

# Letters

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## Organic needs to be delicious, too

Sir, As always Ella's Kitchen CEO Paul Lindley makes good points in his Saturday Essay ('Organic movement needs a united message', The Grocer, 27 August, p20).

What successful organic brands like Ella's Kitchen, Green & Black's, Yeo Valley and (on a smaller scale) my own GO\*DO Chocolate have in common is that they are all delicious, well-packaged and competitively priced. The organic claim supports these values but is not the *raison d'être*. The challenge for the organic sector is how to apply this approach to private label.

**Simon Wright**, founder, GO\*DO Chocolate

## Blippar appeal is limited for now

Sir, The lack of noise around the launch of Blippar was surprising ('Will app-augmented reality prove more than just a Blip?', The Grocer, 27 August, p12).

The potential Blippar offers brands is astounding. Tools of this nature deliver an unrivalled opportunity to create the rich and engaging experiences that consumers are increasingly demanding of packs, ads and posters. However, there is a real danger that Blippar will fall foul of the same problems that QR codes faced when they were introduced.

QR codes didn't catch on because they made it hard for the audience to respond immediately; they required consumers to have a smartphone and a certain level of technical knowhow.

### LETTER OF THE WEEK

## Quality and ethics wow shoppers

● Sir, It's not all dark in organicland ('Shoppers ignoring extra organic products in mults', 27 August, p6).

At Honeyrose Bakery, sales of our cakes – listed in Waitrose, Sainsbury's, Ocado and at more than 2,000 points of sale in small and big customers across the UK – are up year-on-year to August 2011, trending to double-digit growth by year-end. So we see a rosy future based on the support of discerning consumers and buyers.

Echoing The Saturday Essay by Ella's Kitchen Paul Lindley last week, consumers want a simple message with organic.

That starts with a great product, organic or not. It's what's brought us new customers and supermarket listings this year, and kept existing

customers on board. Our innovation in NPD, packaging, pricing and in general ways of conducting business has the ring of truth, passion and commitment with consumers.

Maybe it's easier for us in that, like Ella's, we are founder-managed, small-ish, and privately held.

Looking ahead, we are realists, and have taken the decision to also bake conventional (ie non-organic) lines for our own-label customers who want them, mainly for raw material cost reasons. But own-label customers come to us for great quality products and an ethical business sense that is established, audited, and certified with our organic credentials.

**Lise Madsen, MD and founder,** Honeyrose Bakery

Over the next couple of years I fully expect Apple and Google to build the functionality of Blippar into their operating systems so it runs natively without any requirement to download. Once this happens Blippar will become a viable platform for usage on a mass scale.

However, today it will remain the preserve of the early adopters and highly engaged. If the tech-savvy earlier adopters are your core market then you should go for Blippar with all guns blazing and grab the advantages of the first movers. However, if your core audience is more tech-shy than tech-savvy it would be better to wait until Blippar is more established before you look to harness its power.

**Adam Fulford**, head of planning, Grand Union

## Tobacco must go in plain packs

Sir, Martyn Wythers from Embrace Brands (Letters, 20 August, p32) correctly highlights the importance of marketing innovations to the tobacco industry following restrictions on advertising.

Packaging is now the final and most ubiquitous tobacco advertisement, allowing the industry to continue to reach impressionable youth via branding that gives deceptive messages of sophistication and glamour.

This is why it is so essential that the government introduces plain packaging of tobacco products.

Tobacco is unlike any other

brand in that it is known to shorten the lives of half its long-term users. Plain packaging would reduce the appeal of tobacco products to children, increase the prominence of health warnings and counter the false impression that certain brands are less harmful.

**Dave Clark**, senior policy & campaigns officer, Action on Smoking & Health

## Help for our high street heroes

Sir, The aftermath of the riots presents the practical issue for wrecked stores of how to rebuild.

But we know from our work at Retail Trust that dealing with those who, at any time, have been faced with violence in or around the workplace presents issues that can delve deep into the psyche.

Insurance may cover much of the destruction, but in the short term many independent retailers, c-stores and corner shops face the challenges of day-to-day survival. Following the riots, retailers, their staff, and the industry in general all need to come together to help.

We have set up a #highstheroes campaign that has already garnered much public support in terms of donations and offers of fundraising support. With our own £50,000 kickstart to the fund, we have been able to get out on the streets to offer immediate financial relief to those in need.

But this is not about singing our praises. It's about needing to do more, and with your help, fundraising, yes, but volunteering too – more people on the streets or helping us through the helpline means more individuals helped. This is the big industry issue of the year.

**Nigel J L Rothband**, CEO, Retail Trust

### FROM THEGROCER.CO.UK

#### FIVE MOST READ

1. Angry Earl Grey drinkers demand return of Twinings' old blend
2. Food sales slide at The Co-op as Marks laments 'toughest market in 40 years'
3. Whitehall vows 'no fat tax' as study warns of soaring obesity
4. Celebrity chef demands return of pub smoking
5. Iceland denies Walker finance deal

#### YOUR COMMENTS

**"I introduced a bag charge at my Londis two years ago and saw a decline in usage of 24%. It did work and I fully support a compulsory charge"**  
Arjan Mehr

#### LAST WEEK'S POLL

Peter Marks says trading is the toughest he's seen it in 40 years.

Do you agree? Is it tough, but you've seen worse? Or have you not noticed a squeeze on consumer spending?



#### THIS WEEK'S POLL

Tesco has pulled the plug on its Japanese business, saying it was too small in the country to make a profit.

Will Fresh & Easy be next?

- Yes, it's not long for this world
- It'll limp on for a few more years
- No, Tesco has spent far too much to give up now