

The Grocer

Focus On: Confectionery Publishing 12 September

Confectionery enjoyed an early lockdown, surging in sales as Brits stocked up on comforting snacks. Performance slowed, however, as the pandemic dragged on, with on-the-go formats struggling due to low footfall. However, as consumers slowly return to work and Christmas approaches, an uplift for chocs and candies looks to be in the offing. That said, headwinds are approaching: the UK's newly proposed obesity initiative, a likely recession and Brexit are all certain to have an impact on the confectionery market.

Across two reports, this feature will look at the future of the confectionery market. Which brands have done best during coronavirus, and which have struggled? Which are best prepared for whatever comes next, and which face an uncertain fate?

Feature One: Chocolate by Daniel Woolfson (Daniel.Woolfson@thegrocer.co.uk)

Submission deadline: 19 August

Advertising deadline: 19 August

Key themes

Overview: What will chocolate look like in the future? What are the current reasons for success and pressures? Who's winning and who's losing? And what's the outlook for the year ahead? What will be the opportunities for sales, and what will be the obstacles? What are brands predicting, and how are they getting ready for whatever comes next?

Obesity: what are the likely impacts of the new National Food Strategy report on the chocolate market? Will suppliers be forced to reformulate, shrink or even delist lines? How will they promote them under stricter guidelines?

Children: what are suppliers doing to ensure their treats are suitable for children amid the current obesity epidemic? How will sales be affected by the proposed pre-watershed ban on TV ads for HFSS products?

Reduced sugar: Chocolate with lower sugar content have reportedly struggled to gain mass appeal. What's the problem? And is anyone breaking through to success?

Shrinkflation: it's still happening across chocolate. Why? And can we expect more? By whom most likely?

Commodities: with Brexit and post-virus recession approaching, how will brands cope with the likely much higher costs of sugar, cocoa and the like? Will they take the economic hit or pass it to the consumer (and in what form)?

Formats: In light of reduced footfall, how are countlines performing – and how have blocks, multipacks and gifting formats been doing by comparison?

Dark: Is the dark choc trend still a force to be reckoned with? Or have locked-down Brits returned to milky variants for comfort? What – if any – challenges do dark chocolate face from the 100% dairy-free chocolate unveiled earlier this year? And from vegan 'milk' chocolate lines from well-known brands?

DTC: what's the future of direct-to-consumer chocs? Who's doing already? And who's ramping up?

Christmas: How are chocolatiers preparing for Christmas, one of their biggest sales events of the year? Will they be going all-out with seasonal lines and marketing? If so, how? Or will they be cautious – and why?

Shopper Intelligence: how do Brits shop the confectionery aisle – and particularly the chocolate segment?

Protein: is it the future of healthier chocolate? Which brands have produced protein lines – and why? How are they made? And what success have they had so far? Are more lines to come?

Kantar data: using Kantar commentary, we explain the reasons behind the rise and fall of the relevant sectors.

Nielsen: using Nielsen commentary, we explain the reasons behind the rise and fall of the leading brands.

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

Feature Two: Sugar Confectionery by Natalie Brown (natalie_brown@live.co.uk)

Submission deadline: 19 August

Advertising deadline: 19 August

Key themes

Overview: have candy makers wasted their time? Many big names have launched healthier options for kids and adults alike, but these could now be banned from advertising and promotions under proposed new regulations. Which products are likely to be affected, and how are their owners gearing up for such a ban? What will be the cost?

Children: as with chocolate, what are candy suppliers doing to ensure their treats are suitable for children amid the current obesity epidemic?

Adults: how are brands innovating for adults? What brands, formats and flavours are hitting the mark?

The future: what do suppliers see as the biggest opportunities and obstacles in the year ahead? How are they preparing for them?

Commodities: as with chocolate, how will brands cope with the likely much higher costs of sugar? Will they take the economic hit or pass it to the consumer (and in what form)?

Lockdown: Which brands and formats capitalised on stockpiling and comfort eating? And which struggled during lockdown?

Brands versus own-label: how's the battle playing out? How much of a problem for brands are 'copycat' versions of their lines?

DTC: what's the future of direct-to-consumer candy? Who's doing already? And who's ramping up?

Fruits, toffee and mints: Which areas of sugary confectionery are growing fastest, and why? Which are being left by the wayside?

Gum: given it's largely an impulse/on-the-go purchase, has anyone been chewing it?

Formats: Which other formats are doing well, and which not?

TV ads: what are TV ads likely to look like if stricter guidelines are enforced? Which well-known ads are likely to vanish from the small screen?

Weird flavours: what wild and wacky variants are available in sugar confectionery? Which are doing best? Why?

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