

The Grocer

FOCUS ON: CONFECTIONERY

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FEATURE ONE: HFSS ONE YEAR ON

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At the time of publication, it'll be almost a year since the government's HFSS regulations came into force – banning the majority of chocolate and candy from impulse aisles and other prominent store locations. How has the confectionery market changed as a result, in terms of sales, promotions and marketing? And how is it preparing for the impending ban on volume sales in the mults?

Ranging: How has ranging of confectionery changed in stores? Which retailers have taken the most inventive approach to ranging? And which are paying lip service to ranging – or even flouting the HFSS regulations?

Sales: Volumes are down across most areas of confectionery. How much have they changed in the past 12 months – and to what degree has HFSS been the driver of losses? Which sectors and brands have lost out most? And have any bucked the downward trend? How so?

Enforcement: There's been suggestion that local Trading Standards departments have not been enforcing them. What evidence and/or criticism is there of lack of enforcement? How are Trading Standards responding? Any instances where the rules have been enforced – and what was the outcome?

Promotions & marketing: What promotional mechanics have suppliers and retailers relied on the past year? How effective have they been? How has the approach to marketing changed? Have budgets been upped or cut back? What's the result of marketing activity in the past year?

Volume deals: How are suppliers and retailers preparing for the clampdown on HFSS volume deals? And how do they expect the latest rules to impact sales?

FEATURE TWO: CHOCOLATE

By Nick Hughes nick@nickhugheswriting.com

The price of cocoa is surging. Commodity prices have risen almost 60% in the past year, according to Mintec. At the same time, the average price of bars, pouches and boxes up 12.6% on average in the mults [Kantar]. How much of this is driven by chocolatiers are passing on the commodity costs to shoppers? What other surging input costs are chocolate makers facing? And what are they doing about them?

Cocoa: How significant are commodity cost changes of the past year? What's causing them? Who's been hit hardest? How are chocolate makers responding? To what degree are they leading to high prices for shoppers? And smaller packs? And how are shoppers reacting to change?

Inputs: What are the other rising costs are chocolate makers facing – and why? What part are they playing in reshaping the market?

White chocolate: It's the trendy chocolate style of the season. Is that because it's cheaper to make, given it lacks cocoa? Or are there other reasons? Either way, what opportunities are there for white chocolate to cash in right now?

Ethics: The cost of cocoa is just monetary. An ethical supply chain is also increasingly important. Who's doing what to ensure transparency? And sustainability?

MrBeast: What's all the furore over MrBeast choccie bars? Are there any other trendy/US chocolate brands set to be the next viral snack?

Gifting: With Christmas approaching, who's leading the way in eye-catching gift options? How important are they to the larger category? And how well are they likely to do in a cost of living crisis?

Innovations: We will profile eight new products or ranges that, ideally, have not appeared in The Grocer before. We need launch date, rsp, and a hi-res picture of each.

FEATURE THREE: CANDY

By Emma Weinbren emma.weinbren@thegrocer.co.uk

How are brands and retailers innovating? Who are the most inventive brands? What are the trendiest flavours and formats? How effective are suppliers' efforts?

Sales: How do they look overall – and for brands and own label? What are the key factors shaping candy's performance? Which are the most successful sectors, retailers and brands – and the least

Innovation: How are suppliers using NPD and reformulation to recoup volumes? What are their main focuses? Flavour? Texture? Format? Health? Price? Convenience? How successful have their efforts been so far?

Price: What's making candy so much more expensive – particularly in own label? How are shoppers reacting to higher prices?

Innovations: We will profile four new products or ranges that, ideally, have not appeared in The Grocer before. We need launch date, rsp, and a hi-res picture of each.

Gum: Sales of chewing gum bounced back last year as people were fully back on the go. How's it done since? What are the hottest brands, flavours and formats? And why?

FEATURE FOUR: CREATIVE CHALLENGE

By Niamh Leonard-Bedwell n.leonard-bedwell@thegrocer.co.uk

We ask three design agencies to make old-fashioned sweets fashionable again. They will create a trendy version of humbugs, liquorice allsorts, toffees or the like – making them appeal to younger, social-conscious, price-sensitive shoppers. Each agency will provide artwork of their concepts and an explanation behind their ideas.