

UK CONSUMER GOODS • SEPTEMBER 2026

UK consumer goods: corporate reputation in AI answers

How AI discusses companies and brands in relation to trust, pricing, and social and environmental issues.

ChatGPT • Google AI Overviews • Claude

Negative coverage dominates this audit of corporate issues

The subject mix includes shrinkflation, greenwashing and boycotts. It is not a general test of product recommendations.

01 Nestlé has the highest negative coverage

Nestlé is described negatively in **56% of all answers**, followed by Coca-Cola at 40%. The highest positive coverage is 7%, shared by Unilever and Colgate-Palmolive.

02 Company and brand names receive different coverage

Negative descriptions account for **61% of Unilever's mentions** and 29% of Persil's. For Mondelēz, Oreo and Cadbury, the equivalent shares are all above 90%.

03 No parent-company website is cited

No parent-company website appears in the citations. GOV.UK leads the listed sources, appearing in **15% of all answers**.

The questions we asked

The same questions were put to ChatGPT, Google AI Overviews and Claude Sonnet.

01 Which big consumer goods companies are the most trusted, and which are the least?

02 Which company actually makes the brands in my kitchen and bathroom?

03 Which household brands have shrunk their products while charging the same or more?

04 Are the big food and consumer goods companies profiteering from inflation?

05 Which food companies make the most ultra-processed food, and which should I avoid?

06 Which brands market junk food to children?

07 Which brands are greenwashing, and which sustainability claims are genuine?

08 Which household brands are worst for plastic packaging and waste?

09 Which consumer goods companies are linked to palm oil deforestation or bad supply-chain practices?

10 Which big brands should I boycott, and why?

How companies are described across the issues tested

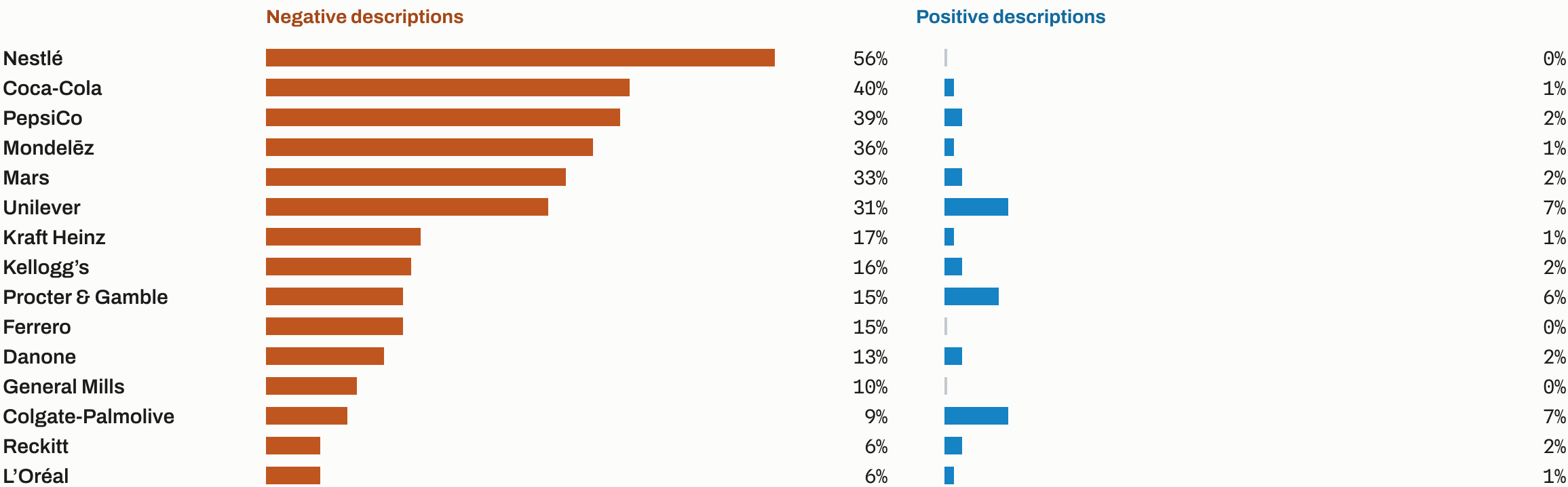
Selected companies described positively or negatively in AI answers on each subject.

SUBJECT	DESCRIBED POSITIVELY	DESCRIBED NEGATIVELY
Most- and least-trusted companies	Unilever, Colgate-Palmolive	Nestlé, Kraft Heinz
Brand ownership	None highlighted	None highlighted
Shrinkflation	None highlighted	Nestlé, Kellogg's
Profiteering and inflation	None highlighted	None highlighted
Ultra-processed food	None highlighted	Mondelēz, PepsiCo
Marketing food to children	None highlighted	Coca-Cola, PepsiCo
Greenwashing	None highlighted	Coca-Cola, Nestlé
Plastic packaging	None highlighted	Coca-Cola, PepsiCo
Palm oil and deforestation	Danone	Nestlé, Unilever
Boycotts	None highlighted	Coca-Cola, Nestlé

The issue matters: a company can receive positive descriptions on one subject and criticism on another. Overall company figures should therefore be read alongside the results for each subject.

Nestlé stands out for negative coverage

Share of all audited answers describing each company negatively or positively. Both chart columns use the same scale.



Every listed company has more negative than positive coverage in this subject set. A 0% positive rate means no positive coverage was recorded in the audit, not that AI never praises the company.

Persil gets less criticism than Unilever; Cadbury gets about as much as Mondelēz

Each percentage shows how often mentions of that name are negative. Lower means less criticism.

PARENT COMPANY	NEGATIVE MENTIONS	ITS BRANDS · NEGATIVE MENTIONS		
Unilever	61%	Persil 29%	Dove 44%	Domestos 0%
Procter & Gamble	48%	Oral-B 11%	Gillette 22%	Fairy 25%
Reckitt	33%	Finish 23%	Dettol 25%	
Colgate-Palmolive	42%	Palmolive 22%	Colgate 40%	
Nestlé	96%	Nescafé 82%	KitKat 87%	
Mondelēz	91%	Oreo 92%	Cadbury 93%	

How to read this: 61% of Unilever mentions are negative, compared with 29% of Persil mentions. These figures describe the tone of mentions, not how often each name appears.

The subject mix matters to the result

The audit tests how companies appear in answers about selected corporate issues. Its aggregate is shaped by that selection.

79%

of parent-company mentions
are negative

Most company mentions are negative

Across the subjects tested, negative descriptions account for 79% of parent-company mentions. The company-level chart shows where criticism is most widespread across answers.

100%

of plastic-packaging answers
criticise each company

Coca-Cola and PepsiCo are each criticised on plastic

Plastic packaging is a consistent point of criticism for both companies. It is a clear priority for examining which claims and sources recur.

Scope of the questions

Controversy-focused topics limit the broader conclusion

Questions about harms and controversies invite criticism. The findings should not be generalised to everyday shopping questions or all AI discussions of FMCG.

GOV.UK is the most-cited listed domain

Share of all audited answers citing each domain. An answer can cite more than one domain.



No parent-company website appears in the citations

0%

of all answers cite a parent-company website.

LinkedIn, Facebook and Reddit also appear among the cited domains. Reviewing the specific posts could help identify whose views are being repeated.

The cited pages offer a starting point for understanding the evidence behind AI descriptions and identifying where a factual response may be useful.

Give AI and its sources better evidence

Suggested actions for communications, sustainability and brand teams.

01 Prioritise campaigns in channels AI already cites

Use citation frequency alongside audience reach to choose campaign targets. Prioritise relevant Which? and The Grocer journalists, and expert content on LinkedIn. Offer original research and verified results tailored to their coverage. Allocate outreach budget to these targets and track whether the resulting coverage is cited.

Which? appears in 13% of answers, LinkedIn in 11% and The Grocer in 8%. These are priorities for relevant content and outreach.

02 Publish a dated plastic-packaging fact sheet

For Coca-Cola and PepsiCo, set out total plastic used, virgin plastic, recycled content and progress against a stated baseline. Separate UK and global figures; link to verification. Give the same evidence to authors of cited plastic coverage.

Plastic: both companies are criticised in 100% of answers on this subject.

03 Explain pack-size changes product by product

For products named in shrinkflation answers, publish the old and new weight, change date and reason. Where comparable prices are available, show price per 100g or 100ml and state the retailer and date. Make the change easy to check.

Shrinkflation: Nestlé and Kellogg's are highlighted negatively.

04 Give brand teams answers to corporate issues

Prepare a short public Q&A for affected brands: who owns the brand, whether the issue applies to its products, and what has changed. Link each answer to product-specific evidence, rather than a general corporate pledge.

Company and brand coverage differs: Persil has 29% negative mentions versus Unilever's 61%.

Scope and measures

An Omniscan AI study of corporate reputation in UK consumer goods, covering company and brand names.

Platforms and subjects

ChatGPT, Google AI Overviews and Claude.

The study covers which companies AI describes as most and least trusted, brand ownership, pricing, food and children's marketing, environmental issues, and boycotts.

What “trusted” means here

AI was asked which consumer goods companies were most and least trusted. The result records how the answers describe each company; it is not a consumer survey or an independent trust score.

Descriptions can draw on corporate reputation, brand familiarity and product-level trust. The study does not score trust in ethics, sustainability or leadership separately.

Coverage across answers

The share of all audited answers that describe a company positively or negatively. Topic-specific figures use only answers about that subject.

Tone of a name's mentions

The share of mentions of a particular company or brand that are negative. This measure is used in the company–brand comparison. The 79% figure covers parent-company mentions across the study.

Source citations

The share of all answers citing a domain. An answer can cite several domains. Citation frequency measures how often a source appears, rather than its influence on an answer.