The Grocer

Focus On: Own Label

By Daniel Selwood daniel.selwood@thegrocer.co.uk

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Supermarkets are innovating in own label once again. They're rolling out food and drink products aplenty, to satisfy cash-conscious shoppers trading down from pricier brands. But while own label is winning share in many categories, few launches are genuinely innovative. Most new lines are simply safe bets – affordable facsimiles of branded alternatives. So, why is own label so risk-averse right now? Is it time for supermarkets to take a few chances?

Innovation: What's the current state of innovation across own label (OL)? How pacey is the innovation pipeline? What categories, products and tiers are supermarkets focusing on? What consumer needs are being satisfied? What branded products are being aped? What trends are being tapped? And – crucially – how come supermarkets are playing it so safe? How does the own label innovation process differ from that of branded – and are there additional risks in OL NPD?

Opportunity: In which does own label dominate in terms of volume share? And in which others does it have the opportunity to grow and pose a genuine challenge to brands? How could it do that? Will it simply offer cheaper copies of branded lines? Or will it have to take some risks?

Promotions: How are the mults pushing their own label NPD? How significant a role do loyalty card deals and other promotional mechanics play for new launches?

Non-Food: Food and drink is very much the main focus of own label. But supermarkets have also been putting work into non-food, such as household and personal care. So, who's been doing what?