

Convenience Stores - UK - April 2013

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“Major grocers are citing strong growth, but this is being driven by rapid portfolio expansion. While these retailers are helping to grow the sector, their outperformance reflects a gain in share from independents, weaker symbol groups and underperforming multiples.”

– John Mercer, European Retail Analyst

In this report we answer the key questions:

- How fast is convenience growing?
- How is convenience changing?
- Which demographic groups are most important?
- How is consolidation playing out?

The convenience store sector is among the most dynamic in grocery retailing. Sector growth is nowhere near as strong as that being seen in online grocery retailing, but it is currently above that for grocery retailing as a whole. For major grocers, the convenience sector is proving particularly appealing – but this is not so much due to major underlying growth as it is untapped opportunities: the convenience sector is one of the last to see competition from the major grocery multiples.

The symbol groups are responding with improved offers including new fascia, better fresh food ranges and new own-brands. And we are seeing some signs of consolidation, with a new tie-up between symbol group [Costcutter](#) and wholesaler [Palmer & Harvey](#).

This report looks at sector growth and prospects, examines the major operators in detail including in our proprietary research on brand perceptions, and includes detailed consumer research. This year we asked consumers which convenience stores they had shopped at, how often they shop at c-stores, whether they now shop more or less at convenience stores and their reasons for shopping more or less.

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