

The Grocer

Focus On: Halloween by Paul Davies (Paul.artist@gmail.com)

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The Story

- **Halloween continues to boom in Britain. And with Halloween falling on a Saturday this year, retailers are gearing up for a bonanza this October. But, following high profile coverage of the fire risks associated with supermarket Halloween fancy dress costumes (one of the event's most significant sectors), are sales about to come crashing down? What other sectors are gearing up for a ghoulishly good time this year?**

Key themes:

Fancy dress: Asda says fancy dress is its biggest sector at Halloween. But after Claudia Winkleman's daughter suffered serious burns when her Halloween costume caught fire and Watchdog subsequently ran an investigation into the fire risks of such products, how long will it remain so? How are retailers responding to the concerns?

Confectionery: Halloween is big business for confectioners. In the past year value sales have grown at a much faster rate than volumes, suggesting they have managed to convince shoppers to spend more on Halloween treats. How have they done this? What sort of new products have been launched? And which retailers are confectionery brands selling through?

The retail mix: This feature will pay close attention to how different retailers are looking to make the most of Halloween. The strategies of the grocery multiples (many of whom are converting whole aisles to Halloween 'stores within stores'), discounters and pound stores will be investigated in terms of merchandising, product ranges, pricing and so on.

Adults: As The Grocer reported in last year's Focus On: Halloween, increasingly adults are being bitten by the Halloween bug. This feature will explore how retailers and brands are looking to capitalise on this trend with new products, marketing campaigns and in store activity.

Toys: This feature will explore how important toys have become for supermarkets that want to make the most of Halloween and investigate what manufacturers and retailers are doing to maximise the opportunities seasonal toys offer.

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 2015. We will be profiling four of the most interesting launches in a separate innovation panel.

- **4 x food innovations:** Halloween products or product ranges that have not appeared in The Grocer before, including launch date and RSP, and a picture of each.
- **4 x non-food innovations:** Halloween products or product ranges that have not appeared in The Grocer before, including launch date and RSP, and a picture of each.

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?