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The Beer Store now sells snacks, energy drinks as part of new chapter

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With convenience stores now selling beer and coolers, The Beer Store ? Ontario's long-standing place to buy beer ? has decided to expand its business and add a little convenience store atmosphere to its outlets.

Walking into The Beer Store in Alliston, there is a large display featuring potato chips right by the front door.

For years, The Beer Store had a monopoly on the distribution of brewed alcoholic beverages in the province. However, recent legislation changed the playing field. First, grocery stores were allowed to sell beer, cider, and ready-mix alcoholic drinks. Starting on Sept. 5, some convenience stores were given the green light to sell those products and several local stores now stock them.

?In response to government changes to the marketplace, The Beer Store is pleased to announce partnerships and investments that will now bring new offerings to consumers and help us serve the province of Ontario in new ways,? The Beer Store said in a statement.

Those offerings include products that naturally go along with having a beer on a sunny day.

?Customers can now shop convenience items such as salty snacks, meat snacks and energy beverages from our partners including Old Dutch, Frito Lay, Jack Link's, Great Canadian Meat and Red Bull.?

the statement went on to say. ?Items vary by retail store location and are also available online with eCommerce orders. The Beer Store will launch a new campaign to showcase its commitment to the customers of Ontario with a new media campaign. The campaign delivers a message of how The Beer Store serves the people of Ontario with choice, speedy service and a world-renowned commitment to the environment through our bottle return program. These investments will allow The Beer Store to successfully compete in the marketplace while maintaining its position as the socially responsible and the best source for beer in Ontario.?

The Beer Store was founded in 1927 as Brewers Retail, before changing its name to The Beer Store in 1985, to reflect the commonly used phrase to describe its locations.

Many people thought The Beer Store was a government-operated outlet like the LCBO. However, The Beer Store has always been privately owned by major brewing companies.

The store has received criticism over the years because it was the only source of beer in the province, which raised concerns about a monopoly and unfairly shutting out smaller breweries.

?Bring it on ? we're ready,? said Roy Benin, President of The Beer Store. ?We see this as a new chapter for The Beer Store and we're excited to compete. All of our channels ? from distribution to retail to deposit return will continue to deliver for Ontario.?

The Beer Store recently opened a new state-of-the-art distribution centre in Bolton, Ontario.