

# Low and no sugar in the ascension

## Health conscious consumers drive sales growth

ALL things staying the same, the UK Government levy on added-sugar will come into force in April 2018, but soft drinks firms reckon customers are already moving towards healthier options of their own accord - creating an opportunity for convenience retailers.

A spokesperson for Aspire Drinks, the firm behind the Aspire range of sugar, carbohydrate and calorie free soft drinks, reckons that there is an increased focus on healthier choices during the summer months

"Consumers commonly seek out soft drinks offering added benefits," said the spokesperson.

"Many people aim to take extra care of their bodies during the summer months, as warm weather and holiday season kick in."

Concern over sugar content was also highlighted as a "key factor" for customers by Mau-

adding more sugar-free alternatives to their soft drinks offering," said Newton.

"With the wide variety of soft drinks products available, it is important that consumers are able to quickly and easily identify sugar-free drinks."

As the trend for healthier soft drinks continues, some range experimentation may be required on the part of retailers, but that doesn't need to mean taking stabs in the dark.

Adrian Troy of AG Barr reckons the growth in popularity of low-calorie soft drinks "means that it's more important than ever for retailers to talk to their customers and find out what they're looking for, to enable them to tailor their offering".

Getting the right range is vital, but retailers should also pay close attention to where they position low and no sugar variants, suggested Troy.

"For example, shoppers that are looking for a healthy op-

portunity can help increase sales, especially on impulse buys.

"Additionally, cross merchandising soft drinks with barbecue items and food, and offering 'meal deal' type offers is a great sales opportunity for retailers, providing consumers with value for money," said Burgess.