

Private Label Food and Drink - UK - March 2012

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"Brands remain the most widely used type of product (89%) and outperformed the own-labels in terms of sales in 2011. However, consumer sentiment indicates that brands may in fact be most at risk in 2012 with own-labels well placed to benefit from a growing pool of users."

– Chris Wisson, Senior Food Analyst

In this report we answer the key questions:

- Which product ranges stand to gain most in 2012?
- How loyal are consumers in 2011-12?
- How can own-labels improve their image?
- Can own-label alcoholic drinks boost their usage further?
- Which consumers are most likely to embrace venture brands?

The UK private label food and drink market is estimated to have reached £37.4 billion in 2011, a 28% increase since 2006. However, this growth lagged slightly behind the wider market, which grew by more than 30% over the same period.

As budgetary pressures continued to grow and consumer confidence fell in 2011, many private label categories benefited from shoppers looking to save money: for example, this report found that half of adults (49%) sometimes bought own-labels because they were priced out of buying branded equivalents. Nevertheless, in 2011, own-labels' sales growth was somewhat dampened by brands fighting back with many upping their promotional and advertising activity, something which is likely to have contributed to their relatively successful year in comparison to the private labels.

Brands remain the most widely used type of food and drink product and, while they have navigated the recession reasonably well, own-labels have gained more users in appealing to cash-strapped consumers. While there are signs of austerity fatigue, and it is possible that many consumers may trade back into brands as confidence increases, the UK's economic recovery is likely to be slow and progressive, with private labels continuing to grow as the majority of consumers integrate them into their shopping repertoires.

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