

The Grocer

Focus On: Soup by Kate Halliwell (kate@katehalliwell.com)

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The Story

Soup is back on the boil! This time a year ago, we reported how the market was in value and volume decline after a mild winter and months of fierce deals by retailers to drive volumes of fresh soup. This time around, fresh soup is flying, canned is holding steady and only dry soups are in decline. What's driven this turn around and how long can the growth last?

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?

Price & promotions: The price war is in full swing in soup. In fresh soup, average prices have fallen as retailers promote hard to put soup at the top of the menu for shoppers on the hunt for a quick lunch. Has price become the key differentiator in fresh soup? How can brands hold on to value? How is the price war impacting the dynamic between brands and own label?

Flavours: How are tastes changing when it comes to soup? In recent years we've seen the development of more meal-style soups using exotic flavours, herbs and spices. Is this continuing? What will be the big flavours of 2015?

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?
- We profile four new products or product ranges that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before, including launch date and RSP.