

Shoprite Group opens 500th Usave store in SA, expanding access to affordable essentials

- The Shoprite Group has opened its 500th Usave store in South Africa: a significant achievement in its ongoing efforts to provide underserved areas with access to low-cost groceries and household goods.
- Usave offers more than 420 products priced under R10, including many for R5 or even R1.
- The no-frills discounter employs over 6 000 people in South Africa, with most jobs created in rural and peri-urban communities.

The 500th Usave supermarket in South Africa opened in Hopefield, Western Cape today – marking a major milestone in the Shoprite Group’s continued mission to expand access to affordable goods and services in more communities across the country and beyond.

Launched in 2003 under the leadership of now-CEO Pieter Engelbrecht Usave has become a critical part of the Group’s low-cost, high-impact format mix - growing from a single small-format store to a pan-African discount retail chain spanning four countries.

“Usave was designed to go where others wouldn’t – to bring real savings and value for money, in real terms, to underserved communities. This milestone signals more than just scale. It shows our intent to continue leading at the intersection of price, proximity and essential access,” says Engelbrecht.

The opening builds on steady growth across South Africa, Namibia, Eswatini and Botswana and includes a mix of traditional Usave stores and eKasi container stores, which focus on reaching lower-income communities with essential food and household goods at the lowest possible prices.

What customers can expect

Usave stores offer a limited but carefully curated range of essential fast-moving products, with a heavy focus on value. More than 420 Usave products are priced under R10, including several at R5 and the renowned R1 packet of biscuits.

In addition, the Ubrand private label range – now at over 350 items – offers quality comparable to leading national brands.

Select larger-format stores feature in-store bakeries while all new stores – now already at 150 locations - offer purified water for sale at just R1 per litre. In some locations, the offering extends beyond grocery retail to basic financial and value-added services available through Money Market counters that facilitate money transfers, bill payments, Computicket bookings, grocery vouchers, airtime top-ups, and in some locations also cell phones and accessories

Built for the communities it serves

Unlike big-box supermarkets, Usave stores are typically between 450m² and 700m², enabling rapid deployment in areas where infrastructure is limited or where other retailers might not operate.

The compact Usave eKasi stores – constructed from 5 to 6 shipping containers – are even more agile, helping bring basic goods into informal settlements and rural areas.

To support operations in regions where electricity supply is often unreliable, Usave has rolled out advanced energy-efficiency technology at more than 200 locations, with plans to expand it group-wide.

Developed in partnership with local tech firm Azoteq, a [SmartSense system](#) enables automated rotational power switching, real-time freezer monitoring, and fuel-saving generator management, helping to prevent stock losses, reduce waste, and cut operating costs. By avoiding unnecessary servicing and optimising energy use, the system has already saved over 95 000 hours of generator runtime and helped achieve a 0% stock loss rate at participating stores – efficiencies that directly support Usave's ability to keep prices low, especially in rural and peri-urban communities.

With 534 stores now open across southern Africa, Usave employs more than 6,700 people and reaches deep into areas where retail penetration remains low but demand for reliable, low-cost essentials is high.

It remains one of the Shoprite Group's fastest-scaling formats – and a critical pillar of its everyday low-price promise.

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