

The Grocer

Focus On: Alcohol by Lisa Riley (lisa.riley@thegrocer.co.uk)

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The Story

Brits have knocked back an extra 22 million litres of supermarket bought booze in the past year. That's volume growth of 0.9%; value sales have grown ahead of this, at 1.1%, suggesting that in spite of the supermarket price war and deflation in the wider economy, shoppers are being convinced to spend more. So which sectors, brands and retailers are driving this? And how is what Brits drink changing?

Key themes (this list is not exhaustive; please investigate new angles as they arise):

Consumer switching: Our analysis shows that sparkling wine and spirits are the key growth drivers in booze. Where are these drinks winning shoppers from and how? Why is cider struggling and what is driving the slight growth in beer and cider?

Consumer tastes: How are drinkers' tastes evolving? Apart from the trend for sweeter drinks, how else are tastes changing? Is the trend for world cuisines having an impact? What about lower abv drinks?

Price and premiumisation: Our research shows that much of the alcoholic drinks market's growth in the past year has been driven by price increases, with more premium products enjoying growing sales. What's driving this?

The retailers: This feature will pay close attention to how different retailers are approaching the alcoholic drinks fixture and to what effect. How are retailers' branded and own-label ranges developing? How are they merchandising the category? Who's performing strongest and weakest?

Innovation: Key to this feature will be a discussion of the latest NPD on the market. The feature will explore the market trends that have inspired these innovations and weigh up which new launches are most likely to encourage new trends in the category. Sixteen of the most interesting recent launches (four beer; four cider; four wine; four spirits or RTDs) will be profiled in separate boxes.

The discounters: The discounters stealing growing share from the traditional multiples across grocery, so how active are they in alcohol? How are they looking to win more share? How do their product and price ranges compare with those of the mainstream multiples? Which brands and products are enjoying the most growth in the discounters?

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?