

BUSINESS

Last Updated: November 10, 2010 7:47PM

7-Eleven to expand in Metro Detroit

Tim Devaney / The Detroit News

7-Eleven plans to open six Metro Detroit stores in the next month as part of a plan to expand in urban areas where it already has a strong presence.

The new stores — in Southfield, Farmington, Livonia, Warren, and Eastpointe — further solidify the region as one of 7-Eleven's most successful markets. Metro Detroit has more than 200 locations and is the highest-selling market for its popular Slurpee.



"We already have a significant presence here," 7-Eleven spokeswoman Margaret Chabris said. "We've built a following and a big fan base." The convenience store, which sells everything from its Slurpee to chips and sandwiches to newspapers and coffee, plans to add 280 locations around the nation this year.

It succeeds in working-class areas like Metro Detroit, according to Ken Dalto, a retail analyst in Farmington Hills, because it's more accessible than many grocery stores and cleaner and safer than nearby party stores.

"The key is being in the blue-collar areas of town," Dalto said. "Those areas are underserved by big chains. But the fact of life is that poor people have to live, as well, and need the necessities of life. Somebody has to serve that market."

The store's convenient locations at hundreds of corners around the city make it an easy choice for consumers who have limited transportation and "can't get around," Dalto said. For families with only one car, when the father goes to work, the mother is stuck at home taking care of the kids, he explained. She can't go across the city to find a grocery store, but she can walk down the street to 7-Eleven.

The store also has many locations near high schools, so it has become a popular hangout for students, he said.

"It's all comes down to the location of the stores," Chabris said. "By adding more stores, 7-Eleven continues to be more accessible. It's all about being convenient for the customer."

Many of these customers forgo the nearby party stores, because 7-Eleven is cleaner and safer, Dalto said.

"It's very important to us not only to be convenient, but also to provide a clean and friendly shopping environment," Chabris added.

7-Eleven also sells a variety of low-priced products for customers who are concerned with value. The store's 300 or so generic brand products, known as 7-Select, are 10-20 percent less expensive.

"We give customers a choice," Chabris said. "If they're loyal to a brand, that's fine. But we find in these recessionary times, they want value."

From The Detroit News: <http://detnews.com/article/20101110/BIZ/11100435/7-Eleven-to-expand-in-Metro-Detroit#ixzz14zBjcm70>