

## Shop Profile

# Gala Performance in Cork City

Ciarán Lynch's Gala store in the Glen in Cork City is reaping the rewards of its recent rebrand, reflected by an increase in sales across the entire store.

CIARÁN Lynch's newly rebranded Gala shop on Glen Avenue in the Glen in Cork City has been warmly welcomed by local residents. The store owner is delighted with the rebrand, which he feels has transformed his shop into an ultra-modern convenience store, perfectly serving the needs of its diverse customers.

Growing up, both of Ciarán's parents worked in the grocery trade, so it was not surprising that five years ago, after seeing the perfect location for a corner shop, Ciarán and his wife made the decision to move into the grocery retail sector themselves.

### Partners in Success

Ciarán and Gráinne found themselves navigating the tricky waters of opening a new business in a difficult economy. However, the store owners and their staff learned quickly and grew to know their customers. Last year, Ciarán decided it was time to take the shop to a new level and while investigating his options, the Gala Group stood out to him.

"I had an idea of what I wanted to do with the shop, and when I saw what the Gala Group offered, it was exactly what I wanted," Ciarán tells RETAIL NEWS. "I heard great things from other retailers that worked with Gala; then I met Colin McTaggart and I was really impressed by his passion and enthusiasm. The Baker's Corner concept was something I really wanted and the Costa Coffee offering complemented it perfectly."

Ciarán has used his transition to the Gala Group to shift sales towards higher volume and higher margin, a combination that should grab the attention of any retailer.

"The process has been remarkably smooth," according to Ciarán. "We kept trading through the changes and it really engaged the customers. It proved that Gala has really strong recognition in



Pictured outside Gala on Glen Avenue are (l-r): Owen O'Sullivan, M&P Ltd; store owner Ciarán Lynch; and Colin McTaggart, Retail Operations Executive, Gala Retail Services.

the area because my customers were delighted they were getting a Gala shop. There was no major construction work in the project, but the changes we made have changed the business a great deal."



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## Identifying Your Customers

With high profile national sponsorships such as Special Olympics, an organisation close to the hearts of almost all Irish people, and other events such as sponsoring the Irish Film and Television Awards and parkrun, the Gala brand has been receiving improved recognition from shoppers around the country. Identifying the distinct needs of the different shopper types visiting Lynch's became the next priority in the project.

Lynch's Gala has two main, distinct, categories of shopper. The first are from the nearby barracks, who are looking for food-to-go solutions, with a general preference for healthier options. The second group is from the large number of local residents, who are willing to shop in their local shop and avoid the traffic of Cork City but only if the price is right. By targeting the needs of both groups, the new look Gala store has made big changes in a very small amount of time.

"As part of this project, we increased the grocery offering



## Fact File

👤	Owner:	Ciarán Lynch
📍	Location:	Glen Avenue, The Glen, Cork City
🏠	Size:	1,600 square feet retail space
👥	No. of Staff:	10 full time & part time
🕒	Opening Hours:	Opening Hours: 07:30-21:00, seven days a week

in the shop" Billy Massey, Retail Operations Manager, Gala, explains. "That may seem to run against the grain with the notion of food-to-go solutions, but we knew this shop had a customer base that would support it and we were looking to create a complete solution for Ciarán and his customers."

## Shop-Wide Sales Surge

The store owner has been impressed with the results to date. "We've seen a lift across the entire shop," Ciarán enthuses. "We are very close to finishing the project now and already sales have seen significant shifts. Grocery is strong, and the Baker's Corner, the deli and coffee offering are all driving a higher volume of higher margin sales."

Ciarán pays particular tribute to M & P O'Sullivan, his local Gala wholesaler. "They are also a family run business, and they are a fantastic group of people to work with. Their order fulfilment is regular and accurate and they go above and beyond when it comes to helping me with any unexpected issues that arise, which is not all that common in grocery retail," he stresses. "By choosing to work with the Gala Group, I have found an overall package and a group of people that have helped me to achieve exactly what I set out to do."

The feeling, it seems, is mutual, and Gala are delighted to have partnered with Ciarán. "It's been fantastic working with people like Ciarán and Gráinne and their whole team," says Billy. "It's a real family business and they have such a strong work ethic that we are proud to be able to help them bring their shop to the next level. We've all put in a lot of work in a small amount of time and the fact that we've seen such big changes is testament to the commitment of everyone involved."



Gala in The Glen embodies the Gala concept of the local shop, working with the local wholesaler, to serve the local community. By focusing on the needs of different types of shopper, Ciarán and his partners in Gala have been able to access the potential sales that existed in the community served by Lynch's store. This is down to the hard work of a highly talented, committed and dedicated group of people who strive to ensure that the shop is equipped to give its customers exactly what they need, when they need it.