The Grocer

Focus On: Alcohol by Daniel Woolfson (daniel.woolfson@thegrocer.co.uk)

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The Story

Less is more in the booze aisles. The past year has seen huge range reductions in the big four – for example, supermarket wine ranges are now 20% smaller than they were in 2015. More Brits are curbing their booze; an extra 600k people have gone completely teetotal. Yet booze sales are booming, with an extra £344.7m spent in the supers. What's going on? Which retailers, drinks and brands are driving this? And what does the coming year hold?

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

Range rationalisation and retail share: Central to this feature will an investigation into how the swingeing cuts to the big four's booze ranges – resulting in some of the world's biggest brands losing listings – have impacted the performances of the different supermarkets. Has it paid off?

Space allocation: Another focus will be on how the allocation of space in store to different booze sub sectors is changing and how this is affecting sales. We will also be exploring how merchandising of the booze is evolving, with a particular focus on secondary sitings such as gondola end chillers

Consumer switching: Our analysis shows that sparkling wine and spirits are the key growth drivers in booze. Where are these drinks winning shoppers from and how? Why is beer and lager the only booze sib sector in volumes decline?

Moderation: With events such as Dry January and Stoptober gaining popularity and growing numbers eschewing the demon drink altogether, the past year has seen a slew of low and no alcohol launches. How are these performing? Which retailers are leading the way in this field?

Price, promotions and premiumisation: Our research shows that much of the alcoholic drinks market's growth in the past year has been driven by price increases, with more premium products enjoying growing sales. What's driving this? How are promotional strategies evolving?

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. Sixteen of the most interesting recent launches (four beer; four cider; four wine; four spirits or RTDs) will be profiled in separate boxes.

The discounters: The discounters stealing growing share from the traditional multiples across grocery, so how active are they in alcohol? How are they looking to win more share? How do their product and price ranges compare with those of the mainstream multiples? Which brands and products are enjoying the most growth in the discounters?