

# The Grocer

**Focus On: Adult Soft Drinks by Natalie Brown (natalie\_brown@live.co.uk)**

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## The Story

**Tired of all the doom and gloom, economic uncertainty and soaring costs as Britain shuffles towards Brexit? Then we have just the tonic: sales of mixers are booming! Tonic sales have more than doubled and premium colas are up by almost 90%. Overall, the adult soft drinks market is up 3.5%. Is this purely because Brits are sousing themselves with more spirits? What else is driving growth? And what about the calls for Brits to drink less alcohol and the growth in events such as Dry January?**

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

**Innovation:** Key to this feature will be a discussion of the latest NPD on the market – particularly recent craft cola and premium soft drink products. 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. Four of the most interesting NPD will be profiled in a separate box.

**Macro trends:** This feature will explore in detail how consumer trends such as health and moderation of alcohol consumption are affecting this market. Another area of interest will be growing premiumisation, with particular reference being paid to the price inflation adult soft drinks have seen in the past year; is this down to premiumisation? Inflation? A bit of both?

**Retailers:** Another key angle of this feature will be analysis of how different retailers are approaching this burgeoning category. How do different retailers' ranges (branded and own label), price and promotional strategies and merchandising differ? Who's championing the sector? Who's lagging behind?

**Craft:** We all know craft booze is booming. Could craft soft drinks be the next big thing? Which brands are playing the craft card to their advantage? How are soft drinks players using the growth in craft booze to their advantage, either by copying the cues of this market or by marketing themselves as mixers for craft gins, etc?

**Alcohol:** The loose definition we use for this feature is soft drinks that are marketed as an alternative to alcohol. With initiatives such as Dry January and Stoptober gaining popularity and the government continuing to bang the drum for temperance, how much of an opportunity does all this present the sector? We will be exploring this in a separate box out.

**Price/promotions:** This feature will investigate the role price and promotions are playing in this market and explore what impact the extension of own label is likely to have on this pattern going forward. *This feature will be exploring in detail the much feted rise of alcohol free spirits and other trends to watch in this sector. We will also be profiling 12 of the most recent interesting new launches in this market.*

**Alcohol free spirits: Fad or the future?** Does Tesco's listing of a non-alcoholic spirit brand herald the birth of a new sector? Or will it be a flash in the pan? How much potential there is for alcohol free spirits?

**Alcohol free beer:** We've seen a spate of launches in alcohol free beers. Who's doing what? Why is demand growing? To what extent do sales spike in January?