

The Grocer

Focus On: Cakes and Biscuits by Michelle Perrett (michelle_perrett@yahoo.co.uk)

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The Story

Sales & volumes of cakes & biscuits are up. Which sectors are driving this growth? Which are struggling? How do retailers and brands' approaches differ and who is in growth or decline? And how is the ongoing health debate impacting sales... is this a sector destined for long-term decline due to the backlash against sugar or are their opportunities here for savvy players?

Key themes (this list is not exhaustive; new angles will be investigated as they arise):

Is savoury the new sweet? Sales of savoury biscuits are flying, according to our research. Which brands, manufacturers and retailers are driving this? Are savoury biscuit brands stealing share from traditional bagged snacks such as crisps by positioning themselves as a healthier, baked alternative?

Health: Central to this feature will be a discussion of how growing health concerns are affecting the market and likely to affect it in the future. Could biscuit and cake and brands reformulate their offerings to make them healthier? Or is it not necessary? What other trends are impacting them?

On the go: Cake slices and small cakes are booming, in spite of the decline of packed lunch occasions. Which brands and retailers are driving this? How else is demand for more convenient food and drink affecting the cakes & biscuits market?

Retailers: This feature will focus on how retailers' strategies have evolved in the category over the past year, with particular attention being paid to the development of own label ranges, merchandising and brand listings. What's driving the decline of the grocery multiples and the rising sales of the discounters and pound stores?

Innovation: Key to this feature will be a discussion of the latest NPD on the market. We will be profiling eight of the most interesting new launches (four cake; four biscuits) in a separate panel. The feature will explore the market trends that have inspired these innovations and weigh up which new launches are most likely to encourage new trends in the category.

Seasonal biscuits: Our research shows that sales of seasonal biscuits have crashed over the past year, suggesting Brits are abandoning the traditional Christmas biscuit tin. So what are we eating instead at Christmas? What can be done to rescue the Christmas tin?

Key questions the feature is likely to address:

- What consumer trends have impacted the category over the past year?
- How have promotional strategies (both in terms of price and marketing) evolved?
- How have individual retailers' strategies impacted the market?
- How has merchandising changed in the market?
- What impact has own-label had on branded players?
- What's next for the category?
- We profile four new products or product ranges that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before, including launch date and RSP.