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CLOSING STORES MAY BE AN EMBARRASSING AND UNPOPULAR ACTIVITY WITH RETAILERS, BUT IT IS ONE OF THE ESSENTIAL ARTS THEY HAVE TO LEARN TO SURVIVE WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN. HOWEVER, THERE IS MORE TO IT THAN JUST PULLING DOWN SHUTTERS AND LETTING THE EMPLOYEES GO – THERE ARE LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS INVOLVED. YET, RATIONALISING THE STORE COUNT IS CRITICAL IF A RETAILER HAS TO JUMP BACK INTO PROFITABILITY AND LIVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY