

The Grocer

Focus On: Toys & Collectables by Amy North (amy.north@thegrocer.co.uk)

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The Story

The British toy market is booming. In 2015, sales increased by 5.9% to more than £3.2bn, driven chiefly by the launch of more than 58,000 new toys, which put a staggering £1bn through the tills. So which toys have been most popular for the supermarkets? What are going to be the hottest toys of 2016? And how is the contest between specialist toy retailers and the supermarkets shaping up? Who's making the most of the growth?

Themes:

Collectibles: Sales of lower priced collectible toys have also been a key contributor to growth in recent years, particularly for the supermarkets because such toys are at the right price point to be purchased as part of the weekly grocery shop. So which products have been most successful and what will be the big hits of 2015?

Black Friday: How much of an impact did Black Friday have on the past year's performance? Which products sold best on Black Friday; larger, more expensive toys rather than smaller items and collectibles? How do larger items sell through the rest of the year; has Black Friday become the key opportunity for selling such items?

Licensed products: Analysis suggests that three of the top 10 selling toys in the past year were linked to a movie or a cartoon. So what were the most successful licensed products of the past year and what will be the big names of 2016?

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 2014. We will be profiling four of the most interesting launches in a separate innovation panel.

Retailer mix: In June 2013, Tesco said it was reducing its focus on some non-food categories, including toys. Has it given them less space in store? What effect has this had on the other supermarkets – have they taken this as an opportunity and ramped up their toy offer or also pulled back from the category? What about pound stores and discounters?

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?