

Big Issue 1

Gazza and Prince William 18/09/23

They're watching you: the evolution of supermarket loyalty cards

How to make a globe

The £500m business changing the shape of British universities

ISSUE 1582 / 18 SEPTEMBER 2023

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Gazza



Prince William

and me

Inside Big Issue man Karl's remarkable royal reception
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A HAND UP, NOT A HANDOUT

NEW EVERY WEEK

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Colour choice?



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Who is Gazza?

Paul Gascoigne

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Gascoigne





PRINCE WILLIAM, A DRAGON, GAZZA AND ME

Big Issue vendor Karl Burns went from selling the magazine on his pitch to a royal appointment unlike any other

Words: Liam Geraghty



(Above) Karl Burns; (Left) Gazza and William shake hands

● Big Issue vendor Karl Burns was sitting on his camping chair selling the magazine right in the heart of Bournemouth when he heard Prince William was in town.

The 55-year-old noticed a crowd outside Pret a Manger across the square where he sells the magazine.

It was an opportunity he would grasp with both hands.

Burns decided to go over to see if he could meet the future king. He was hoping William's history with The Big Issue would get him in. As well as help from one of his regular customers.

"I already knew someone who was there and that was Paul Gascoigne," says Burns. "I've known Gazza a little while. He buys issues off me and talks to me a couple of times a week."

Emboldened, Burns thought he'd ask one of William's aides whether he could go inside.

Burns could scarcely believe what happened next.

"I turned around to the royal protection officer and said, 'On behalf of The Big Issue, I'd like to donate you The Big Issue and I thank you for what you're doing here today.'"

"So I was escorted right down to the back, past all the public, past everyone who was there and I was standing with Gazza and his manager."

The next thing Burns knew, Prince William was heading his way, with *Dragons' Den* star Steven Bartlett in tow, fresh from trying his hand at making customers' sandwiches with Pret staff. Burns stuck out his hand, brandishing a magazine.

"What's this?" the Prince of Wales asked as he took the magazine while Gazza tapped him on the wrist, arm outstretched.

"Big Issue," says Karl. And the penny dropped.

"Ah, are you selling it outside?" asked William as he motioned for an aide to come over. "Can I give you some money for it?"

In the end, William went further than just buying a copy of the magazine – he made sure Burns didn't go hungry either. "I said, 'Thank you very much for what you're doing, and

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Prince William (Prince of Wales)

<https://royalfoundation.com/>

<https://homewards.org.uk/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-66034370>

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/prince-william-homeless-charity-royal-b2364449.html>

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<https://centrepnt.org.uk/about-centrepnt/our-team/our-patron>



Prince William and the Big Issue

<https://www.bigissue.com/news/what-really-happened-when-prince-william-sold-the-big-issue/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-61864144>



Other stories...

THE UNSTOPPABLE RISE OF THE SUPERMARKET LOYALTY CARD



In 1995 the Tesco Clubcard kickstarted the loyalty revolution, changing the way we shop. But in return for our points and discounts, are we giving away more of ourselves than we'd like to think?

By Greg Barradale
Big Issue Activism Reporter

● Imagine you're walking down the aisle at Tesco and you've just picked up some cheese. The device in your hand flashes. What about some red wine?

Then you're online shopping, and you're just about to check out your basket. You're proud, for once, that you've not added crisps and chocolate to the weekly shop. As you go to check out, reminders to buy those items flash up. Ah, go on then.

All this means you're showing "microscopic" behaviours which indicate a risk of switching to Sainsbury's. Here are some deals. Take that rival product out of your basket. Stay loyal. It's the future of shopping. And it's going to get weird.

If you haven't visited Tesco in a while, you might not be familiar with the "Clubcard price". The usual price for, say, a meal deal is £3.90. But with a Clubcard, it's yours for just £3.40. Almost any product you can think of might have a similar discount. A bunch of bananas: £1.55 without a Clubcard, £1 with. A pack of easy-peel oranges: £2.30 down to £1.60. Six apples: £3.25 down to £2.50.

Added up over the cost of a shop, it amounts to a significant premium if you haven't signed up. It's a no-brainer. But these Clubcard prices are the next step in the evolution of supermarket loyalty cards. Almost every big shop has one now – from the Sainsbury's Nectar card to Asda's 'superstar products' – all offering some form of discount for loyal customers.

As the cost of living crisis grips and grocery bills climb, concerns over the

schemes are growing. What are you being asked to give up in exchange for a cheaper trolleyful of goods?

'Privacy has become a luxury'

"If you're poor, increasingly privacy has become something of a luxury," says Caitlin Bishop, senior campaigns officer at Privacy International.

"If you don't have money, you just factually have less privacy. Given that privacy is an increasingly important human right, that is deeply, deeply worrying to us."

In March, the Big Brother Watch campaign group accused supermarkets of exploiting the cost of living crisis with the schemes. Jake Hurfurt, head of research and investigations, said there were concerns over the freedom and consent shoppers actually have when they decide to sign up.

"It is worrying that some supermarkets are taking advantage of a cost of living crisis by pushing shoppers into trading more and more of their personal data to access discounts that used to be available to all," Hurfurt says.

"There is a serious risk that shoppers will feel pressured into handing over their data if the trend of requiring a loyalty card to access any special offer continues."

Retailers should be clear about how they use this data, he adds:

"Shoppers are understandably going to use these loyalty schemes to save money and they should be told upfront about what might happen to their information."

The birth of the loyalty card

There was a time we went to the shops without loyalty cards. The shopkeeper might have known your name, but his bosses didn't know your date of birth. That all changed in 1994, when a couple, Edwina Dunn and Clive Humby, were asked to give a presentation to Tesco's board.

When a shopper buys something, it generates data. With the right expertise, the right mindset, you can take this data and learn amazing things about your customer. Find out their spending patterns, exactly what they're buying, and you can sell them even more things.

Dunn and Humby said their company, Dunnhumby, could do this 15 times quicker and 20 times cheaper than Tesco's own boffins.

"What scares me about this is that you know more about my customers after three months than I know after 30 years," Tesco's then-chairman, Lord MacLaurin, told them at the end of the presentation. The Clubcard was born. Within a year, the supermarket had doubled its market share.

The couple, who left Dunnhumby behind in 2010 after cashing out for an estimated £93 million, declined to be interviewed for this story.

From that presentation, however, loyalty cards grew to become a fixture in our lives just as data became, in the words of Humby, "the new oil". The exchange used to be fairly simple: shoppers gained points, then every so often an envelope would come through their door with some vouchers rewarding ►

So...

How does this Big Issue cover represent the ideology and values of the Big Issue as a social enterprise?

Why has it chosen this story as the lead story?

What about the other features of the front cover?