

Cookware - UK - March 2010

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What is this report about?

Interest in and enjoyment of cooking has been increasing in recent years, driven by wide coverage of food and cooking in the media, particularly the number of TV programmes featuring celebrity chefs, and a desire for more healthy and wholesome home-cooked food. This trend became more pronounced in the recession as people chose to cut back on their spending on meals out at pubs and restaurants, but was already firmly established.

The challenge for cookware manufacturers and retailers is how to translate this growing interest in home cooking into sales of cookware. The strong replacement element to the market, consumers' focus on 'value' and fact that many products at the quality end of the market have lifetime guarantees are all barriers to incremental sales. In an increasingly competitive marketplace, there is therefore a need for in-store marketing to make new products stand out and give consumers more reasons to buy.

What have we found out?

- Stores and websites could drive additional sales through more linking of recipes to new items of cookware: three in ten consumers are cooking more meals from scratch since the start of the recession.
- To capitalise on one in five people trying out more new recipes and 14% doing more home baking, cookware manufacturers and retailers should focus on the 'experience' theme, such as links with cookery schools, TV programmes or even cookery holidays.
- Cookware companies need to focus their marketing on the 'home as venue' theme to build sales as one in six consumers are doing more cooking for friends and family than before the recession.
- "Buy cheap, buy twice!" Four in ten (15 million) already tend to buy quality items that will last longer but manufacturers need to demonstrate why it is worth paying more for quality to the other sixty percent.
- A major challenge for manufacturers is to persuade more consumers to buy additional products that cater for particular types of cooking or baking, or particular occasions as almost 40% of consumers only buy when items need replacing.
- In-store and online, cookware products and brands need to be brought alive to persuade more impulse buying. Links with other sectors, such as food labels or designer names, may be the answer.

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