

# The Grocer

## Focus On: Soft Drinks

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### FEATURE ONE

By Rob Brown [rob\\_j\\_a\\_brown@hotmail.com](mailto:rob_j_a_brown@hotmail.com)

**Soft drinks' powerhouses are working hard to stay relevant. The past 12 months has seen a wealth of flavour innovation, rebranding and sustainability measures from leading makers of soda and squash. So, who's doing what, and why? How effective have been all the launches and changes been?**

**Sales:** How are the soda and squash categories performing? Which big brands are buoyant? And which are sinking? What are the key drivers of value and volume changes? Who is buying traditional soft drinks nowadays? And who are establish brands working to attract?

**Innovation:** Coca-Cola recently revived its Lemon variant; Tango says its Sugar-Free Apple line is soaring; and Irn-Bru Xtra Ice Cream is still exciting shoppers. What's driving flavour innovation? Which flavours are most on-trend? And most successful? Who are they aimed at? And what other noteworthy NPD has been seen across the market?

**Rebrands:** Sprite, Pepsi and Dr Pepper have all undergone major makeovers of late. What exactly did they do? And why? How have the rebrands/reformulations been received? Which other household names have made similar efforts?

**Marketing:** Last year saw the return of the Ribena berries characters and a significant marketing investment by Fanta. So, what did these activations involve? What was their aim? How much spend was involved? And which other brands have also been on the campaign trail?

**Sustainability:** Big soft drinks brands are still some of the world's biggest creators of packaging waste. How in the past year have they worked to tackle this problem? Who's made the most meaningful moves? And who's lagging behind? How have suppliers responded to accusations of greenwashing?

**Health:** Soda brands are pushing their sugar-free lines. Other brands have launched a functional range. What's with all these healthier options? How are HFSS rules shaping the soft drinks category? Which other brands are working to shake off the category's unhealthy image?

**Own label:** How big a threat is own label to soft drinks' big players – and how are they responding?

**Artificial sweeteners:** They've been the cause of more than one controversy in the past year or so. Why? What are the issues? How are big soft drink brands responding?

**A.I.:** Coke's been using AI for its art and ads. How? And what other big-name brands are taking advantage of artificial intelligence.

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

## **FEATURE TWO**

By Pola Lem [pola.lem@thegrocer.co.uk](mailto:pola.lem@thegrocer.co.uk)

**Soft drinks aisles are increasingly crowded, as a host of smaller brands jostle for space. Who are the most notable players challenging the dominance of the category's old guard? What value are they adding to the market? And how?**

**Challengers:** Which are the brands best placed for mainstream success? What's so appealing about them? How are they standing out from the crowd?

**Added extras:** Many smaller brands are more than just pop or squash; they promote gut health, use CBD as an ingredient or add vitamins. Who's doing what – and why?

**Investment:** Challenger brands are attracting investment from the crowd and venture capitalists. Whose been coining in the funds? And what numbers are involved? Where's the money from? And what's is being spent on?

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