

The Grocer

Focus On: Personal Care & Toiletries by Daniel Selwood (Daniel.Selwood@thegrocer.co.uk)

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The Story

Personal care and toiletries are back in growth! This time a year ago, the sector was struggling, but in the past year sales have increased, driven by a sparkling performance for oral care as shoppers have splashed out more on premium toothpastes with added benefits such as whitening and mouthwashes. But other sectors aren't looking so spruce with some struggling. Why? What can they learn from the parts of the market that are in growth?

Key themes:

Dental care: Toothpaste is outperforming the rest of the market. Why is this? Which brands are driving this trend? Who have been the biggest winners and losers of the past year and what's the strategy for the coming year? How is mouthwash performing?

Skincare: Skincare is looking in good shape right now. But the market is polarising; the average price of brands has risen 3.3% in the past year, while own label prices have fallen by a whopping 6.6%. What's driving this? And what's in store for the coming year?

Razor blades: To what extent have razor blades been hit by the current vogue for beards among men? What are brands doing to counter this trend? And are women shaving their bodies less?

Price, promotions and premiumisation: According to our research, shoppers are buying fewer products on deal and opting for more premium products. This feature will include in-depth analysis of how these patterns are impacting the average price paid for personal care and toiletries.

Retailers: Our research shows that the supermarkets are continuing to lose significant ground to discounters and pound stores. Why is this? How have the ways different retailers approach the category – in terms of ranging (own label, retailer exclusives, premium brands, etc), promotions and so on – evolved over the past year and what's on the cards for the coming 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.

Innovation: Key to this feature will be a discussion of the latest NPD from the category's brands and own label players, large and small. 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 market. We will profile four of the most interesting new launches in a separate innovation panel.

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's next for the category?