

# The Grocer

## Focus On: Food to go

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Food to go is going places. Sales of food and drink bought to be consumed outside homes have surged by 13.3% to hit £37.4bn in the past year [Kantar 52 w/e 1 September 2024]. Crucially, volumes are up by a healthy 7.2% too. But growth is by no means universal. Delve deeper into the numbers and a clear picture of the winners and losers emerges: symbol stores and independents, fast food outlets and coffee shops have all lost share of volume, while grocery multiples and forecourts, high street bakery outlets and even pubs are growing share. So how are grocery players winning share? What food and drink is hot right now in the on-the-go market? And what do the varying performances of different retail channels tell us about the state of the UK economy?

**The multiples:** The big supermarket chains have been upping their game in food to go in the past year. Tesco is using AI technology to trial healthier food-to-go layouts; Waitrose is trialling a range of new concepts; and Bestway has launched a new Grab & Go format to help its retailers get a leg up, to name just three examples. How is all this impacting sales? And what's next?

**Promotions:** Kantar's analysis shows that the share of sales made on promotion has increased significantly in the past year, suggesting that retailers and out-of-home venues are fighting hard for custom. What deals are they using? What kinds of products are they including in their deals? And to what extent are meal deals being extended into new occasions such as breakfast, snacks and dinner?

**Out-of-home venues:** Earlier this year, Greggs overtook Subway to become the UK's biggest fast food operator, and took the title of the UK's number breakfast destination from McDonald's. How has it done this? What does the growth of Greggs tell us about how tastes are changing? And how can supermarkets cash in (i.e. through concessions, licensed goods, etc)?

**Suppliers:** This feature will explore how suppliers are helping retailers corner the on-the-go market through innovative NPD, in-store marketing, merchandising and the like, such as hot food fixtures and products and fresh juice machines for example. We will be profiling four new concepts in a separate box (please provide launch date, rsp, pack weight, supplier details and high res photography).