The Grocer

Focus On: Wine and champagne by Daniel Woolfson (Daniel.Woolfson@wrbm.com)

Publishing: 7 April
Advertising deadline: 27 March
Submissions deadline: 20 March

The Story
Wine is growing faster than sparkling for the first time since 2013, driven by shoppers swapping champers for white wine (likely due to champagne's 9.1% average price increase this year). So are we simply trading down? Or is this down to some nifty branding and innovation? And what else is hot in the wine and champagne category?

Key Themes

Rosé blues: Red and white still wines are both up in value, but rosé is down 9.9%. Whilst own label has seen impressive growth of 22%, powered by discounters Aldi and Lidl ranges of £5 or under rosé wines, branded value sales have plummeted nearly £34m. Is there a way for brands to turn sales around without dropping prices, or are today's consumers simply unwilling to pay more than a fiver for a bottle of Rosé?

'Light' wines: The trend for moderation has continued this year, with skinny prosecco, light rosé, and low/no alcohol options launched by brands, as well as own label ranges. Will 'light' wines keep picking up speed over 2018, and who are the key players in the sector? Which NPDs/ranges have seen the most success, and which have missed the mark?

Other sparkling: The fastest growing sector within the category – 'other sparkling' – is predicted to overtake Cava in market share within the year, as Brexit and record poor harvests abroad lead to higher prices for international wines and champagnes. So who are the winners in this sub-category? Is English sparkling wine finally making its mark? Why are OL sales in the sector lagging so far behind brands and which ranges/NPDs have powered the sector's growth?

New formats: Single-serve mini formats have grown in popularity across the category as more shoppers look for moderation, but have any other formats emerged this year? How have new 'half bottles' sold, and what about wine in bag in a box? We look at new and innovative formats, who they target and why they are succeeding or failing.

Promotions: The wider market trend of fewer promotions has been clear to see across the category, with promotions down -5.7% overall. The prevalence of temporary price reductions fell 8.9%, though volume deals grew 4%. How has this impacted on retailer sales?

Advertising and marketing: How the marketing and advertising strategies of the category's biggest brands have evolved over the past year and how they will develop in the coming year to sustain growth or return brands to growth?

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?