

The Retailing of Food and Drink - UK - March 2012

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“The market for food is changing. We are seeing the beginnings of a shift away from the superstores and towards online retailing and convenience stores. That is not to say that the superstores are in trouble, but the days when they swept all before them are now over.”

– Richard Perks, Director of Retail Research

In this report we answer the key questions:

- Has the share of the superstores peaked?
- But if the superstores have stopped growing – who will be the winners?
- What about newcomers?
- Is online going to come to dominate?
- What can one learn from the problems of Tesco?

This report looks at the retailing of food, drinks and tobacco as opposed to the performance of the food retailers. It is not concerned with the non-food businesses of the food retailers or with any associated activities such as financial services. It provides an opportunity to look at some of the smaller channels of distribution, such as the food specialists and discounters such as the growing number of Pound shops.

In theory demand for food should see little growth because, on the whole, people have enough to eat. But it has proved a little more volatile than one might expect because of the development of premium ranges, in particular ready prepared meals. During the recession we have seen people trade down to entry level products which, on the whole, were not available to the same extent in previous recessions.

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