The Grocer

Focus On: Hot beverages and cold brew by Rob Brown
(rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com)

Publishing: 4 September
Advertising deadline: 20 August
Submissions deadline: 20 August

Feature one: The premiumisation of hot beverages

The cuppa is going posh. In modern Britain, a milky mug of tea or hastily brewed instant coffee will no longer suffice. At least, that's if the latest innovations in the category are anything to go by. In February, Nescafé unveiled a 'craft' version of its Azera blend. Twinings has been busy investing in its 'wellbeing' teas as it prepares to overhaul the brand. PG Tips has brought out a vitamin-infused range. And Hotel Chocolat is looking to make the hot chocolate into the ultimate luxury with its growing Velvetiser range. All of these innovations coincide with strong growth in the retail hot beverages market, up £188.3m thanks to the pandemic and resulting rise in at-home consumption. So how much of the market can these posh innovations take? Will they suffer as high-street coffee shops reopen? And where does all this leave your standard mug of instant?

Tea: Black tea has been battling a long-running decline. To what extent can premiumisation help to overcome this? Or does the premium market really lie with other forms of tea, such as fruity and herbal?

Coffee: Instant still accounts for the lion's share of sales. But how much of this is 'posh' instant? What insights are driving the craft-style innovations in this space? And how many people are migrating to formats such as filter coffee and pods? It's worth noting that there has been a surge in commodity prices in coffee. How will that affect the premiumisation trend, as shoppers pay more for a standard brew?

Hot chocolate: To what extent are retail brands also pushing premium cues, and how? How much of a market is there here?

Out of home: To what extent are all of these innovations drawing on out-of-home cues? And will this premise of out-of-home quality inside the home be as powerful now that Covid restrictions have eased?

Innovations: Four new premium products or product ranges that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before including launch date and rsp, and a hi-res picture.

The out-of-home fightback: Coffee shops have reopened and they're looking to win back their trade. How much of the in-home market could they take and what tactics are they using to do so?

Feature two: Is the iced coffee market bulletproof?

The recipe for bulletproof coffee is a seemingly unappetising blend of coffee, oil and ghee. That's probably why, after a brief moment in the spotlight, the brew seems to have fallen out of favour. So perhaps another part of the market is more deserving of the 'bulletproof' moniker: iced coffee. The market has grown a staggering 37.6% despite the challenges of Covid restrictions, which have dampened the on-the-go market, and a lacklustre summer to date. So how are iced coffee brands managing to keep the momentum going? To what extent is this through NPD, and how much more is planned? Are they winning more shelf space as a result? And how are other iced beverages such as kombucha faring?

NPD: Innovation has been coming thick and fast over the past year. What have been the most important innovations, and how much innovation is set to hit the shelves in the coming year?

Pricing: Promotions have gained importance in the category. To what extent are they driving sales? And will this emphasis on pricing continue?

Brands: It's been a year of mixed fortunes for brands. While some have enjoyed soaring growth, others have faltered. What have been the drivers of success?

Retail space: How have iced coffee fixtures changed over the past year, and will the category get more space on the back of its sales growth?

Energy drinks x iced coffee: Energy drinks brands have been muscling in on the iced coffee market with their own extra-strength brews. Which have been the most successful, and who are these appealing to?

Innovations: Four new products or product ranges that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before including launch date and rsp, and a hi-res picture.