

The Grocer

Focus On: Soup by Amy North (amy.north@thegrocer.co.uk)

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The Story

Brands are having a tough time in the soup category. Why are they losing share to own label? Which retailers have been pushing their own label lines in the past year and how are brands looking to fight back? And why are overall soup volumes in decline?

Key Themes:

Retailers: This feature will explore in detail the factors that have led to different retailers' performances, from ranging (branded and own label) and merchandising through to price and promotions. Which retailers have been the most successful in the past year and why?

Brands: This feature will explore in detail the factors that have led to different brands performances, from NPD and new formats through to advertising, marketing and promotions. Which brands have been the most successful in the past year and why? How are players using innovation and strong marketing to cement a point of difference?

Price & promotions: Average prices have fallen 2.8% in the past year. This feature will explore the reasons behind this, from the shift to own label and growth in the discounters through to deal activity amongst brands and moves to everyday low pricing. How are promotional mechanics evolving and what are players doing to retain category value?

Flavours: How are tastes changing when it comes to soup? In recent years we've seen the development of more filling, meal-style soups using exotic flavours, herbs and spices. Is this continuing? What will be the big flavours of 2016/7? And what of the trend for 'raw soups'?

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. Eight of the most interesting recent/forthcoming launches (four fresh; four ambient) will be profiled in a separate box.

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?