

The Grocer

Focus On: Winter Remedies by Paul Davies Paul.artist@gmail.com

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Sales of winter remedies are booming, with Brits having spent an extra £32.9m on keeping the sniffles at bay in the past year. What's causing the growth? Is it simply a symptom of poor weather and a particularly difficult cold and flu season or does it reflect savvy NPD, promotions, advertising and other activity by the sector's biggest players and brands?

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

Retailers: Central to this feature will be an exploration of how different retailers have performed in this market over the past year, with particular attention being paid to how their ranging, promotions and other tactics vary.

The weather: This feature will explore in detail what impact the weather has had on sales of winter remedies over the past year. Is the weather the key reason for the surge in sales of winter remedies? How do brands and retailers time promotions and ads, etc, around periods of severe weather?

Price and promotions: This feature will explore in detail the role price and promotions have played in the fortunes of the category over the past year, how strategies have evolved and how brands and retailers are looking to use price and promotions to return to growth over the coming year. Particular attention will be paid to the relatively strong performance of lozenges; have they benefitted as a result of their lower price point?

Innovation: Key to this feature will be a discussion of the latest NPD on the market. 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. Four of the most interesting recent/forthcoming launches will be profiled in a separate box.

Marketing and advertising: This feature will also explore how marketing has evolved over the past year, with particular attention being paid to above the line advertising, point of sale marketing and the 'as good as the major brand' claims of many of the smaller players in the market. How have things changed and what are brands' strategies for the coming year?

Functional food & drinks as remedies: This feature will include a box out looking at how food and drink brands are looking to provide remedies for cold and flu sufferers by fortifying food and drink products.

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.