

The Grocer

Focus On: Cooking sauces and meal kits by Ash O'Mahony (Ashleigh.omahony@wrbm.com)

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The Story

The recipe box has turned a corner. Market leader HelloFresh reached break-even point for the first time at the end of last year, countering critics who said the idea would always be loss-making. Now it's time for the next challenge: making this recipe box concept work in-store. Everyone's at it – Waitrose is grouping recipe ingredients together on one shelf, while Tesco has partnered with Simply Cook, and M&S has a meal kit bag. Can anyone get it right? If so, can brands with their own meal kit propositions get in on the act, and how? And where does this leave the standard cooking sauce format?

Key themes:

Meal kit brands: How can meal kit brands get involved in the appetite for recipe boxes? Is their format appealing to consumers? Could they do more in terms of in-store merchandising?

Cooking sauces: Cooking sauces are up in value and volume. How do they play into current consumer trends, and where do they fit into the recipe kit boom? Similarly, where do stocks fit into this trend?

Retailer strategy: There have been plenty of failed attempts to get recipe boxes to work in store – see the abandoned HelloFresh/Sainsbury's collaboration, and the discontinued Waitrose Dinner for Tonight trial. So what are the new strategies at play? And can any of them work?

Kantar data: Using Kantar commentary, we explain how the different areas of cooking sauces performed and why

Nielsen data: Using Nielsen commentary, we look at the 10 fastest-growing brands and 10 fastest-falling brands of the past year.

Innovations: We identify four new products that have ideally not appeared in The Grocer before including launch date and RSP, and a picture of each.