

# The Grocer

Focus On: Infant Care by Natalie Brown ([natalie\\_brown@live.co.uk](mailto:natalie_brown@live.co.uk))

**Publishing:** 23 January  
**Advertising deadline:** 7 January  
**Submissions deadline:** 4 January

## The Story

**The infant care sector remains in decline thanks to a particularly poor performance from nappies and baby wipes, which have collectively lost more than £40m. What's happened? What are suppliers and retailers doing to inject some much needed growth into the sector? Meanwhile, other areas such as healthcare are performing well. Why is this?**

## Key themes:

**Nappies:** Nappies continue their downward trend. Why is this? What strategies are brands and retailers putting in place to help push the market back into growth?

**Innovation:** This will be key to this feature. We will be investigating how new product development has shaped the category over the past year and what is in store for shoppers in 2016. We will be profiling four of the most interesting launches in a separate innovation panel.

**Healthcare:** Infant healthcare is booming. Although it still only accounts for a small part of the market, it added the most revenue to the market this year. How has this been achieved? Which brands are driving this growth?

**Baby food:** Baby food has been battered in the health debate as the sugar content of food and drink for babies comes under growing scrutiny. So, which products have been hardest hit and who has managed to grow sales? How are suppliers tackling the health debate?

**Own label:** Own label is declining faster than branded in value terms. But, unlike branded, own label has secured volume growth in infant care thanks to a 6.5% drop in average price. Are retailers sacrificing value to drive volume sales? How have their strategies changed over the past year?

**Price/promotions:** Prices in infant care overall are up but the likes of nappies and baby wipes have seen prices tumble. How come? There's also a huge difference between own label and branded prices. What's driving this?

**Retail share:** Aldi's infant care sales have increased by nearly 50% in a category it already massively overtrades in. How has this been achieved? Which products are driving its growth? How are rival discounters performing? What about the mults? How has their focus on this category changed this year?

**Advertising and marketing:** This feature will also investigate how the marketing and advertising strategies of the category's biggest players have evolved over the past year and how they will develop in the coming year to sustain growth or return brands to growth.

## Key questions the feature is likely to address:

- What consumer trends have impacted the category over the past year?
- How have promotional strategies (both in terms of price and marketing) evolved?
- How have individual retailers' strategies impacted the market?
- How has merchandising changed in the market?
- What impact has own-label had on branded players?
- What's next for the category?