

# The Grocer

Focus On: Cakes and biscuits by Niamh Leonard-Bedwell

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**Cakes and biscuits enjoyed a boom over the last year of lockdowns, with cake value sales increasing by 5.1% sales while biscuits grew by 3.4%. The growth is attributable to consumers buying more packs per trip, increased prices, and more full-price sales. But with HFSS rules impending and many watching their waistlines, will shoppers ditch the biscuits for a healthier snack? Can challenger and incumbent brands reformulate their products for a health conscious consumer? And will we be tempted by impulse cakes and biscuits when we're on the go?**

**Health.** With the pandemic ebbing, many believe that consumers will be more conscious about their health, including monitoring their diet. For comfort food that has thrived during lockdown, is this a threat to future sales? Or will more focus be put on brands? What impact will HFSS rules have? And what role will free-from play?

**Return of impulse.** With more people going back to school or the office, what is the opportunity for capturing on-the-go purchases? Will the expected decline in home-baking and return of office parties be a boon for cakes? And will we see a return of biscuits targeted towards the breakfast market and lunchtime snacking?

**Brands vs labels.** Brands grew by a higher percentage than own labels over the past year. This was true both in biscuits, where brands remain dominant, and cakes where own labels products still make up over half the market. Recent product launches have allowed brands to retain dominance, while M&S's own-label range has been aided by online availability courtesy of Ocado. So what's dividing the winners and losers, and where can we expect the balance to lie between brands and own-labels in the future?

**Online channel:** Cakes and biscuits were among the beneficiaries of increased online grocery shopping during the pandemic. With many consumers expected to continue using this channel post-pandemic, what does it mean for the category?

**4 x innovations:** We will profile four new products or ranges that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before. For this we require a high-res product image, launch date, rsp and full product details.