

The Grocer

Focus On: Beer and Cider by Daniel Woolfson (Daniel.woolfson@wrbm.com)

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The Story

It's World Cup time. And for the booze aisles, this only means one thing: a boom in beer and cider sales. Some brands are looking to nab the lion's share with sponsorship packages but, just like the England team, it will have tough competition. Craft beer and cider are continuing to play a winning game in terms of growth, as drinkers are increasingly willing to splash out on more premium choices. So could this be the first craft World Cup?

Themes:

World Cup: The competition kicks off on 14 June. What are beer and cider brands/retailers doing to capitalise on this opportunity? Who is investing in promotions? And what other activity will there be to persuade fans to part with their cash?

Craft lager and ale: Both have done well throughout the year, as less premium brands fall by the wayside. But will the World Cup see fortunes reverse?

Cider: Cider was among the fastest growing categories in alcohol last year. So what brands/formats are proving particularly popular? Will craft cider be the next craft beer?

Stout: Value sales shot up over the past year, and that's not just down to price rises. Why?

Rising prices: Prices of ale and lager both increased over the past year. To what extent is this down to premiumisation and to what extent a decline in promotions? And how long can this upwards trend continue?

Own brand: All this price upheaval seems to be pushing punters towards cheaper own label brands, which have boomed in value sales (albeit from a small base). Which retailers are winning?

Minimum unit pricing: How has this shaken up the category and what will be the effects over the coming year?

Innovation: We run-down of the top launches in beer and cider, ideally ones that haven't been featured in The Grocer before including RSP and image.

The end of white cider? Could the combination of MUP and increasing awareness of alcohol consumption spell the end of white cider as we know it?

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?