

## TOP STORY Amscan UK's new chairman Charlton joins to ramp up international operations

Amscan International has appointed former greeting card boss John Charlton as chairman of its UK division.

John has a wealth of experience in the gift and greeting card sectors, having been executive vice-president of American Greetings and chief executive of UK Greetings.

He said: "I believe I can help bring more excitement, energy and excellence to what is the leading player in the global party market. I met the executive team of Amscan in the UK at this year's Spring Fair and when they explained their planned initiatives I was impressed and excited."

John will be working with Amscan's international senior vice-president, Mark Ashcroft,

to rapidly expand and develop the party category in the UK, Australia, South Africa and Europe.

Additionally he will work with the management team of Amscan UK to further develop the company's new Pride, Passion, Party sports initiative, which was launched this summer ahead of the World Cup. He will also help to explore new go-to-market strategies.

Jim Harrison, chief operating officer of Amscan Holdings, said: "John has a unique knowledge and understanding of retailers in international markets. We believe this will allow us to more aggressively ramp up our international operations."

"He also brings a wealth of management expertise that, when coupled with our existing executive team in the UK, will be able to deliver new and exciting programmes for retailers."

Amscan International is the world's leading designer, manufacturer and distributor of party products, serving more than 40,000 retailers globally.

The company, with bases in the US, Canada, Mexico, Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Germany and Milton Keynes, supplies 40,000 individual items from balloons and banners to tableware, costumes and gifts.



John Charlton: new strategies.

## Costumes help break world record

Costumes by Smiffy's were among those worn when the world record for most people dressed as superheroes in one place was broken by the Rugby Football Union during a Sevens competition held at Twickenham in May.

More than 1,000 spectators at the match wore fancy dress, with appearances from Smiffy's favourites He-Man, She-Ra, Batfink and Bananaman, among others.



A colourful scene from the record-breaking event.

## Dear Editor

On 24 June, members of Nabas elected their brand new committee. Paul Pearce (decorator), Mark Saunders (display manufacturer), Jo Uddin (retailer and decorator) and Sharon Platt (retailer and decorator) and Philomena Groome (decorator) make up the team, which will be headed up by Ada Elliot (wholesaler) as chair.

The new committee is committed to raising the profile and presence of Nabas as the only truly independent trade association for the balloon industry. For the past 23 years the organisation has provided a wide range of valuable services to its members including free public and employer liability insurance, legal and support helplines, promotion and networking opportunities, information and industry news as well as training opportunities.

Nabas is focused on rewarding its highly loyal members by adding even more value to their membership. Additional benefits coming on stream include a range of discount schemes, for example the Fuelcard and AA membership, and regional events for members. The committee is also looking forward to this October's national Festival of Balloon Art being the biggest and best ever.

Nabas members are the standard bearers. They have long been recognised within the party industry as being qualified, experienced and committed to maintaining high safety and environmental standards.

Each member of the new committee is proud to be given the opportunity to represent and support them in continuing to provide great balloon products and services to the trade and to the general public.

*The Nabas committee*

## Street Kids' latest achievements

Street Kids Rescue, the charity set up by Party Superstores owner Duncan Mundell following a life-changing trip to Burma, has been notching up further achievements:

- arranging for piping to run from the nearest well (2km away) to the village.
- supporting a monastic hospital in its medical work – including removing tumours and carrying out reconstructive surgery after bear attacks.
- buying land to build a centre for disabled children.
- building a village school for 200 children.
- collecting unwanted items to sell at auction, and collecting foreign currency to change into sterling.

Plus, says Duncan, "the boys I met on my first visit are doing very well. Thanks to your donations, they are off the streets and have a great future."

Details: [streetkidsrescue.org](http://streetkidsrescue.org)

## Party suppliers get erotic

Names familiar in the party industry, such as Princess Distribution and Double G, were among the exhibitors at the annual ETO (Erotic Trade Only) show at the NEC in early July.

## Visitor numbers up 15%

Licensing International Expo in Las Vegas saw 15% more visitors than last summer, many of whom came from the UK and other countries.

It was the best-attended show for many years, and 75% of the space has already sold out for next year (June 14-16). [www.licensingexpo.com](http://www.licensingexpo.com).

# TOP STORY

## Costume shows at war again

### Battle of the show organisers set to resume

The rivalry over competing costume and party shows has reared its head again after Tom Baker of InCostume Party Shows Ltd announced plans for a spring show, in competition with the British Costume Association.

The planned dates of March 26-28 at the Ricoh Arena mean the event will again clash with the BCA's show – scheduled for March 27-29 at Stoneleigh Park, about 10 miles away.

There was a similar situation in autumn last year, and many visitors and exhibitors complained that an already small industry was being divided.

There has been ill-feeling between the two sets of organisers since InCostume Ltd, the company set up to run the 2009 spring show on behalf of the BCA, went bust straight after the event. The BCA on one side and Tom Baker and Samantha Hartup on the other – who had run the show – blamed each other for the circumstances leading up to the business's demise.

Tom and Sam then set up InCostume Party Shows to run an autumn show in direct competition with the BCA's own autumn event. Tom and Sam decided not to run a spring event this year ("to give the BCA a chance") so the BCA had the stage to itself. But Tom now believes there is enough interest from key suppliers to warrant doing his own show again in 2011 – though he concedes that "the industry cannot support two trade shows and Spring Fair".

Features will include:

- free parking.
- fancy dress social event.
- cost breakdown so exhibitors can see where their money is spent.

The balloon, costume and face painting trade associations will be offered space free of charge and will share a percentage of any profit. There will be special deals for small and first-time exhibitors, while larger exhibitors will be helped to show their ranges at their best.

Tom said: "We are going to make an event that anyone in the costume, party or balloon industry will want to be part of, will support and be proud of."

Meanwhile, the BCA says space is already being booked at its event – and it has added "wow" factor by launching a costume awards scheme (see separate story).

Details of InCostume Party Shows' event: [www.incostumepartyshow.co.uk](http://www.incostumepartyshow.co.uk)

Details of BCA event: [www.partyandcostumeshow.co.uk](http://www.partyandcostumeshow.co.uk)



Rivals: top, Tom Baker of InCostume Party Shows and bottom, Peter Denton, chairman of the BCA.

## 'Can new show make money?'

British Costume Association chairman Peter Denton said he was disappointed and surprised to hear that InCostume Party Shows had thrown their hat into the ring.

"I don't see how IPS envisage making a profit out of this," he said. "It's a small industry anyway, and we've already got confirmed bookings for our show from most of last year's exhibitors. Very few of the big suppliers are likely to exhibit at either of the shows anyway – some not even at Spring Fair – and the upfront costs of a venue like the Ricoh are enormous.

Transworld lost money on running a party show and they were a professional event organiser. We can cover our costs because so much of the work is done by volunteer committee members, but I just don't see it working as a commercial venture."

Peter conceded that the appearance of another show at this stage could divide the industry and reduce his exhibitor base but said he saw no reason to throw in the towel.

"No doubt there are some companies that will take stands at the IPS that might otherwise have come with us, but we're confident that we can add to the loyal core of exhibitors that we already have commitment from. We're well ahead in terms of planning, the venue is booked, we've started our sales and marketing campaign and we're a proven organisation that people trust.

"Our visitors – even if footfall could have been bigger last year, are serious buyers and our exhibitors were broadly content with the level of business they achieved last year." One BCA exhibitor, Ann Harding of Antiks Fancy Dress, accused IPS of "actively seeking to make things difficult for the industry" by running their show on the same weekend as the BCA's. "I hope that they will see sense and withdraw these divisive plans," she said.

### Contact numbers for suppliers mentioned in this issue's articles

Amscan/Anagram:	0800 581 535	Magic Mirror:	01782 328 989	Qualatex:	(see Pioneer)
Antiks:	01425 620300	Make Believe Costumes:		Smiffy's:	0800 590 599
Blue Moon Lingerie:	1202 741 136		0191 224 3005	Snazaroo:	(see Oasis Arts)
Bobo Funcco:	020 8991 5777	Mardigras:	01782 744790	Unique Party:	01724 281113
Bristol Novelty:	0117 972 4012	Mask-arade:	01926 814292		
Creative Collection:	0191 373 1113	Nabas:	01989 762204		
Creative Party:	01202 590222	Oasis Arts:	01562 744522		
Double Take Costumes:		Palmer Agencies:	02890 647 119		
	0161 237 3775	Pam's of Gainsborough:			
Dreams2Go:	0844 330 5058		0845 2306763		
Fun Shack:	0113 2001050	Petra Boase:	01760 337333		
FunToSee:	08702 621 621	Le Piccole Cose:			
Heaton Party:	0191 586 5890				
Leg Avenue:	see Princess Distribution	Princess Distribution:	0845 270 2730		

We have done our best to include the phone number of every supplier mentioned in editorial content in this issue, but we cannot guarantee that none have been missed out. If you need to be assured of having your contact details published, we would advise you to purchase an advertisement.

## TOP STORY Awards scheme launches at show Best costumes to be recognised

The British Costume Association is launching an awards scheme, with the prizes to be presented at the annual BCA show dinner dance on September 25 at Stoneleigh Park.

The awards ceremony, to celebrate excellence within the party and costume industry, is the only awards programme of its kind to have dedicated costume categories. This, says the BCA, will raise the profile of the industry and highlight the importance of entrepreneurship, enterprise and quality.

It says: "This is an opportunity to be recognised across the industry and to celebrate achievements, and to inspire growth and development both within the costume business and the industry as a whole. This is especially relevant in a time of recession, as to gain one of these prestigious awards will stimulate customer interest, raise profiles and hopefully spur economic growth."

Entrants must be BCA members. Three finalists from each category will have their images or information exhibited at the September show, where the winner for each award will be announced.

Chairman Peter Denton said: "Winners will get coverage in the BCA magazine, and get UK recognition within the industry for their business. This is a fantastic opportunity to gain exposure and recognition. This will boost staff morale and impress and attract new and potential customers."

For the rules, or to submit entries, email [info@madhattersfancydress.com](mailto:info@madhattersfancydress.com) or write to to BCA Awards, British Costume Association, PO Box 136, Ashington NE62 5ZX.

Award categories are:

### *Best Themed Display*

This award will recognise the best use of space, lighting, props and composition. It will be subdivided into floor display and window display.

### *Best Costume Design*

This award will judge costume versatility, uniqueness, durability, imagination and overall rentability.

### *Best Unique and Artistic Costume*

This will be judged on most flamboyant, cleverly constructed and wow "factor" costume. Garment can be a one-off use item.

### *Best Party/Costume Website*

Award for the website that shows the most developed, interactive, visually interesting, easy to use and most innovative design.

### *Best New Party/ Costume Shop*

Entries for businesses that are less than four years old. This award recognises success and achievement, and also the contribution that the business has made to the local economy.

### *Most Entrepreneurial Party/ Costume Business*

Recognises vision, drive and adaptability.

### *Party/ Costume Business and Individuals Who have*

### *Achieved Against all Odds*

Recognises those who have overcome challenging circumstances, obstacles, disadvantages or disabilities.



A scene from the last BCA event catwalk show: innovation in costumes will soon be recognised with a new awards scheme.

## Drop-shipping for Blue Moon

Blue Moon Lingerie has partnered with Your Lingerie Wholesaler to provide a drop ship service with no minimum value orders.

Richard Harris, director of the Poole-based company, said: "We receive a high number of enquiries regarding drop shipping and placing no minimum value orders and we are very happy that these customers now have a way of selling our brands."

Details: [www.bluemoonlingerie.com](http://www.bluemoonlingerie.com), [www.yourlingeriewholesaler.com](http://www.yourlingeriewholesaler.com), Email: [info@yourlingeriewholesaler.com](mailto:info@yourlingeriewholesaler.com)  
Phone: 01288 352154  
(ask for Michelle)

## Paladone sets a new record

Paladone Products has partnered with Guinness World Records to launch the first range of licensed Guinness World Records toys and gifts in 2010 and 2011.

The products, from juggling sets to bus-jumping motorbike kits, will be on sale in gift and toy shops from next summer.

## Retail sales up again in May

High street sales grew for a fourth consecutive month in May, with an overall 5.4% uplift in like-for-like sales, according to accountants and business advisers BDO.

But this result was largely due to growth in homeware sales – with leisure-focused retailers having a worse than average growth.

## Consumers fear finance worries

Consumer confidence was "frayed", household finances deteriorating and anxiety about future finances deepening during June, according to Markit/YouGov.

Consumers were at their most pessimistic for over a year and feared that the worst could be yet to come for household finances.

## Autumn Fair – 25% more stands

The number of exhibitors at this year's Autumn Fair is expected to be 25% higher than last year, with a big increase in floor space.

Managing director Louise Young said: "Exhibitors have already taken more floor space than we went to show with last year. This is a very encouraging indicator of how well the trade has weathered tough economic conditions, and also that our own efforts to support and grow the market are bearing fruit. These are the only shows in the home and gift market that have seen their attendance figures increase over the past three years, and exhibitors are voting with their feet by coming back in droves."

Details: [www.autumnfair.com](http://www.autumnfair.com)

## Best gets better

Christmas party specialist Best Parties Ever has achieved BS8901 accreditation – the first sector-specific British standard for achieving sustainability in the events industry.

The company says clients are increasingly scrutinising potential suppliers' sustainability credentials when making buying decisions.

Meanwhile, the company has launched a new brand to run bars at festivals. Arribar! made its launch at Glastonbury in June.

# TOP STORY Face painter wins kids' award

## Pop stardom too for 'fascinating' entertainer

Face painter Claire Guest of Fascinating Faces in Camberley was a finalist in the Best Children's Party Entertainment category of the What's On 4 2010 Awards, being pipped at the post by a rival children's entertainment company.

The awards, supported by Prima Baby & Pregnancy magazine, celebrate the best activities for children. The 13 categories ranged from Best National Pre-Schooler Activity to Most Outstanding Community Group Volunteer for children.

Fascinating Faces provides professional face and body painting for children and adults and is a member of Face (The Face Painting Association), which was created to improve standards

and raise the profile of face painting.

Claire said: "We were delighted to have been nominated and short listed for this prestigious award. We are immensely proud to be part of the rapidly growing world of face and body art and we get such great pleasure in bringing smiles to hundreds of children's (and adults') faces every year. Fascinating Faces works closely with several local businesses and charities. We love to support our local community and it is wonderful to see the same smiling faces coming back time and time again."

Meanwhile Claire and her mother are set for pop stardom after the local choir in which they sing released its first album in July. Rock Choir Vol.1, the first of a four-album contract for Rock Choir, went to number 1 in all pre-order charts on Amazon in its first week, beating the likes of Kylie, Scissor Sisters and Eminem.

The choir performed at the Hammersmith Apollo in June to celebrate the album launch. Claire said: "I got to combine both my passions that day by offering face painting to the younger members of the choir before we all went on stage!"

Claire is our guest face painter in our face painting page this issue.



Claire celebrating the album launch.

## Record number of retail failures

The retail sector saw record business failures in 2009, with 3,600 retail businesses going under, according to accountants and business advisors BDO and the Centre for Economics and Business Research. The number of failures was described as "depressingly high" – and many of those retailers that did survive did so through heavy discounting that left margins "painfully thin".

Things are expected to improve this year, with retail failures expected to decline by 8% year on year, but there will still be 3,335 that go out of business.

Apparently contradictory figures from Experian though suggest that UK business insolvencies as a whole were down 15% year-on-year in April.

## Sales up 1%

Retail sales volumes were up 1% year-on-year during 2009, according to the Office of National Statistics.

### DIARY DATES

- September 3-7, Paris  
Maison et Objet (trade show for gifts and home accessories)  
Details: [www.promosalons.co.uk](http://www.promosalons.co.uk)
- September 21-22  
NEC Birmingham  
Event UK  
For event organisers  
[www.event-uk.com](http://www.event-uk.com)
- September 25-26  
Stoneleigh Park  
BCA autumn show  
[www.incostume.co.uk](http://www.incostume.co.uk)
- September 27, 28  
Whittlebury Hall,  
Northamptonshire  
Event Organisers Summit  
For corporate event planners  
Details: [www.forumevents.co.uk](http://www.forumevents.co.uk)
- September 28-30  
Olympia, London  
Brand Licensing Europe  
An extra day this year, and a 50% increase in size, for this 230-exhibitor-strong event that showcases the offerings of licensors.  
Details: [www.brandlicensingeurope.eu](http://www.brandlicensingeurope.eu)

- October 16 & 17  
Stoneleigh Park  
Nabas Festival of Balloon Art  
Details: [www.nabas.co.uk](http://www.nabas.co.uk)
- October 29-31  
Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire  
The Winter Fair  
New consumer festive gift shopping show run by the Royal Agricultural Society of England.  
Details: [www.thewinterfair.com](http://www.thewinterfair.com)
- November 1-5  
Ohio, USA  
Float Convention (balloons)  
Details: [www.floatconvention.com](http://www.floatconvention.com)
- November 2-4  
Melle, Germany  
Euro Jam  
Balloon skills and networking event  
Details: [www.euro-jam.com](http://www.euro-jam.com)
- November 7-11  
Mol, Belgium  
Millennium Jam  
Said to be the longest balloon festival in Europe. Check dates before booking travel, as website gives conflicting information.  
Details: [www.millenniumjam.com](http://www.millenniumjam.com)



### 2011

- January 22-25  
Houston, Texas  
Halloween & Party Expo  
The organisers say this is the industry standard show for Halloween buyers. International attendance was excellent at the last show (above).  
There will be a fashion show, an industry-wide party and a special bash to mark Rubie's 30th anniversary. Exhibition space was already 92% sold by early July.  
Details: [www.HalloweenPartyExpo.com](http://www.HalloweenPartyExpo.com)
- January 24 & 25  
Twickenham, Middlesex  
Live Events Forum

- For party and event organisers  
Details: 01992 374054
- January 28 - February 1  
Frankfurt, Germany  
Christmasworld  
Christmasworld will feature a new florists' supplies area in Hall 9.0, where visitors will find annual and seasonal decorations, decorative gifts, party and festive products. One floor higher, in Hall 9.1, the spotlight will be on annual and seasonal decorations and decorative gifts. Anyone looking for festive lighting, shop and display and Christmas decoration, should visit Hall 11.  
Details: [www.christmasworld.messefrankfurt.com](http://www.christmasworld.messefrankfurt.com)

## New discount chain in town

### Partyware among offerings at bargain stores

The founders of 99p Stores have launched a Woolworths-style variety chain called Family Bargains, which sells toys, home furnishings, health and beauty products, food – and party products.

Camarthen in Wales is the location of the first store, and the next will be in the Midlands. A total of 10 should be open

before Christmas, initially in the Midlands and North then the company will wait to see how sales of festive products shape up before deciding on a bigger roll-out.

Though the single price format of parent retail chain 99p Stores will not be used in Family Bargains, most of the new store's 2,700 SKUs will retail at £10 or less.

The move by 99p Stores to a new warehouse and head office in Northampton, which can serve up to 400 stores,

is another driver behind it launching Family Bargains.

99p Stores aims to have 200 stores this year, aiming for a turnover exceeding £300 million and 5000 employees. 99p Stores currently employs 3000 people, including head office and warehouse staff.

It has over 3,000 products, including gift bags, napkins, plates, cups, musical candles, self-inflating balloons, light sticks

and 80 assorted balloons for 99p.

While the big single-price retailers Poundland and 99p Stores were growing before the downturn, the recession and collapse of Woolworths saw a new flurry of activity as both chains bought scores of former Woolworths stores.

For the year to 31 January 2010, 99p Stores' sales and profits both increased significantly.

### Alworths opens 10th store

Variety retailer alworths will be opening its 10th store - in Alloa, Clackmannanshire - on July 21, in the former Ethel Austin premises. It will be the first store in the alworths chain not to be located in an ex-Woolworths site.

The stores stock similar products to those of the now-defunct Woolworths - including party accessories, cards and wrap.

The chain is looking to have 22 sites in the UK by the end of 2010.

The first store - in Didcot - opened in November last year.



**Alworths' first store, in Didcot: now it has 10 – and counting.**

### Dragon triumph for Amscan

An Amscan International team took part in what is said to be the largest Dragon Boat festival to take place in the UK - and won the award for most money raised for collecting more than £1,000.

During the July event the Amscan team, called Pride, Passion, Party, drove a 40ft dragon boat across a lake in Milton Keynes. The team, made up of 16 rowers and one drummer, took part in the sponsored event to help raise money for local charity, MacIntyre. The event was a huge success, with 60 teams and thousands of spectators.

"This is the second year in a row that Amscan has entered a team. It's a great day out and not only do we raise money for a worthy cause but we also have fun whilst doing it," commented Louise Wayman, marketing communications co-ordinator and acting crew manager.

"The race is a great way to build company morale as everyone has to work together as a team to make it a success, from the organising down to the actual racing. It all takes effort and hard work. The competition was extremely tough and although we didn't manage to win, it was a fantastic achieve to

win the award for the most money raised, and we were very proud about that."

**The Amscan team celebrate their fund-raising achievement.**



### Shop crime survey starts

Shopworkers' union Usdaw plans to carry out a nationwide audit to gather examples of how retailers are fighting shop crime and aggression towards shop staff.

The move comes as the union met with local and national government, police and retail employers to agree a united front against retail crime and against violence and abuse to staff.

Usdaw has been running its Freedom from Fear campaign against violence and abuse to shop workers since 2003. Since then, there has been a decline in reported incidents. The government says that since 1997 more shoplifters are going to jail and there are tough sentencing guidelines in place for those who commit violence against shop staff.

However, there were still over 13,000 physical attacks in 2009 and hundreds of thousands face verbal abuse regularly.

### NEW PRODUCTS



■ The Dragon, from the reversible range of costumes at Double Take, is suitable for all kinds of fancy dress occasions, in particular Chinese New Year. It's red on one side and green on the other and is machine washable and generously sized. The company also offers a Swan dress inspired by a frock once worn by Icelandic singer Bjork – which is said to count among the Top 10 Worst Oscar Night Dresses of all time.



■ This party pack includes the best of a wide range of party decorations and tableware from Heaton Party. The range includes several different types of melamine tableware, paper garlands, banners, bunting, streamers, confetti and balloons in a range of colours and styles. Also pictured, from the paper range, are these lanterns, said to be great for Chinese New Year.



■ This bright sequin eye mask from Unique Party comes in the traditional Mardi Gras colours but could be worn to any masked ball. The silver shimmery bag is from the company's range of gift bags, for taking presents to parties.

# Mr Bean is South African favourite

## Masks out in force at World Cup

The celebrity masks were out in force when Dean Walton, co-owner of mask company Mask-arade, went to watch the World Cup in South Africa.

Nelson Mandela and Mr Bean appeared to be the most popular people in South Africa, said Dean. "We even made it on to the front page of South Africa's national newspaper, Die Burger, along with Prince Harry, Prince William and David Beckham!"

Unfortunately, during the journey home Dean lost his camera and is appealing for anyone who took any mask photos during the 10 days to get in touch.

Meanwhile, back in Warwickshire, the company's directors have been busy creating new masks, of celebrities who are appearing locally.

Ray Duffy said: "Every time we read in the paper that there is a celebrity in town, we manufacture a couple of masks of them and track them down. We always give them a mask to keep and ask them to sign the other one to be framed for our wall of fame."

Recent acquisitions include TV botanist David Bellamy, Squeeze singer Glen Tilbrook and Who Wants to be a Millionaire host Chris Tarrant.



**Nelson Mandela – the most popular people in South Africa – and Chris Tarrant, added to the collection when he visited Warwickshire.**

## Retail reacts to World Cup effect

The World Cup certainly had an effect on retail, though quite whether it was positive or not is a matter for debate.

Accountants and business advisers BDO said the impact was adverse, with the first England game keeping people away from the shops, and sales for the following week worse than expected because of the fine weather and the excitement about the football.

The Confederation of British Industry said June's sales were lower than a year before, but expected July to be better, because of the football.

Online sales, though, benefited from the combination of fine weather and the build up for the World Cup, with higher sales of alcohol, electrical goods and clothes contributing to May figures that were 22% higher than the previous May, the highest growth for two years, according to IMRG Capgemini.

- There were more internet searches for "vuvuzela" than for Wayne Rooney, England flags or

Robert Green during England's tenure in South Africa. Analyst Experian Hitwise said there was a 20-fold increase in searches for information about the annoying horns that are played at matches in South Africa.

- More than half of small firms allowed their staff to watch World Cup matches at work, according to the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB).

- The FSB was worried that many football fans would get "over exuberant" and have to take time off work with hangovers. The Forum of Private Business also voiced concerns that staff would be "more distracted than normal".

- As PP went to press BDO reported that like-for-like sales for the whole month of June were 4% higher, even though the football adversely affected retail especially on the days when England played. Trade is expected to remain reasonably strong for the remainder of the year as the VAT increase has been deferred until 2011.

## Tesco 'is too powerful'

Some 43% of British consumers feel that Tesco is too powerful, pushes down prices for producers and drives out competition from smaller shops, according to a YouGov survey.

Even among the 18-34 year olds who are the most supportive of the chain, 35% consider the supermarket giant to be "a bad influence", and older consumers are even more disapproving.

## Bullying guide published

A new 207-page training resource helps businesses to tackle bullying in the workplace. The publishers say that bad behaviour at work, like bullying, leads to poor performance, low productivity, high absence, staff turnover and poor corporate image.

Details: [www.optforlearning.co.uk](http://www.optforlearning.co.uk)

## NEWS IN BRIEF

- Inflation was 3.4% higher in May than a year before, but the CBI believes the "surprisingly high" figure will start to come down.

- London event organisers need to hurry up and book their venues for parties in 2012 because many venues will be unavailable due to bookings for Olympic related events, says Stand Out magazine.

- London Mayor Boris Johnson will be the keynote speaker at Londonlaunch:live on October 20-21, an event to promote party venues and event suppliers. Details: [www.londonlaunchlive.com](http://www.londonlaunchlive.com)

- About 250 delegates attended the Events Industry Association's summer Eventia meeting in Glasgow in July. [www.eventia.org.uk](http://www.eventia.org.uk)

- The website of Banners Banners – which supplies banners – has been updated.

Details: [www.banners-banners-banners.com](http://www.banners-banners-banners.com)

- Clinton Cards expects its total annual sales to be about 2% lower than previously predicted because trading has worsened since its interim statement in May.

- Blue Moon was voted Best Lingerie Distributor at the Erotic Trade Only awards.

## BP oil disaster inspires costume

American fancy dress supplier Fun World has sold thousands of pieces of its new men's costume, inspired by the environmental disaster caused by BP in the Gulf of Mexico. The "oil"-covered set of workman's overalls features a BP logo – standing for "Bad Planning".

National sales manager Alexander Losito said: "Although it may not be politically correct, the response and orders have been overwhelming!" Available in the UK from Palmer Agencies.

