2022, voters can register by mail or in person by May 17, 2022, or online by June 9, 2022.

To participate in the general election on November 8, 2022, voters can register by mail or in person by October 11, 2022, or online by November 3, 2022.

Voters can choose to affiliate with an established political party or register as a non-partisan. Registered voters can change their party affiliation or non-affiliation and update their voter information through the Nevada Secretary of State's website.

Voters can register on the same day they vote in certain circumstances. Those voters must register and vote in person at a polling place and must present a Nevada issued driver's license or identification card displaying a Nevada residential address.

To be eligible to vote, a person must be a U.S. citizen, be at least 18 years old by election day, be a resident of Nevada for at least 30



Josh Hicks

days before election day, not be imprisoned for a felony, and not have been declared mentally incompetent by a court of law.

Voters with felony convictions have their right to vote restored automatically upon release from prison, even if serving parole or probation.

Unregistered Nevadans who transact business at the DMV are automatically registered to vote unless they affirmatively opt-out.

To register online, or for further information on registration options, please visit <https://www.nvsos.gov/sos/elections/voters>.

### Casting a Ballot

Nevadans have three



Lindsay Knox

ways to vote in an election. All active voters (i.e. voters for whom the registrar or county clerk has verified a correct mailing address) will be sent a mail ballot and can submit their ballot via mail or at a designated drop box. Voters can also direct that their mail ballot be prepared and submitted by another person.

Voters also have the option to cast a ballot in person, either on election day or during early voting. Early voting sites are established at various locations throughout the state in the 14-day period prior to election day. On election day, voters may cast a ballot at a polling place of their choice.

Continued on next page





# BACK-TO-SCHOOL SPENDING TO SURPASS \$481 MILLION STATEWIDE

## RAN

### STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE HEADING TO STORES TO

prepare for the new school year. The Retail Association of Nevada (RAN) estimates that back-to-school shoppers will spend \$481.4 million on clothes, backpacks and school supplies for the upcoming year.

Back-to-school shopping is one of the biggest retail periods of the year, second only to the winter holidays.

Clark County and

Washoe County schools started on August 9 and most colleges, including the University of Nevada campuses in Reno and Las Vegas and the College of Southern Nevada started on August 23.

RAN projects \$337.8 million will be spent shopping for K-12 students, up 8.9 % from last year.

Electronics are expected to be the largest spending category at \$116.2 million. Spending on clothing and accessories is projected to be second at \$99.6

million, followed by shoes (\$63.3 million) and school supplies (\$54.5 million).

Nationally, families with students in grades K-12 will spend \$37.1 billion, according to a recent survey by the National Retail Federation (NRF), with average spending per household expected to be \$848.90, up from \$789.49 last year.

“Both brick-and-mortar and online retailers stocked up and were ready for the influx of

back-to-school shoppers,” said Bryan Wachter, Senior Vice President of RAN. “We expected to see elevated spending levels as much of the usual shopping activity was not necessary during last year’s virtual school setup. Students were also excited for the

*Continued on page 11*



## ELECTION ISSUES AND RESOURCES

*Continued from previous page*

### Communicating With Employees

#### Do:

● **Provide election information to employees:** If employees are not registered, let them know their registration options for the primary and general election.

● **Invite candidates into the workplace to meet with employees:** Providing employees with the opportunity to meet candidates from the local, state, and federal level allows them to ask questions and develop their own opinions.

● **Provide employees time off to vote:** Employers are required to provide paid time off for employees to vote. Employees must give at least one day notice to an employer if they want paid time off to vote.

● **Encourage employees to become educated on the issues and candidates:** Many trade associations, including RAN, produce candidate and issue guides that can be a useful resource to voters.

● **Remind employees to vote:** Demonstrate the employer’s commitment to the electoral process by

reminding employees to vote.

#### Don't:

● **Pressure employees to vote a certain way:** Allow employees to make their own decision.

● **Promise something of value for a vote:** Nevada prohibits direct or indirect attempts to provide something of value to a voter in an effort to get their vote or discourage them from voting.

● **Ask employees to make financial contributions to candidates or promise an employee**

● **reimbursement for their political contributions:** Nevada prohibits “conduit” contributions, which are contributions made by one person but directed and paid for by another. If an employee chooses to make a political contribution, it should be their own choice and their own money.

● **Allow employees to set up betting pools on an election:** Despite Nevada’s history as a gaming-friendly state, betting on elections is against the law. ■



## Important Information for SIG Members


NRS requires all existing members of a self-insured group to be notified of all new members.  
NRNSIG new members are listed below.

**Bead Jungle**  
**Fernley Mini Storage LLC**  
**Supreme Fire Protection LLC**  
**The Corner Bar**

## Fun Facts About September

1. The name "September" comes from an old Roman word, "septem," which actually means 7. That's right – September was the seventh month of the year on the Roman calendar – It did not become the ninth month until the advent of the Gregorian calendar.
2. The Romans believed that September was looked after by the god of fire. So they always expected fires and volcanic eruptions to occur during this month.
3. Out of all 12 months of the year, September is spelled with the most letters. It contains nine letters, and it happens to be the ninth month of the year. No other months have the same amount of letters as their number in the calendar year.
4. A little-known, but highly significant holiday falls in September. September 17th is Constitution Day, which marks the day that the U.S. Constitution was adopted.

**NRNSIG** members who wish to register a negative vote on a new group member, please write NRNSIG at 575 S. Saliman Road, Carson City, NV 89701, indicating which member and the reason(s) for the negative vote.





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**Elko Office**  
557 W. Silver Street, #206, Elko, NV 89801  
(775) 753-7771

**Membership Information:** Find out more about RAN’s self insured group. Call Pro Group, **800-859-3177**, or the RAN office at **775-882-1700** (toll free in Nevada 800-690-5959).

Don’t forget to check out our website, [www.RANNV.org](http://www.RANNV.org).



# NATIONAL NOTES *Continued from page 7*

Walmart’s Marketplace, online and in-store fulfillment and pickup technologies with Adobe Commerce, a solution for merchants and brands. This as Walmart has developed these capacities which has helped it increase its business.

*Progressive Grocer*

## HOME DEPOT AND TARGET: MASKS ARE BACK

Many businesses, including Home Depot and Target, are requiring employees to wear masks. This in response to the Delta strain of COVID-19. Some store in different states and municipalities will differ but the mandates are a result of the CDC’s recommendation which suggests both vaccinated and unvaccinated people wear face coverings. A few chains indicated they may

require their employees to be vaccinated. *WSJ*

## WALMART, TARGET, AND OTHERS UNITE TO REINVENT RETAIL BAG WITH IN-STORE PILOTS

In July 2020, Closed Loop Partners’ Center for the Circular Economy launched the Consortium to Reinvent the Retail Bag, a multi-year collaboration across retail sectors, with founding Target, Walmart, and others committing \$15 million collectively.

Pilots of the new bags will begin in California, and in select Walmart locations. The solutions being tested include multiple reusable bag models, alongside enabling technologies that aim to help serve customers’ needs, extend the useful life of retail bags and provide visibility

into the full lifecycle of a bag. Across the select stores, customers can sign up to try these new solutions, whether it’s to borrow, incentivize or receive reminders to use a reusable bag. *Grocery Dive*

## WALMART BIG ON SOLAR

Walmart is supporting the growth of clean energy in New York. Walmart has contracted with Nexamp as an anchor tenant to support 129 megawatts of community solar projects.

Walmart is subscribing to a share of each of 23 Nexamp solar farms across the state of New York, and will receive energy credits, equivalent to approximately 50 megawatts of the entire portfolio.

Thirty-two Walmart stores, four Sam’s Clubs, and one distribution center participating in the

program. *Chain Store Age*

## WALMART, TARGET INVEST IN EDUCATION

Walmart will invest \$200 million in debt-free education for its associates. Associates can attend approximately 40 schools in 250 different business-related programs. Employees are eligible to participate in the program on their first day of work.

Target is also investing in its employees’ educations. For employees who pursue educational opportunities outside of the select business-aligned programs, including master’s degrees, Target will provide direct payments to their academic institution of up to \$5,250 for non-master’s degrees and up to \$10,000 for master’s degrees each year to reduce the burden of up-front, costly tuition payments. *Chain Store Age*

# BACK-TO-SCHOOL SPENDING *Continued from page 9*

return of in-person sports and other extracurricular activities, which likely lead to additional spending.”

With nearly 120,000 students enrolled in public and private colleges throughout Nevada, RAN estimates spending for students heading back to college reached an estimated \$143.6 million.

Electronics was expected to be the largest spending category at \$36.1 million, followed by dorm and apartment furnishings (\$19.3 million), clothing and accessories (\$18.7 million) and food (\$14.5 million).

Nationwide, the NRF reports spending for college students as

projected to reach \$71.0 billion, with the average household spending \$1,200.32.

College spending estimates rose 8.4 percent from last year’s estimate. The continued shift toward ecommerce was evident in back-to-school shopping preferences, as K-12 shoppers reported

department stores and online shopping as their most popular destinations, both tied at 48.0 percent.

College shoppers do most of their shopping online, as 43.0 percent of college shoppers will be visiting popular online. ■



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# FOOD SUPPLIERS MAKE STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS IN PRIVATE BRANDS

**FMI, THE FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION, RECENTLY**

released the 2021 Power of Private Brands report, which finds 91% of food retailers and manufacturers surveyed plan to significantly or moderately increase their investment in private brands in the

next two years.

“During the pandemic, many more consumers gave private brands a try, and this has resulted in new acceptance among today’s shoppers,” said Doug Baker, vice president of industry relations for FMI. “At the same time, the rise of ecommerce and home cooking

offer the food industry an opportunity to further grow their private brands programs.”

Highlights of the report indicate food retailers and suppliers will make strategic investments, including:

- 52% boosting private brands ecommerce strategies.
- 77% changing

or rethinking private brand assortments and supplier strategies in response to the pandemic.

- 70% making longer-term commitments to supplier arrangements and engaging more closely with existing suppliers.
- 58% adding innovative new private brands. ■ FMI