

The Grocer

Focus On: Crisps, Nuts and Snacks by Rob Brown (rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com)

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The Story

Brits are going nuts! As consumers turn towards healthier snacking options, nuts have come to the fore – racking up over nearly £36m in extra sales last year. The rise of trendy options such as the tiger nut and the pili nut among health bloggers can't have done any harm. Yet as nuts become the fastest growing snack, former darling of the snacking world popcorn is slowing down. So what's going on?

Key themes:

Nuts: Sales of nuts are up 7.4% by value, but that's almost entirely driven by price. So what is making prices rise? The rise of nuts being seen as a healthy snacking option – rather than being shunned for their fat content – is fuelling demand but doesn't explain why prices are suddenly up. Is it trendy new options? And why are consumers prepared to pay more?

Popcorn: Last year, it was all about the popcorn, which was storming ahead with over 11% increase in value. This year, growth has slipped back to just over 4%. So is the popcorn party over? And is there any innovation left in the category?

Crisps: Demand is still strong for the potato-based snack despite the plethora of other options out there. To what extent is this fuelled by lighter crisps? Has the introduction of various spicy, exotic new flavours played any part?

Healthy snack: The healthy snacking boom isn't going anywhere. What have been the latest innovations and what are consumers looking for?

Brands: Branded growth is behind that of own label, but which ones are still performing well. Have social media campaigns and seasonal marketing made an impact?

Premium: We're likely to see a return to recessionary behaviour, where shoppers swap evenings out for evenings in – and are prepared to pay more for premium snacks to make it feel more special. So who stands to benefit?

Innovations: We identify new products or product ranges that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before including including launch date and RSP, and images

Crazy crisps: Crisps have gone mad over the past year – we've had everything from candy cane to sparkling glitter prosecco plus we look at the latest trends in snacking with Food Spark.

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?