

# The Grocer

## Focus On: Tobacco

By Jimmy Nicholls [Jimmy.Nicholls@thegrocer.co.uk](mailto:Jimmy.Nicholls@thegrocer.co.uk)

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After the temporary bump of Covid, this year has been a return to reality for tobacco. As Big Tobacco reiterated its commitment to stubbing out the category, prices continued to ratchet, bans on branding encouraged trading down and the stigma against smoking continued to grow. Meanwhile vaping is still heating up. So with traditional cigarettes and roll-ups in terminal decline, how many shoppers are switching over to vapes and e-cigs? How do the demographics of smokers and vapers differ, and what impact is that having? And how are the strategies of Big Tobacco companies likely to fare in 2023?

**Economic case:** With smoking becoming increasingly costly, and vapes offering 600 puffs for as little as a fiver, is it encouraging shoppers to switch?

**Age groups:** Colourful vapes have become associated with younger shoppers, with smoking increasingly tied to older generations. How are brands and retailers appealing to different groups?

**Big Tobacco:** Cigarette giants have spent years pledging to move away from tobacco into vaping and e-cigarettes. Is this translating into tangible actions? And what does it mean for the wider smoking and vaping markets?

**Accessories:** Given the constraints on tobacco advertising and display, accessories offer brands a chance to add excitement to the category. So what are the latest developments?

**Illicit trade:** Economic rules of thumb suggest that as the legal market for tobacco becomes pricier the illicit trade becomes more appealing. So how is the black market for tobacco evolving?

**Heated tobacco:** Heated tobacco claims to offer the pleasure of conventional smoking without as many health drawbacks. How are efforts to promote it in the UK progressing?