

The Grocer

Focus On: Sauces & Condiments by Simon Creasey (creasey.simon@gmail.com)

Publishing: 12 September
Advertising deadline: 21 August
Submissions deadline: 14 August

The Story

- **A difficult year for sauces & condiments: value has dipped; volumes have inched up, suggesting price is increasingly important. Own label is stealing volume share from brands following a fall in price. Which retailers are driving this growth in own label? What can brands do to fight back? And what's driving the boom in barbecue and chilli sauce?**

Key themes (this list is not exhaustive; new angles will be investigated as they arise):

Retailers: This feature will focus on how retailers' strategies have evolved in the category over the past year, with particular attention being paid to the development of own label ranges, merchandising and brand listings. What's driving the decline of the grocery multiples and the rising sales of the discounters and pound stores?

Own label v brands: Own label is in strong volume growth but value is down. This feature will investigate why this is. Crucial to this feature will be analysis of how brands are using factors such as NPD, price promotions and marketing & advertising to counteract the march of own label. Which brands are performing strongest?

Innovation: A discussion of the latest NPD, from new, premium mayonnaise and ketchup variants to format innovation such as non-drip bottles, will be central to this feature. How has innovation impacted the performances of specific brands and what's on the cards in terms of innovation this year?

Types of sauces: Barbecue and chilli sauce are in strong growth, ketchup and other British classics are holding steady, while salad cream is struggling. This feature will pay close attention to the factors affecting these disparate performances. What is being done to return struggling sectors to growth and sustain the growth of others?

The weather: Table sauces consumption goes up in times of hot weather as Brits break out the barbies. So how big a factor has the weather been on the category in the past year? How do brands use things like ads and promotions to drive sales when the sun began to shine? How's this summer's weather affected sales?

The next big thing: This feature will investigate in detail the food trends that are likely to shape new products, from brands large and small, over the coming 12 months. We're particularly interested in hearing from smaller brands that have or are looking to break into the supermarkets.

8 x innovations: We identify eight new products (four sauces; four condiments) or product ranges that have not appeared in The Grocer before including launch date and RSP, plus 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?