

letters

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Brits still buying European waters

Sir, I write in response to the article that appeared in The Grocer entitled 'Shoppers Ditch European Bottled Water for British' (The Grocer, 22 August) and would like to set the record straight.

Firstly, the assumption that British consumers are turning away from European bottled water brands and buying British is not only unsubstantiated but based on one-sided data. Recent independent research carried out by IPSOS shows that consumers do not buy based on origin. In fact, 70% of shoppers stated the country of origin was their least important criterion when selecting a water.

Secondly, the biased assertion that sales of Volvic and Evian, the UK's leading bottled water brands, have slumped is entirely false. The total coverage figures quoted by Nielsen to 29 August confirm our Volvic and Evian brands to be in volume growth, both YTD (+0.7%), and in the past 12 weeks (+7.4%).

Retailers need to bear in mind that Evian and Volvic are by far the UK's leading water brands and contribute almost £220m in sales through retailers' tills each year. Patrick Kalotis, marketing director, Danone Waters UK

Gü is the unsung star of the chiller

Sir, Reading in the trade press that Gü may be snapped up by some major player in chilled desserts made me think that here is a true innovator that quite possibly never got all the plaudits it deserved.

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Smoothie ruling is good for stores

● Sir, A ruling by the ASA has confirmed that Innocent smoothies can count for two of your 5-a-day as each 250ml serving contains the crushed pulp and the juices of two portions of different types of fruit. The review of Innocent's two-portion claim was commissioned following several complaints about an advert that first ran in June this year.

The ruling was supported by the Department of Health, which earlier this year updated its guidelines to recognise that smoothies can count for up to two of your 5-a-day.

The DH's 5-a-day website states: "Smoothies may count as a maximum of two of your 5-a-day where they contain both pure 100% fruit juice and all of the edible pulped fruit and/or vegetable... one portion is defined as at least 150ml of fruit juice or 80g of fruit or vegetable."

Before Gü there really was nothing in the chiller cabinet to shout about other than mind-bogglingly boring yoghurt. The only things chocolatey that one could dip one's spoon into was lame, tame chocolate-coloured glue, while poor old own-label hadn't even got its head around the concept that uncompromising, portion-controlled treats for older pud enthusiasts could ever be a goer.

With branding consultancy Big Fish at the creative strategic helm, and a likeable and infectiously enthusiastic founder in James Averdieck, here was a brand that was destined to make a stir.

Of course there were failings. Gü never established a personality or a

A 250ml Innocent smoothie counts as two portions of fruit as it contains both 80g of crushed fruit and 150ml of pure juice, or more than 80g of crushed fruit with the remainder of the second portion from juice.

This is good news for retailers as now all the key nutritional bodies (The Food Standards Agency, The British Nutrition Foundation, the Department of Health and the ASA) agree that certain smoothies can count as two portions towards people's 5-a-day – consumers can be assured that Innocent's smoothies are an easy and tasty way to help people reach their 5-a-day target. As this news reaches consumers we expect to see an increase in demand for smoothies.

Dave Pickup, commercial director, Innocent Drinks

voice to match the sheer beauty of its packaging. It spawned a rather underwhelming younger sister in Frü that was never anything more than an unwelcome distraction and, in her desperation to get noticed, was perhaps a little too keen to hang around the back of the bikesheds with a couple of the major mults.

Yet for all these minor blips here was a top-notch pudding proposition that simply refused to stand still. A brand with more NPD incarnations than Doctor Who that had the bare-faced audacity to make glass ramekins cool and even sell its wares to the posh pud snobs of Paris. Simply superb.

Ian Hills, Purple Pilchard

Squeezing out the indie traders

Sir, Let's not be complacent about the so-called advantages brought by supermarkets to communities (Saturday Essay, 12 September). Supermarkets frequently squeeze out independent high street shops and undercut those that do manage to hang on. Inaccessible supermarkets are not necessarily connected with closures as Jonathan James infers: the 'once-thriving shop' has probably closed because of a huge rent and/or rates hike or because yet another supermarket has lured away its trade.

Jacqueline Percival, Gosport

Retailers must be prepared for CRC

Sir, Next year will see the introduction of the Carbon Reduction Commitment, a scheme that will essentially put a price on an organisation's carbon dioxide emissions.

Organisations that fall under the remit of the CRC will have to monitor their CO₂ emissions and purchase and surrender to government allowances to cover them. Each organisation will either receive a penalty or a bonus at the end of each year depending on how they perform relative to other CRC organisations, and the marketing opportunity for those that do well in the scheme should not be underestimated.

The key message to retailers is to act now and act fast. The quicker they develop their CRC strategy the greater likelihood they will have of creating competitive advantage.

Mark Johnson, AEA

FROM THEGROCER.CO.UK

FIVE MOST READ

1. Kraft's Cadbury bid could go hostile as Orangina sale looms
2. Waitrose seals exclusive Duchy Originals tie-up
3. Morrisons makes hay as profits rise by 22%
4. Young's launches first microwave fish finger
5. Tesco Telecoms adds 100 jobs in Liverpool

YOUR COMMENTS

"Whoever succeeds Sir Stuart [Rose] will need grit, conviction for the brand and a palpable appetite to build on its success. Better to appoint from within"
'100'

LAST WEEK'S POLL

The Cadbury board last week rejected a £10.2bn offer from US group Kraft.

Was it a fair price they should have accepted, was the offer too low – or should Cadbury stay British at all costs?

FAIR 13% | TOO LOW 30% | STAY UK 57%

THIS WEEK'S POLL

Waitrose boss Mark Price called its exclusive supply deal with Duchy Originals "the final piece in the puzzle" for the supermarket.

Who do you think has gained most from the deal?

- Waitrose
- Duchy and the prince's charities
- Suppliers



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