

# In depth report: Smiggle – the rise of the colourful retailer

For many of us who have been in Stationery for the past 10 years, we have seen a number of retailers who have entered the market come and go. Whether it was the threat of a retailer like Blott who came on board and fizzled out over the years, eventually bought by Tinc. Then there are smaller retailers who have risen to become the competitive forces of today such as Card Factory and Tiger.

The rise of Smiggle in such a short period of time (reaching a 100 stores in just over 3 years) has really rocked the stationery competitor market and shows no sign of slowing down.

In this part of the report we explore the rise of this retailer, why it has seen such growth in such a small time, what makes it competitive and engaging and what we can learn from its fast growth.



## Smiggle – a brief history

Smiggle started as an idea by Stephen Meurs and Peter Pausewang, who saw a gap in the market for fun, engaging, collectable, fashionable, and affordable stationery aimed at the 5 to 14 year age group. The Smiggle concept was born, the name coming from the words 'Smile' and 'Giggle' mashed up together.

## Why has it grown so quickly?

### Product Offering

Smiggle has certainly found a gap in the market where it can offer such a specialist offer for one target audience. If you think about its main competitors on the high street, such as WHSmith and Paperchase, they are one stop shop for all stationery and gifts customers, trying to cater for all markets and not having the luxury of being able to give their all to just one niche part of the market. Of course that means that they have more footfall, they can offer a variety of product and they can offer different consumers choice.

However, the amount of product development involved in servicing the variety of different customers they have sometimes means their product can get repetitive. Retailers can get 'stuck' delivering the same formula of products and promotions each year and can become risk averse. However, what we can see from Smiggle, is a push to be innovative and they are constantly changing their product offer as if they were a fashion retailer. In a world that is constantly changing younger people get bored of the same things and they want something new to be able to show off to their friends.

With their website offering a variety of things to keep you interested, the same is done in their stores with their push to have product which offers something slightly different. These products show innovation and wanting to be able to offer their target market products that they will get excited about.





## Visual Merchandising in store

Innovative visual merchandising is certainly something that other retailers are falling behind still. Customers now want an experience when they are shopping and Smiggle is literally an assault on the senses.

Their windows are no longer static, with video screens installed in many of their stores, which allow them to advertise a variety of offerings, whether it's newness, competitions or the main offer in the store at the time.

Smiggle follows an effective colour blocking method in store; currently offering predominantly blue, green and black ranges for boys and blue, purple and pink ranges for girls.

**The full report can be found as part of the Back to School Market research report at [www.Brightdisposition.com](http://www.Brightdisposition.com)**