

The Grocer

Focus On: Healthcare & Supplements by Kate Halliwell (kate@katehalliwell.com)

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The Story

Brits spent more on vitamins & minerals than they did oral painkillers last year, making the sector the biggest in healthcare for the first time and marking a landmark moment for the category. Vitamins & minerals' growth is healthcare's second greatest absolute gain of the year, after indigestion remedies. What's going on? What's driving growth in vitamins & minerals? What are the other stand-out stories from the sector in the past year?

Key themes:

Vitamins: This feature will explore the factors – including NPD, price, promotions, advertising and wider macro consumer trends – that have led to the growth in vitamin & minerals. How are players looking to sustain growth? Which parts of this market are in growth and which are in decline? What's driving this?

Age/condition specific supplements: Over the past few years we have seen a glut of launches for specific consumer groups (men, women, pregnant women, sports people, etc). This feature will explore the factors that are leading to this growth.

Diet pills: This feature will explore the latest goings on in the diet pill market – often subject to peaks and troughs driven by the launch of new products and negative publicity regarding and at times unfortunate (and embarrassing) side effects. Some brands have stepped up advertising massively in the past year. To what effect? What will be the next big thing in this market?

Advertising and marketing: The market's spending on ad space has dipped in the past year. This feature will investigate how the marketing and advertising strategies of the category's biggest brands have evolved and how they will develop in the coming year.

Innovation: This will be key to this feature. We will be investigating how new product development has shaped the category over the past year and what is in store for shoppers in 2016. We will be profiling four of the most interesting launches in a separate innovation panel.

Promotions: Promotions, particularly multibuy deals, are of huge importance to this market. This feature will explore how the promotional strategies of retailers and brands have changed over the past year. Attention will be paid to the promotional strategies of retailers and how this has affected average prices, and of course sales and buying patterns, over the past year.

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?