Beyond Spend

Q2 2026

A Quarterly View of Consumer Behaviour

Powered by Fable Data

UK Grocery Market | Q2 2026 (April–June)

Contents

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1 About Beyond Spend: A Behaviour-First View of Consumer Spending

Beyond Spend is a quarterly view of UK grocery spending built around two questions: **where is consumer money going, and why?**

Created by Beyond: Putting Data To Work using anonymised transaction data from Fable Data, it looks beyond headline sales and market share to understand the behaviours driving performance: who is shopping, where they are shopping, how much they spend, whether they return and how they divide their grocery wallet between retailers.

The first edition of Beyond Spend established the baseline. Q2 gives us something more valuable: movement.

We can now begin to see which behaviours are persisting and where the market is changing. The multi-retailer household remains firmly embedded, with even Weekly Loyal Buyers shopping across an average of three grocery retailers. Different retailers also continue to play very different roles within the same shopper's routine.

At the same time, there are clear shifts in customer behaviour. Lidl moves from 10th to 2nd in the Loyalty League as its Comeback Trend rises from 9th to 1st. M&S moves from 10th to 1st for Spending Shift, while Co-op rises three places to 2nd in Growth Momentum, supported by the strongest Reach Growth in the league.

This edition explores those changes through a series of complementary lenses: competitive standing, growth momentum, loyalty, individual brand performance, shopper missions, regional behaviour and economic weight.

Together, they reveal a grocery market where the headline picture can appear relatively stable while meaningful competitive shifts are taking place underneath.

The purpose of Beyond Spend is to identify those shifts early enough for businesses to act on them.

1.1 How to Get the Best Out of Beyond Spend

Beyond Spend is designed to be used selectively, with purpose and around the questions you need answered.

Each section provides a different view of the same underlying market:

- **Competitive Standing** shows the strength of each retailer's overall customer position.
- **Growth Momentum** identifies where shopper behaviour and spend are moving.
- **Loyalty** examines whether customers are returning and where repeat behaviour is strengthening.
- **Brand Lens** explores the distinctive role each retailer plays in the grocery repertoire.
- **Customer Lens** looks at how different shopper groups divide missions and spend across retailers.

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- **Regional Lens** reveals how grocery behaviour and competitive dynamics vary across the UK.
- **Looking Ahead** identifies the behavioural signals we believe will matter most in Q3 and beyond.

Read together, these lenses provide a detailed picture of the market. Individually, they allow leaders to go directly to the commercial question most relevant to them.

Beyond Spend is ultimately about turning observed consumer behaviour into better commercial decisions.

2 Executive Summary

Q2 2026 reveals a grocery market where headline stability masks a redistribution of customer behaviour. Shoppers are still spending, but who gets that spend, for which missions and how often is changing.

Three findings matter most.

1. Growth is coming from winning more of the customer, not simply more customers

Lidl remains first in the Growth Momentum League, ranking second for Reach Growth and Spending Shift and first for Comeback Trend. Co-op rises to second, driven by the strongest Reach Growth in the analysis, while M&S moves from tenth to first for Spending Shift, with customers allocating a greater proportion of their grocery expenditure to the retailer.

Why it matters commercially: There is no single growth lever. A retailer with extensive reach may have more to gain from increasing frequency or share of wallet than from customer acquisition. Another may need to turn trial into repeat behaviour.

Action: Identify where headroom exists in your customer relationship - reach, frequency, basket, repeat behaviour or share of wallet - and focus investment there.

2. Loyalty no longer means exclusivity

Tesco takes first place in the Loyalty League and ranks first for Returning Customers. Lidl climbs from tenth to second as its Comeback Trend moves from ninth to first. But even Weekly Loyal Buyers use an average of three grocery retailers, while Weekly Bargain Hunters use six.

Why it matters commercially: Your loyal customer is probably somebody else's customer too. The competitive battle is not simply to retain the shopper, but to increase the number and value of the missions they choose to give you.

Action: Look beyond retention. Understand which missions you currently own, which go elsewhere and where you have the opportunity to win the next one.

3. Shopping mission matters more than the retailer label

Aldi records the largest average basket among the ten retailers analysed, at £27.10 in June, while Co-op has the smallest at £12.00. The differences are even more pronounced between shopper groups. Bulk Buyers average more than £54 per transaction across around seven purchases, while Lunch-Time Buyers make more than 40 transactions at around £10 each.

Why it matters commercially: Labels such as discount, premium, mainstream and convenience tell only part of the story. A £12 top-up, £50 stock-up and £10 lunch represent very different commercial relationships, even when made by the same customer.

Action: Build strategy around missions, not averages. Decide which shopping occasions you want to own, then align range, price, format, loyalty and customer experience around winning them.

The Q2 message

Q2 suggests the UK grocery market is increasingly being shaped by allocation rather than withdrawal. Customers do not necessarily need to spend more for a retailer to grow. The

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opportunity is to give them a reason to allocate more of their existing grocery spend to that brand.

The competitive question for the second half of 2026 is therefore not simply: “How do we get more customers?” It is: “How do we earn a bigger role in the customers we already have?”

2.1 At a Glance: UK Grocery Q2 2026

The headline signals shaping behaviour

Metric	Q2 2026 Headline	What it tells us
Average basket value	Broadly stable within individual retailer	Average transaction values changed relatively little within most major supermarkets during Q2, despite differences in basket size between brands.
Basket mix	Varies by retailer	Different retailers continue to win very different missions. Aldi captures some of the largest shops, while Co-op is dominated by small and micro transactions.
Customer reach	Tesco remains the broadest; Co-op records the strongest Reach Growth	Scale remains valuable, but Q2 shows that growth can also come from expanding the number of shoppers and occasions a retailer captures.
Spending Shift	M&S moves from 10th to 1st	Customers are allocating a greater proportion of their grocery spend to M&S, making it one of Q2's strongest movements. Further quarters will show whether this represents a sustained shift in M&S's role within the grocery shop or a more seasonal pattern.
Comeback behaviour	Lidl moves from 9th to 1st for Comeback Trend	Recent Lidl shoppers are increasingly returning. Comeback Trend moves from 9th to 1st, while Lidl retains 1st place overall in the Growth Momentum League.
Return behaviour	Tesco ranks 1st for Returning Customers	Tesco continues to demonstrate the strongest established repeat behaviour, reflecting its deeply embedded role in household grocery routines.
Multi-retailer shopping	Weekly Loyal Buyers use 3 retailers on average; Weekly Bargain Hunters use 6	Loyalty does not mean exclusivity. Growth increasingly depends on earning more missions and a greater share of the customer's grocery wallet.
Regional behaviour	Varies across region	National averages conceal substantial differences in basket size, customer reach, retailer strength and the way grocery spend is distributed across regions.

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3 Competitive Standing

3.1 How to Read the Competitive Standing League

The Competitive Standing League provides the broadest view of retailer performance, combining seven measures of customer behaviour:

- **Average Basket Value** – how much customers spend per transaction.
- **Customer Reach** – how widely the retailer is used.
- **Reach Growth** – whether that customer base is expanding.
- **Wallet Share** – how much of grocery spend the retailer captures.
- **Spending Shift** – whether more or less customer spend is moving towards the retailer.
- **Returning Customers** – the strength of established repeat behaviour.
- **Comeback Trend** – whether return behaviour is strengthening.

Together, these measures show both the scale of the existing customer relationship and the direction in which it is moving.

3.2 Who Leads in Q2 2026?

Q2 produces meaningful movement in the Competitive Standing League, although the strongest positions continue to reflect a combination of scale, customer depth and momentum.

Rank	Retailer	Movement	Key Signal
1	Tesco	→	Structural dominance remains unmatched, although reach growth slows
2	Lidl	▲1	Ranks 2nd for Reach Growth, while Comeback Trend moves from 9th to 1st
3	Aldi	▼1	Existing shopper relationships strengthen, but reach and spending momentum cool
4	Sainsbury's	→	Deep reach, wallet share and repeat behaviour continue to anchor performance
5	Morrisons	▲1	Broad incremental improvement rather than one standout source of growth
6	Co-op	▲3	Strongest reach growth in the market demonstrates the power of frequent, smaller missions
7	M&S	▲1	Moves from 10th in Q1 to 1st in Q2 for Spending Shift, indicating a greater share of active shoppers' grocery spend is moving to M&S.
8	Asda	▼3	Average basket remains above £23, while Reach Growth and Spending Shift rank near the bottom of the league
9	Waitrose	▲1	Reach growth accelerates from a relatively small base

Rank	Retailer	Movement	Key Signal
10	Iceland	▼3	Falls three places to 10th despite high Basket Value and Comeback Trend rankings

The rankings should also be viewed in the context of changes to retailers' physical footprints and customer propositions. Store footprint and format mix can influence reach, frequency and basket size, while pricing and loyalty initiatives can affect spend allocation and return behaviour.

This is particularly relevant in Q2. Lidl continues to expand its store estate, with more than 50 new stores planned over 12 months, while Aldi entered 2026 targeting 40 new UK openings. Tesco extended Aldi Price Match to more than 2,000 Express stores during the quarter and continued to develop Clubcard personalisation following the launch of Your Clubcard Prices in March.

These developments should not be treated as direct explanations for movements in Beyond Spend. They do, however, provide important context: changes in reach, frequency, basket value and repeat behaviour may reflect not only customer preference, but also changes in physical availability, format, value proposition and loyalty activity.

Tesco retains first place, ranking first for Customer Reach, Wallet Share and Returning Customers. This gives it the strongest overall customer position in the league. Its advantage is increasingly about the depth and resilience of an already extensive relationship rather than rapid acquisition. Lidl moves into second place, with one of the most balanced performances across the measures. It ranks second for Reach Growth and Spending Shift and first for Comeback Trend. This combination is significant because acquisition, spend movement and return behaviour are all moving in the same direction.

Aldi takes third. Its standout strength is Basket Value, where it ranks first, demonstrating the scale of the grocery missions shoppers entrusts to the discounter. Its Q2 momentum is less pronounced than Lidl's, but first place for Basket Value alongside third place in the Loyalty League supports its overall competitive position.

Behind the top three, Sainsbury's remains supported by substantial reach and repeat behaviour, while Morrisons shows a more balanced improvement across several measures. Co-op's position is particularly interesting. Its average basket of approximately £12 places it last for Basket Value, yet it ranks first for Reach Growth and reaches around a third of shoppers. Its competitive position is therefore driven by the number of shoppers and occasions it captures rather than the value of an individual transaction.

At the other end of the table, Waitrose and Asda illustrate different competitive challenges. Waitrose is gaining reach, but that wider engagement has yet to translate consistently into deeper repeat behaviour. Asda retains relatively large baskets and a substantial customer footprint, while weaker Reach Growth, Spending Shift and Comeback Trend constrain its overall momentum.

The league therefore reveals a market where size alone does not determine competitive strength. The strongest positions combine an established customer relationship with evidence that shoppers are continuing to move towards the brand.

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3.3 Beyond's Perspective

A single league position can hide very different types of competitive strength. The Q2 data suggests that the same ranking can be reached through very different combinations of reach, transaction value, repeat behaviour and share of wallet.

This matters when retailers benchmark themselves against competitors. Improving a metric is not necessarily valuable in isolation. Higher reach generated through smaller convenience missions, for example, has different commercial implications from increasing the share of grocery expenditure captured from existing customers. Equally, a larger average basket is only one part of the picture if those transactions happen less frequently.

The more useful question is therefore not simply where a retailer ranks, but what is driving that position and whether it supports the role the retailer wants to play for its customers.

For management teams, this changes how competitive performance should be assessed. Benchmarking should focus on the combination of measures that reflects the retailer's proposition and growth strategy, rather than pursuing improvement across every measure equally.

The strongest competitor is not necessarily the retailer that wins every metric. It is the one whose customer behaviours work together to support its commercial model.

3.4 Killer Comparison: Aldi vs Co-op - The Basket and the Occasion

Aldi and Co-op provide perhaps the clearest demonstration of why transaction value alone cannot explain competitive strength.

Aldi has the largest average basket of the ten retailers analysed, reaching £27.70 in May and £27.10 in June. Around a third of its transactions fall into the large, very large or bulk categories.

Co-op sits at the opposite end of the spectrum, with an average basket of around £12. In June, half of its transactions are small and a further 29% micro.

Yet Co-op reaches around a third of shoppers and ranks first for Reach Growth.

The two retailers are therefore creating value through fundamentally different customer behaviours. Aldi wins substantial grocery missions. Co-op wins a high volume of smaller occasions.

For Aldi, the opportunity is to protect and expand its role within the planned household shop. For Co-op, availability, convenience and frequency are central to increasing the number of occasions it captures.

Finding	Commercial implication
Aldi combines the largest average basket with substantial grocery missions.	Protect the planned-shop role while identifying opportunities to increase visit frequency without diluting the proposition.
Co-op combines the smallest average basket with the strongest Reach Growth.	Convert broad reach into more frequent occasions and greater cumulative customer value.
Basket size alone does not determine competitive strength.	Benchmark competitors on the customer missions they win, not simply average transaction value or overall rank.

4 Growth Momentum

4.1 How to Read the Growth Momentum League

The Growth Momentum League focuses on direction of travel rather than absolute market size. It combines three equally weighted measures:

- **Reach Growth** – whether a retailer is attracting a broader group of shoppers.
- **Spending Shift** – whether customers are allocating a greater share of their grocery spend to the retailer.
- **Comeback Trend** – whether recent shoppers are becoming more likely to return.

Together, they show where shopper behaviour is moving and, importantly, what is driving that movement.

4.2 Who Has Momentum in Q2 2026?

Q2 produces a reshuffle in the Growth Momentum League, although Lidl retains the top position.

Rank	Retailer	Movement	Growth Signal
1	Lidl	→	Ranks 2nd for Reach Growth and Spending Shift and 1st for Comeback Trend
2	Co-op	▲3	Market-leading reach growth drives mission-led momentum
3	Morrisons	▲1	Broad-based improvement rather than reliance on a single metric
4	Aldi	▼1	Reach Growth falls from 2nd to 5th and Spending Shift from 4th to 7th, while repeat behaviour improves
5	M&S	▲5	Moves from 10th to 1st for Spending Shift, driving a five-place rise in the Growth Momentum League
6	Tesco	→	Ranks 1st for Customer Reach, leaving less headroom for incremental Reach Growth
7	Sainsbury's	▲2	Improving spending shift creates modest momentum
8	Waitrose	▼1	Ranks highly for Reach Growth, but lower Spending Shift and Comeback Trend limit wider momentum
9	Iceland	▼7	Falls from 2nd to 9th in Growth Momentum despite ranking 2nd for Comeback Trend
10	Asda	▼2	Weak reach growth and spending shift leave little incremental momentum

Growth Momentum measures changes in observed customer behaviour, but the drivers behind those changes can extend beyond customer preference alone. Reach Growth may reflect genuine customer acquisition, but it can also be influenced by new store openings,

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changes in format or increased availability through online and delivery channels. Similarly, changes in return behaviour and Spending Shift may occur alongside developments in loyalty schemes, personalised offers, member pricing and promotional activity.

These factors are particularly relevant when interpreting Q2. Retailers continue to invest in physical expansion, convenience formats and digital access, while loyalty programmes are becoming increasingly personalised. The Beyond Spend data shows where customer behaviour is moving; these wider developments provide context for the different mechanisms that may be helping to enable that movement. They should not, however, be interpreted as direct causes without further evidence.

Lidl remains first overall, ranking second for both Reach Growth and Spending Shift and first for Comeback Trend. This gives it the highest overall Growth Momentum ranking in Q2, with more shoppers engaging, a greater proportion of grocery spend moving towards the retailer and Comeback Trend moving from ninth to first.

External market data supports the direction of travel, with NIQ also recording strong sales growth for Lidl during the period.

Co-op rises three places to second, driven by the strongest Reach Growth in the league and third place for Spending Shift. Its position is particularly striking because it continues to have the lowest average basket of the ten retailers.

The growth mechanism is therefore less about transaction size and more about occasion growth. More shoppers choosing Co-op for immediate needs, top-ups and convenience missions can create substantial aggregate growth even when individual baskets remain relatively small.

Morrisons moves up one place to third, with a more balanced profile. It ranks fourth for both Reach Growth and Spending Shift and fifth for Comeback Trend. No single measure dominates, but acquisition, spend movement and return behaviour are all moving broadly positively.

Aldi slips one place to fourth. Reach Growth falls from second to fifth and Spending Shift from fourth to seventh. Against its already substantial customer base and large baskets, the pattern points towards a period of consolidation rather than the faster incremental momentum seen previously.

The largest upward movement comes from M&S, which climbs five places from tenth to fifth. Its route to growth is distinctive: M&S moves from tenth to first for Spending Shift, while Reach Growth improves from tenth to sixth. The signal is less about rapidly expanding the number of shoppers and more about capturing a greater proportion of the grocery spend already in play.

The Beyond Spend movement is also reflected in wider market data, with NIQ recording M&S grocery sales growth of 11.8% over the 12 weeks to 16 May 2026.

Further down the league, Tesco remains sixth, reflecting the challenge of generating rapid incremental growth from an already extensive customer base. Sainsbury's rises two places to seventh, helped by stronger Spending Shift, while Waitrose falls one place to eighth, despite improving Reach Growth, showing that acquisition has yet to translate into broader momentum.

Iceland records the largest fall, from second to ninth. Q1 linked Iceland's momentum to frozen-led value missions, meal planning and batch cooking during the winter months. Q2 suggests at least part of that boost was seasonal, with broader shopper and spend momentum receding as the year progressed.

Asda falls two places to tenth. It retains meaningful scale and valuable baskets, but weak Reach Growth and Spending Shift indicate limited incremental behaviour moving towards the retailer during Q2.

4.3 Beyond's Perspective

Q2 demonstrates that there is no single formula for grocery growth.

Lidl retains the strongest overall momentum by performing well across multiple dimensions. Co-op is expanding through reach and occasions. M&S is capturing a greater share of existing grocery spend. Morrisons is progressing steadily across several measures.

Each route can create growth, but what happens next determines whether that momentum becomes sustained commercial value.

For retailers, this creates a more useful set of strategic questions: Where is our greatest headroom? Do we need more shoppers, more occasions or a greater share of their grocery spend? And what needs to happen next to turn that opportunity into sustained growth?

Growth Momentum therefore provides more than a ranking of who is moving fastest. It reveals the customer behaviour producing that growth and where the next commercial opportunity lies.

4.4 Killer Comparison: Co-op vs M&S - Two Routes to Growth

Co-op and M&S both rise sharply in Q2, but the customer behaviour behind their momentum is very different.

Co-op rises three places to second overall, ranking first for Reach Growth and third for Spending Shift while remaining tenth for Basket Value. With an average basket of around £12, its growth comes from being chosen by more shoppers and for more occasions.

M&S rises five places to fifth overall, driven particularly by its movement from tenth to first for Spending Shift. It ranks sixth for Reach Growth. Monthly data shows acceleration in May, when Spending Shift reached +4.7%, alongside increases in basket value, reach and value share.

The contrast reveals two distinct routes to growth.

Co-op is expanding the number of shoppers and occasions it captures. M&S is increasing the economic value of its customer relationships by winning a greater share of grocery spending.

For Co-op, the opportunity lies in availability, convenience and frequency. For M&S, it lies in securing a greater role within the household grocery shop and sustaining that increased share of spend.

Finding	Commercial implication
Co-op ranks first for Reach Growth while retaining the smallest average basket.	Turn increased reach into repeat occasions and greater cumulative customer value rather than relying on larger transactions.
M&S moves from 10th to 1st for Spending Shift.	Sustain the increased share of existing customers' grocery spend and identify which missions are driving the change.
Different retailers are generating momentum through different customer behaviours.	Identify whether the greatest growth headroom lies in reach, frequency, repeat behaviour or share of wallet, then target investment accordingly.

5 Loyalty

5.1 How to Read the Loyalty League

The Loyalty League measures the strength and direction of repeat shopper behaviour using two equally weighted measures:

- **Returning Customers** – the proportion of shoppers who return within the quarter.
- **Comeback Trend** – whether that return behaviour is strengthening or weakening quarter on quarter.

Together, they distinguish between retailers with a deeply established base of repeat shoppers and those where loyalty is actively strengthening or weakening.

This distinction matters in a grocery market where loyalty increasingly means earning repeat visits and a greater share of spend within a multi-retailer relationship.

5.2 Who is Building Loyalty in Q2 2026

Q2 produces one of the biggest reshuffles in the Beyond Spend leagues.

Rank	Retailer	Movement	Loyalty Signal
1	Tesco	▲1	The strongest established returning-customer base, with improving comeback
2	Lidl	▲8	Comeback Trend moves from 9th to 1st, driving an eight-place rise in the Loyalty League
3	Aldi	▲2	Returning customers and comeback strengthen together
4	Sainsbury's	▼1	Deep repeat behaviour continues to provide stability
5	Morrisons	▲1	Gradual improvement in comeback supports a relatively stable base
6	Asda	▼2	Existing retention holds up better than recent comeback behaviour
7	Co-op	▲1	1st for Reach Growth, with the opportunity to convert new reach into repeat behaviour
8	Iceland	▲1	Ranks 2nd for Comeback Trend but 10th for Returning Customers
9	M&S	▼8	Q1 comeback strength reverses sharply
10	Waitrose	▼3	Recent reach gains have yet to translate into repeat behaviour

Loyalty performance should also be viewed within the context of a rapidly evolving grocery loyalty landscape. Member pricing, personalised offers, points, rewards and app-based promotions increasingly give shoppers reasons to identify themselves and return, while giving retailers more opportunities to influence subsequent behaviour.

These initiatives may contribute to changes in repeat and comeback behaviour, but Beyond Spend does not attribute movements to individual loyalty programmes. The data shows how customer behaviour changed; developments such as Clubcard personalisation, Lidl Plus Points and Nectar provide important context for understanding the environment in which those changes occurred.

Tesco moves into first place, Lidl climbs eight positions from tenth to second and Aldi rises to third. At the other end of the table, M&S falls from first to ninth and Waitrose drops to tenth.

The top three reveal three different forms of grocery loyalty.

Tesco represents embedded habit. It remains first for Returning Customers, while Comeback Trend improves from seventh to fourth. Its scale and consistency indicate a customer relationship firmly established within household grocery routines.

That relationship is increasingly supported by Tesco's use of Clubcard as more than a traditional rewards programme. Clubcard connects member pricing, promotions and increasingly personalised offers, allowing Tesco to use observed customer behaviour to make subsequent interactions more relevant. With limited headroom to expand an already extensive customer base, this ability to deepen individual relationships becomes increasingly important.

Lidl provides the most dramatic movement, climbing from tenth to second as Comeback Trend moves from ninth to first. Returning Customers remains eighth, making the distinction particularly important: Lidl does not yet have Tesco's depth of established repeat behaviour, but recent shoppers are returning at a stronger rate.

The timing is particularly interesting.

On 5 May 2026, Lidl replaced its Coupon Plus programme with Lidl Plus Points. Customers now earn a point for every £1 spent and can exchange accumulated points through a Rewards Marketplace for free products and money-off rewards. The launch was supported by the “Just a Lidl…” advertising campaign, featuring the return of Liberty X and promoting the expanded Lidl Plus proposition.

The new structure places greater emphasis on accumulating value over time and gives shoppers more choice over the rewards they receive. It therefore creates a mechanism that could encourage customers to consolidate more repeat spending with Lidl.

The scheme change cannot explain the Q2 movement on its own, and much of the quarter's behaviour will have been established before or alongside its introduction. The timing is nevertheless notable. Lidl's Loyalty ranking rises from tenth to second during the same quarter in which the retailer makes a shift towards a more flexible, choice-led loyalty model.

Aldi reaches third as Returning Customers and Comeback Trend strengthen together. Its position provides an important counterpoint to both Tesco and Lidl because Aldi has built this behaviour without an equivalent points-based loyalty programme.

Its customer relationship remains rooted heavily in the core proposition itself: price, range, familiarity and habitual use. The contrast demonstrates that loyalty can be engineered through an ecosystem, but it can also emerge from consistently delivering a proposition customers have reason to revisit.

Below the top three, Sainsbury's remains supported by its established returning-customer base, reinforced by the wider Nectar ecosystem and its combination of member pricing and personalised offers. Morrisons shows more gradual improvement, with Comeback Trend strengthening while the established returning-customer base remains relatively stable.

Asda's existing customers remain comparatively resilient, while its lower Comeback Trend ranking points to greater difficulty converting recent engagement into repeat behaviour. Co-op faces almost the reverse opportunity: it ranks 1st for Reach Growth, and the next challenge is converting that wider audience into the repeat behaviour already visible within its established customer base.

Iceland ranks second for Comeback Trend but tenth for Returning Customers, suggesting strong return behaviour among a comparatively narrow customer base.

The two lowest-ranked retailers raise a different question.

M&S falls from first in Q1 to ninth in Q2, driven particularly by Comeback Trend. The monthly picture, however, is more nuanced. Comeback moves from -24.0% in April to +27.7% in May before settling at -2.5% in June, while Return Rate rises from 47.5% to 60.6% and ends the quarter at 59.1%.

The quarterly ranking therefore identifies weaker relative loyalty performance, while the monthly data shows substantial strengthening during the quarter. Combined with M&S's first-place Spending Shift ranking, the opportunity is clear: turn increasing economic relevance into consistent repeat behaviour.

Waitrose finishes tenth despite ranking highly for Reach Growth. More shoppers are entering the proposition, but that acquisition has yet to develop into comparable repeat behaviour. Converting wider reach into sustained customer relationships will be an important measure of future progress.

5.3 Beyond's Perspective

The Q2 findings sit within a wider transformation of grocery loyalty.

Member pricing is now embedded across much of the UK market, changing both the value customers receive from loyalty programmes and the information retailers can gather about their behaviour.

Importantly, there is evidence that these savings are real. The Competition and Markets Authority reviewed around 50,000 loyalty-priced grocery products and found that 92% offered a genuine saving against the retailer's usual price.

For shoppers, loyalty membership therefore increasingly influences the everyday economics of grocery shopping. For retailers, it creates something equally valuable: an identifiable customer.

A transaction linked to a customer creates behavioural data. Repeated transactions begin to reveal frequency, missions, preferences and responsiveness to promotions. Used effectively, that information can make subsequent interactions more relevant:

Behaviour → Data → Personalisation → Relevance → Repeat Behaviour

The competitive landscape is already showing different approaches to this opportunity.

Tesco has a mature Clubcard ecosystem connecting pricing, offers and personalisation with the largest customer reach in the analysis, reaching around 62% of shoppers during Q2.

Lidl is moving towards a more flexible points-and-rewards model at the same time as Beyond Spend detects rapidly strengthening comeback behaviour.

Aldi, meanwhile, demonstrates that a sophisticated loyalty scheme is not a prerequisite for repeat behaviour. Its third-place position is being generated largely through the strength and consistency of the underlying proposition.

These different models reinforce an important point: the reason to return is the heart of the loyalty strategy.

That reason might be price consistency, convenience, familiarity, personalised value, product preference or accumulated rewards. The strongest propositions can combine several of these.

The growth of loyalty pricing also changes the competitive stakes. Customers increasingly identify themselves to access a retailer's most attractive prices. In return, retailers gain a richer understanding of how those customers shop.

The commercial advantage will increasingly depend on what they do with that knowledge.

In a market where customers routinely shop across several supermarkets, generating another visit is only part of the opportunity. The greater prize is using relevance and value to earn more of the customer's grocery missions and a greater share of their wallet.

5.4 Killer Comparison: Tesco vs Lidl - Embedded Habit and Emerging Loyalty

Tesco and Lidl occupy the top two positions in the Q2 Loyalty League, but the customer relationships behind those rankings are very different.

Tesco ranks first for Returning Customers and fourth for Comeback Trend. Its loyalty is already embedded: a large proportion of shoppers repeatedly return, creating a mature and highly valuable customer base.

Lidl ranks eighth for Returning Customers and first for Comeback Trend. Recent shoppers are increasingly returning, while the overall depth of habitual repeat behaviour remains considerably lower.

That creates two different strategic opportunities.

For Tesco, the opportunity is to deepen an established relationship through greater relevance, personalisation and share of wallet.

For Lidl, the priority is to convert rapidly strengthening comeback behaviour into established habit. The movement from ninth to first for Comeback Trend shows that more recent shoppers are returning, but the lower Returning Customers ranking means there is still considerable headroom to build the depth and consistency of those relationships.

The contrast captures two different stages of loyalty development. Tesco already has scale, frequency and embedded behaviour, so growth depends increasingly on earning more value from relationships that already exist. Lidl is building momentum earlier in the loyalty journey, with the opportunity to turn increased return behaviour into routine use and a greater share of grocery spend.

Finding	Commercial implication
Tesco ranks first for Returning Customers, reflecting deeply embedded repeat behaviour.	Use data, personalisation and relevance to deepen existing customer relationships and increase share of wallet.
Lidl moves from ninth to first for Comeback Trend, while ranking eighth for Returning Customers.	Convert strengthening return behaviour into established habit, frequency and a larger share of grocery missions.
Tesco and Lidl reach the top of the Loyalty League through different customer behaviours.	Diagnose whether growth depends on strengthening an established relationship or turning emerging loyalty into routine behaviour.
Loyalty can be mature or developing even when headline rankings look similar.	Look beneath the league position to understand the strength, direction and depth of the underlying customer relationship.

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6 Brand Lens

The league tables show how retailers are performing against one another. The Brand Lens looks beneath those rankings to understand the role each retailer is playing in customers' grocery lives.

Basket size, reach, spend allocation and repeat behaviour reveal very different customer relationships. Q2 also allows us to place those behaviours alongside what retailers themselves are doing in the market, from store investment and loyalty changes to shifts in proposition and positioning.

6.1 Tesco: Scale Becomes a Platform for Depth

Tesco remains the UK's most broadly embedded grocery retailer in the Beyond Spend data. It ranks first for Customer Reach, Wallet Share and Returning Customers, giving it a formidable combination of scale and repeat behaviour.

Average basket value remains remarkably stable, moving from £22.60 in April to £22.50 in June. Customer Reach is similarly consistent at around 61%, reinforcing the picture of a retailer already deeply established within household routines.

That scale changes the growth challenge. Tesco has less headroom than smaller competitors to generate dramatic gains simply by attracting more shoppers. The opportunity lies increasingly in deepening the value of relationships it already has.

Clubcard is central to that strategy. Member pricing creates an everyday incentive to identify at checkout, while the resulting behavioural data gives Tesco the ability to understand missions, frequency and product preferences across a customer base that reached around 62% of shoppers during Q2.

This makes Tesco's first-place Loyalty position particularly valuable. An established returning customer becomes more commercially powerful when Tesco can use what it knows about that customer to increase relevance and capture additional missions.

> **Brand Signal: Tesco's scale is increasingly a data advantage. The opportunity is to turn its market-leading Customer Reach and Returning Customers into deeper personal relevance and a greater share of each customer's grocery wallet.**

6.2 Lidl: From Trial to Habit

Lidl produces one of Q2's strongest all-round performances, rising to second in Competitive Standing, first in Growth Momentum and second in Loyalty.

The important feature is how the individual measures connect. Lidl ranks second for Reach Growth and Spending Shift and first for Comeback Trend. Customers are arriving, spend is moving towards the retailer and recent shoppers are increasingly returning.

Its average basket also remains substantial, at £23.20 in June, suggesting Lidl is being trusted with meaningful grocery missions rather than simply occasional value purchases.

The external strategy is moving in the same direction. Lidl launched Lidl Plus Points in May, replacing Coupon Plus with a model that rewards accumulated spending and allows customers greater choice over how rewards are redeemed.

At the same time, Lidl continues to invest in physical expansion. Its store pipeline matters because greater geographic availability removes one of the practical barriers to turning consideration into routine use.

The combination creates an important opportunity. Lidl has already demonstrated its ability to attract shoppers on value. Q2 suggests it is increasingly developing the repeat behaviour required to become a more habitual part of the household grocery repertoire.

> **Brand Signal: Lidl's next stage of growth is about converting momentum into habit. Its Comeback Trend has moved from 9th to 1st, while substantial baskets, loyalty investment and store expansion give it several routes to deepen the customer relationship.**

6.3 Aldi: Winning the Big Shop

Aldi's standout Q2 characteristic is the size of the mission shoppers entrust to it.

It records the highest average basket of all ten retailers analysed, reaching £27.70 in May and £27.10 in June. Around a third of its transactions fall into the large, very large or bulk categories.

This is important because it challenges any lingering view of the discounter primarily as a supplementary destination. For many customers, Aldi is clearly capable of fulfilling a substantial household grocery mission.

Aldi also rises to third in the Loyalty League, with both Returning Customers and Comeback Trend strengthening. Unlike Tesco, Sainsbury's and increasingly Lidl, this behaviour is being generated without a conventional points-based loyalty programme.

Its proposition therefore remains unusually dependent on the fundamentals of retail: price, range, product quality, familiarity and accessibility.

Continued investment in the store estate supports that model. Greater physical availability gives Aldi more opportunities to translate a main-shop proposition into routine behaviour.

> **Brand Signal: Aldi has moved well beyond winning on price alone. Large baskets and strengthening repeat behaviour show a retailer increasingly trusted with the main household shop.**

6.4 Sainsbury's: Strength in the Established Relationship

Sainsbury's remains one of the market's most deeply established grocery relationships.

Its Q2 performance is less dramatic than Lidl's or Co-op's, but its strength lies in scale and consistency. Customer Reach remains substantial, average baskets are stable at around £21, and Returning Customers continue to provide a strong base.

Growth Momentum improves during Q2, helped particularly by stronger Spending Shift. That matters because for a retailer of Sainsbury's scale, relatively small movements in the proportion of customer spend it captures can translate into commercial value.

Nectar provides an important infrastructure around that relationship. Nectar Prices and personalised offers allow Sainsbury's to combine value communication with increasingly customer-specific incentives.

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The strategic opportunity is therefore similar in some respects to Tesco's: use an already broad customer relationship to increase the proportion of missions and spend captured, rather than relying primarily on substantial increases in reach.

> **Brand Signal: Sainsbury's strength is the breadth and maturity of its customer relationship. Growth increasingly depends on using value, data and relevance to persuade established shoppers to allocate more of their grocery spend to the brand.**

6.5 Morrisons: Rebuilding Momentum

Morrisons delivers one of Q2's quieter but more balanced improvements.

It reaches third in the Growth Momentum League, ranking fourth for both Reach Growth and Spending Shift and fifth for Comeback Trend. Unlike some competitors, where a single measure drives the story, Morrisons is moving positively across several dimensions.

That matters for a retailer whose competitive position has been under sustained pressure. The Q2 data suggests greater stability in the customer relationship, with acquisition, spend allocation and return behaviour beginning to move in the same direction.

Morrisons also retains a distinctive structural advantage through its combination of supermarkets, convenience, online, wholesale relationships and manufacturing capability. The challenge is ensuring those assets translate into a proposition that is clear and relevant to customers.

The Q2 behaviour offers encouraging signs, although the movement will need to persist before it can be considered a sustained change in trajectory.

> **Brand Signal: Morrisons is showing broader signs of recovery rather than a single spike in performance. The next test is whether that balanced Q2 momentum can be sustained and converted into a stronger competitive position.**

6.6 Co-op: The Economics of Convenience

Co-op has the most distinctive basket profile in the analysis.

Its average transaction is only around £12, by far the lowest of the ten retailers, and in June half of transactions are small and a further 29% are micro.

Yet Co-op reaches around a third of shoppers and ranks first for Reach Growth and second overall for Growth Momentum.

This makes Co-op a powerful example of the economics of occasion-based grocery. Its role is less about capturing a large planned weekly shop and more about being available when shoppers need a top-up, immediate purchase or convenient local solution.

Physical presence is therefore particularly important. Co-op planned 24 new or transformed stores during Q2, taking the number of new or substantially improved locations planned for the first half of 2026 above 40.

That investment aligns closely with the behaviour visible in the data. More locations create more opportunities to capture convenience occasions, while the expanding customer base creates an opportunity to convert occasional users into more frequent ones.

> **Brand Signal: Co-op grows by winning occasions. Its high reach, rapid reach growth and small baskets make availability and frequency central to the economics of the brand.**

6.7 M&S: Expanding the Grocery Relationship

M&S produces one of Q2's most interesting combinations of signals.

It moves from tenth to first for Spending Shift, indicating that customers are allocating a greater proportion of their grocery expenditure to the retailer. The movement peaks in May, when Spending Shift reaches +4.7%, alongside increases in basket value, reach and value share.

This aligns with M&S's wider ambition to become relevant to more of the family grocery shop. Its challenge has historically been to extend its reputation for quality, treats and food-to-go into a broader range of everyday household missions.

Q2 suggests progress in that direction. Customers do not simply appear to be visiting; they are allocating more economic value to the relationship.

Loyalty provides a note of caution. M&S falls sharply in the quarterly Loyalty League, although the monthly data improves considerably through the quarter. The next stage is therefore to make the increase in spend consistent and repeatable.

> **Brand Signal: M&S is increasing its share of the grocery wallet. The opportunity is to turn growing economic relevance into a more habitual role within the family shop.**

6.8 Waitrose: More Shoppers, Now More Reasons to Return

Waitrose's Q2 story begins with acquisition.

It records strong Reach Growth, suggesting that more shoppers are engaging with the brand, but finishes tenth in the Loyalty League. The contrast between those measures makes conversion the central strategic issue.

Its basket profile is also revealing. Despite its premium positioning, Waitrose records a relatively high proportion of smaller transactions. This suggests that the brand often fulfils selective missions within a broader multi-retailer routine rather than automatically owning a large weekly shop.

That creates an opportunity as well as a challenge. If Waitrose can convert growing reach into repeat behaviour and encourage customers to extend the number of missions they give the retailer, the economic value of the relationship can grow without requiring a wholesale change in brand positioning.

> **Brand Signal: Waitrose is attracting attention. The next opportunity is to convert that wider reach into repeat behaviour and a larger role within customers' grocery routines.**

6.9 Iceland: From Seasonal Momentum to Customer Depth

Iceland undergoes one of the largest reversals between Q1 and Q2, falling from second to ninth in the Growth Momentum League.

The underlying measures help explain why. Reach Growth and Spending Shift weaken, while Comeback Trend ranks second.

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This supports the possibility that some of Iceland's Q1 momentum reflected the particular role frozen food can play during winter: value-led stock-ups, meal planning, batch cooking and larger planned purchases.

As those seasonal conditions recede, the wider acquisition and spend momentum softens. Yet the strength of Comeback Trend suggests that customers brought into the proposition are still finding reasons to return.

That distinction is important. The Q2 opportunity is less about recreating a seasonal spike and more about deepening the relationship with the customers Iceland has already acquired.

> **Brand Signal: Iceland's Q1 surge has eased, but comeback behaviour provides something to build on. The opportunity is to turn seasonal relevance into a more consistent year-round relationship.**

6.10 Asda: Scale Without Momentum

Asda remains a substantial grocery retailer, with meaningful customer reach and relatively valuable baskets, but Q2 shows limited incremental behaviour moving towards the brand.

It finishes tenth in the Growth Momentum League, with weak Reach Growth, Spending Shift and Comeback Trend constraining its position.

That combination matters because Asda's challenge is less about establishing basic market presence. The retailer already has scale, stores and a large customer base. The issue is whether existing and prospective shoppers are finding reasons to increase their engagement.

Against competitors generating momentum through loyalty, convenience, store expansion, value or greater ownership of the main shop, standing still becomes increasingly costly.

Asda therefore has an opportunity to extract more value from assets and customer relationships that already exist, but doing so requires stronger behavioural movement towards the brand.

> **Brand Signal: Asda retains scale, but Q2 shows limited momentum. The priority is to turn an established market presence into reach growth, spend allocation and repeat behaviour.**

6.11 Beyond's Perspective

Growth comes from expanding the role a retailer plays in the customer's grocery life. The opportunity may be a bigger basket, another occasion, a return visit or a greater share of wallet. The winning route depends on the relationship the brand already owns.

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7 Customer Lens

The Brand Lens shows how individual retailers are performing. The Customer Lens turns the perspective around and asks a different question: how are shoppers actually organising their grocery spending?

The Q2 data reinforces one of the clearest findings from Q1: grocery loyalty does not usually mean shopping with a single retailer. Different supermarkets are being used for different missions, and even the most habitual shoppers maintain relationships with several brands.

Understanding those missions helps explain why reach, basket size, return behaviour and share of spend can move in very different directions.

7.1 Five Distinct Grocery Behaviours

Beyond Spend identifies five shopper groups based on observed transaction behaviour:

- **Bulk Buyers** make large, relatively infrequent grocery shops. Their average basket is £54.40 and they make around seven transactions during the period.
- **Casual Shoppers** make smaller purchases across several grocers. Their average basket is £13.90, reflecting a more fragmented approach to grocery shopping.
- **Lunch-Time Buyers** sit at the opposite extreme to Bulk Buyers. They make more than 40 transactions, with an average basket of around £10, reflecting frequent, highly focused purchases.
- **Weekly Bargain Hunters** make regular, larger-basket shops while distributing those purchases across multiple grocers.
- **Weekly Loyal Buyers** also shop frequently with larger baskets, but concentrate more of those transactions within the same retailers.

The differences between these groups demonstrate why average basket value alone gives an incomplete picture of customer value. A £10 transaction repeated more than 40 times represents a very different commercial relationship from a £54 basket purchased around seven times.

7.2 Even Loyal Shoppers Use Multiple Retailers

The number of grocery brands used by each group is particularly revealing.

Weekly Loyal Buyers use an average of three retailers. Weekly Bargain Hunters use six.

Even the group whose behaviour is most concentrated therefore maintains relationships with multiple grocery brands.

This is an important distinction for how loyalty is understood. A customer can return frequently to Tesco, Sainsbury's or Lidl while simultaneously using other retailers for top-ups, convenience, premium purchases, stock-ups or specific products.

The competitive battle is therefore increasingly about the role each retailer earns within a multi-retailer routine.

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For one household, Aldi may capture the main weekly shop, Co-op the emergency top-up and M&S the weekend meal. Another may use Tesco for the main shop, Lidl for value-led stock-ups and Waitrose for selected premium purchases.

In both cases, the customer can display genuine repeat behaviour towards several brands at once.

7.3 Missions Explain the Basket

The five shopper groups also help explain the wide differences in basket value seen across the retailer data.

A large basket often signals a retailer being trusted with a substantial planned mission. Aldi's Q2 basket profile is a good example, with a relatively high proportion of large and very large transactions.

Small baskets can indicate a completely different type of value. Co-op's £12-ish average basket reflects its role in frequent convenience and top-up occasions, while the smaller transactions seen at retailers such as Waitrose may reflect selective missions within a wider grocery repertoire.

The commercial question is therefore less about whether a basket is inherently “good” or “bad” and more about whether it is appropriate to the mission the retailer is trying to own.

A convenience retailer can create considerable customer value through frequency. A main-shop destination can create it through basket depth. A retailer occupying several missions has the opportunity to combine both.

7.4 Income Changes the Mission Mix

Income adds another layer to the picture.

Higher-income households have greater capacity to absorb discretionary and convenience-led grocery spending, while lower-income households are more exposed to the economic consequences of where, when and how they shop.

But Q2 suggests that income alone does not determine grocery behaviour. Customers across income groups continue to divide their spending between retailers and missions.

This makes the relationship between income, mission and retailer choice particularly important. A small convenience purchase may have limited impact on one household's finances while representing a much greater economic commitment for another.

7.5 From Customer Segments to Commercial Decisions

The value of these behavioural groups lies in what retailers can do with them.

Traditional segmentation can describe who a customer is. Transaction behaviour reveals what they are doing.

For retailers, that creates a more actionable set of questions.

A Bulk Buyer may already trust the retailer with a substantial shop, but shop too infrequently. The opportunity may be to capture smaller missions between stock-ups.

A Lunch-Time Buyer may visit extremely frequently, but with limited transaction value. Increasing basket size even modestly could materially change the value of that relationship.

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A Weekly Bargain Hunter already has significant grocery needs but distributes them across as many as six retailers. The opportunity is to give that customer a reason to consolidate another mission or a greater proportion of spend.

A Weekly Loyal Buyer is already more concentrated but still uses around three retailers. Even here, there is headroom to increase share of wallet.

This is where behavioural data becomes commercially powerful. The same growth target can require completely different interventions depending on the relationship the customer already has with the retailer.

7.6 What the Customer Lens Tells Us

Q2 reinforces the shift towards mission-based grocery relationships. Shoppers are building portfolios of retailers that collectively meet different needs, creating opportunities for brands to grow by capturing additional occasions and a greater share of existing grocery spend.

> **Customer Insight: A retailer does not need to win the whole customer to grow. It needs to earn the next occasion, the next mission or the next share of spend.**

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8 Regional Lens

National averages conceal very different grocery markets across the UK.

Basket values, customer reach, retailer strength and spending behaviour vary materially by region. The same retailer can therefore play a very different role depending on where the customer lives.

Q2 shows why geography matters commercially: growth opportunities that look similar at national level can require very different strategies on the ground.

8.1 East Midlands

The East Midlands remains a contested grocery market, with Tesco leading and Aldi holding a particularly significant position.

Average basket values remain relatively stable through Q2, as does customer reach. The more notable movement is in customer behaviour, with comeback strengthening sharply in May before easing again in June.

Aldi's regional strength is particularly relevant given its national Q2 profile. Across the UK, it records the largest average basket of the ten retailers analysed, demonstrating its ability to capture substantial grocery missions. In the East Midlands, that combines with an already strong competitive position.

This makes the region an important battleground for the main household shop. Tesco retains the advantage of scale, while Aldi has developed a proposition capable of competing for a significant proportion of household grocery spend.

> **Regional Insight: The East Midlands combines a market leader with deeply established discounter competition. Growth increasingly depends on which retailer can capture more of the main grocery mission.**

8.2 East of England

The East of England combines relatively strong basket values with a competitive retailer mix.

Tesco leads, with Aldi holding a substantial position behind it, reinforcing the strength of the discounter beyond its national average.

Customer behaviour remains broadly stable through the quarter. As in several regions, comeback strengthens significantly in May before moderating in June, while movements in basket value and customer reach are comparatively limited.

That stability is itself important. With established grocery participation and several retailers already competing for household spend, the opportunity is increasingly about redistribution rather than market expansion.

A relatively small change in the proportion of grocery spend allocated to an individual retailer can therefore be commercially significant, particularly when applied across an established customer base.

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> **Regional Insight: The East of England is a mature grocery market where the competitive prize lies increasingly in earning a greater share of existing customer spend.**

8.3 Greater London

Greater London has one of the most distinctive grocery profiles in the regional analysis.

Average basket value is comparatively low at £16.60 in June, while customer reach stands at 14.4% and market share by value at 10.5%. This points to a market characterised by smaller, more frequent grocery transactions rather than large individual shops.

The retailer mix is also distinctive. Tesco leads at 28.7%, followed by Sainsbury's at 21.3%, with Lidl at 10.5%, M&S at 9.3% and Asda at 7.3%. M&S therefore retains a stronger position in London than in many other regions, but within a market still dominated by Tesco and Sainsbury's.

London's lower basket value is particularly important when considered alongside its high customer reach. The opportunity is less about increasing the size of each individual transaction and more about capturing a greater number of missions within an already highly active grocery market.

> **Regional Insight: Greater London is a high-frequency, smaller-basket grocery market. Growth depends on winning more occasions and a greater share of existing customer spend within a highly competitive retailer landscape.**

8.4 North East

The North East presents a distinctive grocery economy, with a potential role for mainstream and value-led retail.

Tesco leads, while Aldi maintains a meaningful competitive position. Basket values and customer reach remain relatively stable through Q2, indicating a market where established shopping patterns continue to dominate.

The regional picture suggests that growth is more likely to come from shifts within established shopping behaviour than from dramatic changes in participation. For retailers, the opportunity is to understand which missions they are already winning, where customers are choosing competitors instead, and how value, range, convenience and proposition can encourage a greater share of existing grocery spend.

> **Regional Insight: The North East demonstrates why value needs to be understood in the context of the customer making the purchase, rather than through national basket averages alone.**

8.5 North West

The North West supports one of the broader competitive fields in the analysis.

Tesco leads, but Aldi, Asda and Morrisons all retain meaningful positions, giving shoppers several credible options for substantial household grocery missions.

Average basket values and customer reach remain relatively stable through Q2. May again brings an improvement in comeback behaviour before that momentum softens in June.

The retailer mix is the more significant feature. Unlike markets dominated by a single leader and one major challenger, several established brands are competing for the same household spend.

This creates a market where growth is increasingly about share of wallet. The opportunity comes from persuading shoppers already active in the grocery market to allocate an additional mission or a greater proportion of their expenditure to one retailer.

> **Regional Insight: The North West is a share-of-wallet battleground, with several established retailers competing for the same household grocery missions.**

8.6 Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland has one of the most distinctive retailer structures in the report.

Lidl is particularly strong, while M&S also holds a more prominent position than in many other UK regions. The result is a competitive landscape that differs markedly from the national ranking.

Northern Ireland offers a view of what a more established Lidl position can look like when the retailer already occupies a significant role within the regional grocery repertoire.

M&S's relative strength adds another dimension, demonstrating that the same regional market can simultaneously support value-led and more premium grocery propositions.

> **Regional Insight: Northern Ireland demonstrates how national retailer rankings can shift at regional level. Tesco leads with 43.5% of value share, while Lidl accounts for 16.1% and M&S 12.3%, giving both a more prominent position than across the UK overall.**

8.7 Scotland

Scotland is characterised by broad grocery participation and one of the most competitive retailer mixes in the analysis. Its average basket is £21.60 in June, while market share by value reaches 11.9%.

Tesco leads, but Asda, Aldi, Co-op and Morrisons all hold meaningful positions. Co-op is particularly significant here, reflecting the importance of convenience and local accessibility within the Scottish market.

That creates a different growth challenge. With a substantial proportion of shoppers already participating in the market, the opportunity is to increase the economic value of those established relationships through additional missions, frequency or share of wallet.

> **Regional Insight: Scotland demonstrates the commercial power of broad customer participation. The opportunity is to increase the value of an already extensive grocery relationship.**

8.8 South East

The South East combines relatively valuable baskets with extensive retailer choice.

Tesco leads, while mainstream, discount and premium propositions all compete for a customer base with comparatively strong spending power.

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Basket values and reach remain relatively stable through Q2. As a result, the more important competitive question is how shoppers distribute that spending between the retailers available to them.

The region also demonstrates why a valuable customer does not automatically translate into a deeply held customer relationship. With extensive choice, households can divide substantial grocery expenditure across several brands and missions.

This places greater emphasis on relevance: giving customers a reason to consolidate an additional mission or a larger proportion of their grocery wallet.

> **Regional Insight: The South East combines valuable customers with extensive choice. Growth depends increasingly on earning a greater share of an already substantial grocery wallet.**

8.9 South West

The South West is notable for the relative strength of Lidl.

That regional position becomes particularly interesting when viewed alongside Lidl's national Q2 momentum. The retailer ranks first for Growth Momentum and Comeback Trend, suggesting that recent shoppers are increasingly returning and allocating more spend to the brand.

A strong existing regional position provides a particularly valuable platform from which that national momentum can translate into deeper customer relationships.

The South West also highlights the continuing importance of physical availability. Grocery missions remain influenced by which stores customers can conveniently access, making location and network expansion an important complement to price, loyalty and brand proposition.

> **Regional Insight: The South West shows how national momentum can become more powerful when it is combined with an established regional position and physical availability.**

8.10 Wales

Wales is another market where Aldi holds a leading position.

That position is significant given Aldi's wider Q2 customer behaviour. Nationally, the retailer records the largest average basket in the analysis, at £27.10 in June, and rises to third in the Loyalty League.

Its Welsh strength therefore appears to extend beyond value-led trial. The retailer is capable of capturing substantial grocery missions within a region where it already has an established customer position.

Basket values and customer measures remain comparatively stable through the quarter, placing greater emphasis on how existing spend moves between competing retailers.

> **Regional Insight: Aldi's strength in Wales demonstrates how a value proposition can develop into an established main-shop relationship, with customers entrusting the retailer with substantial household grocery missions.**

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8.11 West Midlands

The West Midlands is another of Aldi's strongest regional markets, creating a particularly interesting competitive dynamic with Tesco.

Nationally, Aldi's Q2 profile combines the largest average basket in the analysis with strengthening repeat behaviour. In the West Midlands, those characteristics sit alongside an already substantial customer footprint.

This matters because it further erodes the traditional distinction between the discounters and the established full-range supermarkets. Customer behaviour suggests Aldi is increasingly competing for the same substantial household grocery missions.

For established competitors, the challenge is therefore broader than defending against price competition. It is about retaining ownership of the main shop itself.

> **Regional Insight: The West Midlands demonstrates how deeply the discounters are now embedded in mainstream grocery behaviour, competing directly for substantial household missions.**

8.12 Yorkshire and the Humber

Yorkshire and the Humber is one of the more evenly contested major grocery markets in the analysis.

Tesco leads, but Aldi, Asda and Morrisons all hold substantial positions. Almost half of the market represented by the top five is therefore held by four meaningful challengers.

Customer behaviour is remarkably stable. Average basket value moves from £22.50 in April to £22.70 in May before easing to £22.30 in June, while market share sits at around 12.5–12.6%.

The underlying behavioural measures add some movement to that stable picture. Comeback reaches 28.6% in May before falling to -1.7% in June, while Spending Shift improves from -0.3% in April to +0.5% in June.

This suggests a market where the overall customer base is relatively settled, but the distribution of spend within it can still move.

Yorkshire also demonstrates the continuing importance of established regional retailer relationships. The competitive story extends beyond Tesco versus the discounters, with Asda and Morrisons retaining significant positions.

> **Regional Insight: Yorkshire and the Humber is a battle for share rather than access. With several substantial competitors already embedded in the market, growth depends increasingly on persuading existing shoppers to shift spend between retailers.**

8.13 What the Regional Lens Tells Us

Three conclusions emerge from the regional data.

First, there is no single UK grocery customer. Basket values, customer reach, retailer strength and the distribution of grocery spend vary materially between regions, creating very different customer relationships and competitive environments.

Second, national retailer rankings conceal significant regional strengths. Aldi is particularly powerful in the East and West Midlands, Wales and Yorkshire and the Humber. Lidl holds a larger share in the South West and Northern Ireland than in many other regions. M&S has a more prominent position in London and Northern Ireland, while Co-op accounts for a larger share of grocery spend in Scotland.

Third, physical presence still matters. Loyalty platforms, digital propositions and personalisation can deepen customer relationships, but grocery remains a category where proximity influences which missions a retailer can realistically capture. Aldi, Lidl and Co-op are all continuing to invest in their store networks; Co-op alone planned 24 new or transformed locations in Q2, taking its first-half total above 40.

The Regional Lens therefore changes the strategic question. National performance tells us who is winning overall. Regional behaviour begins to reveal where the next growth is available and what type of growth it is likely to be.

> **Regional Insight: Grocery growth is increasingly local. Retailers that understand the economics of each regional customer base can make better decisions about range, format, value, investment and the missions they are best placed to win.**

9 Looking Ahead

Q2 reveals a grocery market where the most important changes are increasingly happening within the customer relationship.

Overall grocery demand remains relatively resilient. The more significant movement is in how shoppers distribute that demand: which retailers they use, which missions they give them, whether they return and how much of their grocery wallet each brand earns.

As we move into Q3, six signals will be particularly important to watch.

9.1 Can Lidl Turn Comeback into Habit?

Lidl enters Q3 with exceptional momentum.

It finishes Q2 first for Growth Momentum, second for Competitive Standing and second for Loyalty, while Comeback Trend moves from ninth to first.

The next question is whether that strengthening return behaviour becomes established habit.

The timing of Lidl Plus Points makes this particularly interesting. The new loyalty model gives customers a clearer incentive to accumulate spending over time, while continued store expansion increases the number of shoppers for whom Lidl can become a practical part of their regular grocery routine.

Q3 should begin to reveal whether these elements are translating into deeper repeat behaviour and a greater share of wallet.

> **What to watch: Returning Customers, Spending Shift and whether Lidl's move from 9th to 1st for Comeback Trend is sustained.**

9.2 Can M&S Hold on to More of the Grocery Wallet?

M&S produces one of Q2's most striking movements, rising from tenth to first for Spending Shift.

This is important because it points towards a change in the role customers are giving the retailer. M&S has long been strong in premium, treat and convenience missions. Capturing a greater proportion of grocery spend suggests potential progress towards its ambition to play a larger role in the family shop.

External sales data supports that direction, with NIQ recording grocery growth during Q2.

The challenge now is consistency. M&S's Loyalty ranking weakens on a quarterly basis, despite considerable improvement within the quarter.

Q3 will therefore test whether increased spend becomes a sustained customer behaviour.

> **What to watch: Spending Shift, basket development and whether stronger spend converts into more consistent return behaviour.**

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9.3 Can Co-op Convert Reach into Frequency?

Co-op demonstrates another route to growth.

It finishes Q2 first for Reach Growth and second for Growth Momentum, despite having by far the smallest average basket in the analysis.

Its strength lies in capturing shoppers and occasions. Continued investment in new and transformed stores should increase the number of opportunities to do both.

The next stage is to extract more value from that expanding audience. For Co-op, this does not necessarily mean dramatically larger baskets. Additional visits and a greater share of convenience and top-up missions may be equally valuable.

> **What to watch: whether Reach Growth translates into comeback, frequency and Spending Shift.**

9.4 Will the Discounters Continue to Diverge?

Aldi and Lidl enter Q3 from different positions.

Lidl has the immediate momentum, with acquisition, spend movement and comeback reinforcing one another.

Aldi has the largest average basket in the market and strengthening loyalty, but its Growth Momentum ranking slips as Reach Growth and Spending Shift moderate.

This creates an important test of two increasingly mature discount propositions.

Lidl's challenge is to turn rapid momentum into established behaviour. Aldi's is to generate further growth from a customer relationship that is already deeply embedded in substantial grocery missions.

The difference between them should tell us more about what the next phase of discount growth looks like.

> **What to watch: Aldi's Reach Growth and Spending Shift versus Lidl's Returning Customers and sustained comeback.**

9.5 Will Grocery Growth Become Even More About Share of Wallet?

Perhaps the most important Q2 signal is that growth is increasingly being created through redistribution of existing grocery expenditure.

M&S is gaining Spending Shift. Lidl combines Spending Shift with stronger comeback. Tesco and Sainsbury's have extensive customer bases from which relatively small increases in wallet share could create substantial value.

At the same time, the Customer Lens shows that even Weekly Loyal Buyers use around three grocery retailers, while Weekly Bargain Hunters use six.

That leaves considerable spend in play.

For retailers with already extensive reach, the next stage of growth may increasingly depend on persuading customers to move one more mission, one more occasion or another portion of their grocery wallet towards the brand.

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> **What to watch: Spending Shift alongside reach. Growth without major customer acquisition may become an increasingly important feature of the market.**

9.6 Beyond's Perspective

Q2 reinforces a shift in the competitive question facing UK grocery.

The market is increasingly about how much of the customer relationship each retailer can earn.

For some, that means attracting more shoppers. For others, it means turning trial into repeat behaviour, increasing frequency, capturing larger missions or persuading established customers to allocate more of their grocery spend to the brand.

The retailers entering Q3 with the strongest opportunities are those where several of these behaviours are beginning to connect.

That is what Beyond Spend will continue to track.

> **Looking Ahead Insight: The next phase of grocery growth will be shaped by retailers' ability to turn customer engagement into a greater share of missions, occasions and spend.**

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10 Glossary

Beyond Spend uses a range of behavioural measures and customer definitions to understand how people shop, how retailer relationships are changing and where growth is coming from.

10.1 Core Measures

Average Basket Value

The average amount spent in a single transaction with a retailer.

Basket value can help indicate the type of grocery mission a retailer is capturing. Larger baskets are more commonly associated with substantial or planned grocery shops, while smaller baskets can indicate top-up, convenience or highly focused missions.

Customer Reach

The proportion of customers in the dataset who shop with a retailer during the period.

Reach indicates the breadth of a retailer's customer base and helps distinguish between retailers used by a large proportion of shoppers and those serving a smaller customer audience.

Reach Growth

The change in Customer Reach over time.

Positive Reach Growth indicates that a retailer is engaging a broader customer base. Negative Reach Growth indicates that reach is contracting.

Wallet Share

The proportion of customers' total grocery expenditure captured by a retailer.

Wallet Share helps show the economic importance of a retailer within customers' overall grocery spending, particularly in a market where most shoppers use more than one grocery brand.

Spending Shift

The direction in which customers are moving their grocery spend.

A positive Spending Shift indicates that customers are allocating more of their grocery expenditure to a retailer. A negative Spending Shift indicates that spend is moving away.

Returning Customers

The proportion of customers who shop with a retailer again within the measurement period.

This provides an indication of the strength of established repeat behaviour.

Comeback Trend

The direction of change in customer return behaviour.

A positive Comeback Trend indicates that recent customers are becoming more likely to return. It can therefore identify strengthening customer relationships before that behaviour becomes fully established.

10.2 Basket Sizes

Beyond Spend groups grocery transactions into six basket-size categories:

Basket	Transaction Value
Micro	£0–£5
Small	£5–£15
Medium	£15–£30
Large	£30–£60
Very Large	£60–£100
Bulk	£100+

10.3 Shopper Segments

Beyond Spend identifies five shopper groups based on observed basket size, shopping frequency and the number of grocers used.

- **Bulk Buyers -** Large, infrequent shops, averaging £54+ per basket across around seven transactions.
- **Casual Shoppers -** Smaller purchases spread across multiple grocers, with an average basket of around £14.
- **Lunch-Time Buyers -** Frequent, low-value purchases, with 40+ transactions and an average basket of around £10**.**
- **Weekly Bargain Hunters -** Frequent, larger shops spread across multiple retailers, using an average of around six grocers.
- **Weekly Loyal Buyers -** Frequent, larger shops concentrated within fewer retailers, while still using an average of around three grocers.

10.4 Income Groups

For analysis within Beyond Spend, customers are grouped into three income bands:

Income Group	Annual Income
Low Income	£0–£19,999
Mid Income	£20,000–£31,000
High Income	£32,000+

10.5 League Tables

Competitive Standing League

The broadest Beyond Spend retailer ranking, combining seven measures:

- Average Basket Value
- Customer Reach
- Reach Growth
- Wallet Share
- Spending Shift
- Returning Customers
- Comeback Trend

Together, these provide an overall view of both the strength of the existing customer relationship and the direction in which it is moving.

Growth Momentum League

A comparative ranking based equally on:

- Reach Growth
- Spending Shift
- Comeback Trend

It identifies retailers where customer behaviour is moving most positively, regardless of their absolute market size.

Loyalty League

A comparative ranking based equally on:

- Returning Customers
- Comeback Trend

It considers both established repeat behaviour and whether that behaviour is strengthening or weakening.

10.6 Behavioural Terms

Behavioural Momentum

Positive movement across customer behaviours that indicates a retailer relationship is strengthening.

This can include expanding reach, increasing spend allocation and strengthening return behaviour.

Conditional Loyalty

Repeat behaviour that depends on the retailer continuing to meet particular customer needs, such as price, convenience, availability, quality or rewards.

It reflects the reality that customers can repeatedly choose a retailer without giving it all of their grocery spend.

Effort Reduction

Making a shopping mission easier for the customer.

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This can include convenience, proximity, availability, simpler purchasing or anything else that reduces the practical effort required to complete the mission.

Mission-Based Shopping

Shopping behaviour organised around what the customer needs to accomplish, rather than attachment to a single retailer.

A household might use one retailer for the main weekly shop, another for top-ups, another for convenience purchases and another for premium or treat occasions.

Justified Indulgence

Spending more on a particular product or mission where the customer feels the additional cost is worthwhile.

This can help explain why customers under wider budget pressure may continue to make selective premium purchases.

Sequential Shopping

Using different retailers in sequence to fulfil different elements of the overall grocery requirement.

Rather than giving one supermarket the entire grocery shop, customers distribute missions across several retailers according to factors such as price, convenience, range, quality and availability.

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11 About and Contact Us

About Beyond: Putting Data To Work

Beyond: Putting Data To Work helps organisations turn complex data into better decisions that drive measurable commercial outcomes. Combining expertise in data strategy, engineering, analytics and AI, it focuses on closing the gap between insight and action — ensuring that data is not just analysed but actively used to improve performance. Its approach centres on practical delivery inside real operating environments, helping organisations align data, technology and decision-making to unlock value quickly and at scale.

About Fable Data

Fable Data operates a multi-stack technology platform that anonymises and aggregates consumer spending data from multiple banks and credit-card providers across the UK and Europe. It build large-scale, predictive data products that provide a real-time view of in-store and ecommerce transactions across all merchants and sectors. The data enables deep-dive analysis of spend trends at the individual-brand level, as well as broader sector and macroeconomic research.

For further information

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