

# 5 Strategies for Faster, Smarter New Product Development for Fast Moving Consumer Goods



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# Introduction

The fast-paced world of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) has products that zip from production lines to shopping carts in a flash. Think food, drinks, cigarettes, personal care items, and everything else that's restocked almost as quickly as it's sold. It's a vast industry that fuels a large chunk of the global economy and keeps the wheels of retail spinning.

If you're a VP of PMO tasked with steering new product development, you know this sector demands sprinter speed in a marathon setting. The competition is fierce, but so are the opportunities.

This eBook is your playbook for mastering portfolio management in the FMCG world. It will show you how to navigate through changing consumer preferences and make the most of the latest technological advancements to keep up and stay ahead.

Learn practical tips on using your project management office (PMO) to cut through the noise and speed up your product launches. It will help you learn how to get the right products to market quicker and align every new venture with your broader business goals.

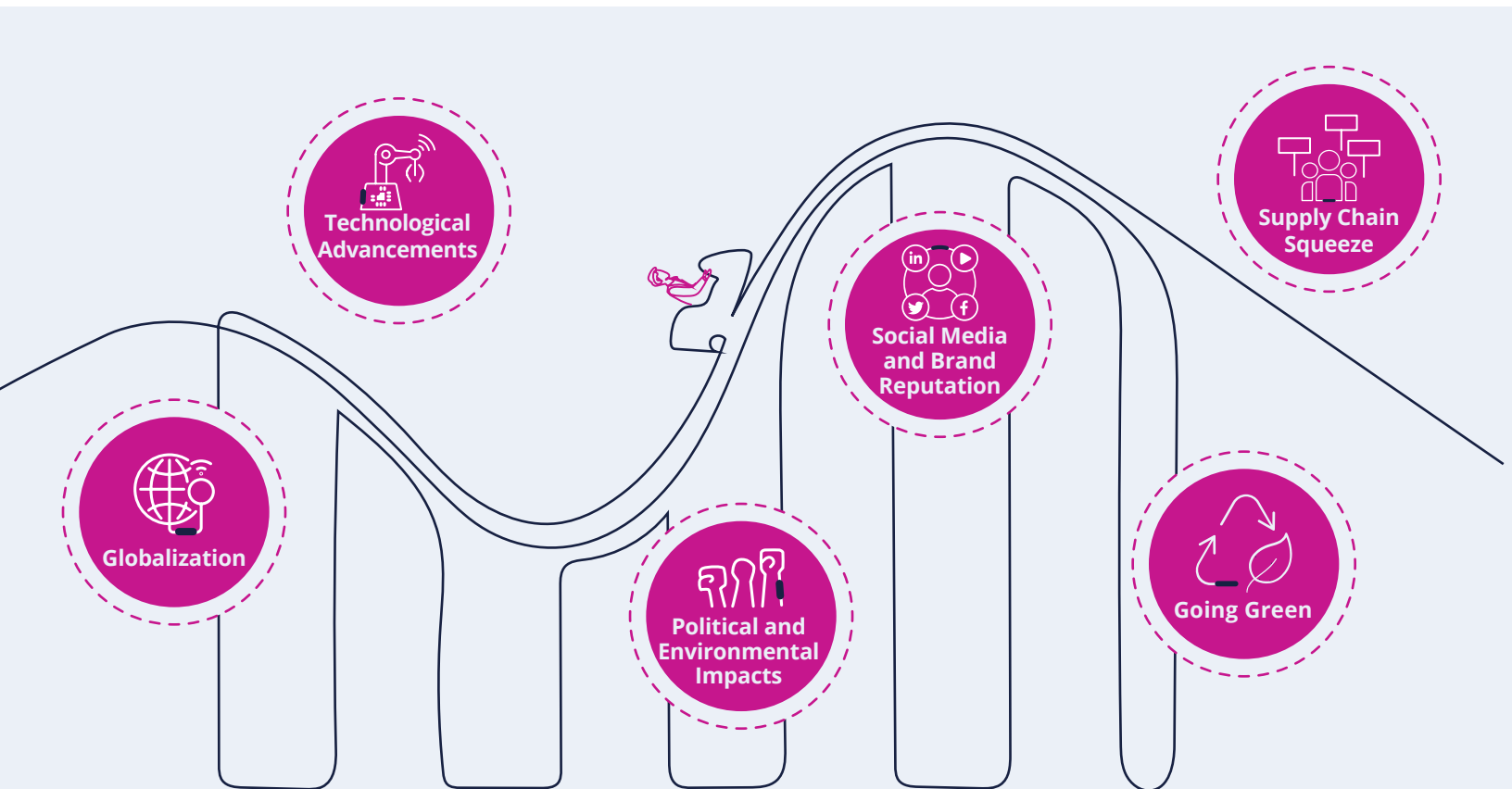
So, let's dive in, and gear up to turn challenges into checkmarks on your to-do list!



# A Quick Level Overview of Global Macroeconomic Challenges



Since COVID-19 came on the scene, the global economy has been on a rollercoaster. Jobs and the stock market seem okay, but inflation has been shaking things up by pushing prices on everything from raw materials to transportation. This makes it tough for businesses. Even though people are working, they're still watching their wallets more closely, wary of how much they're spending because everything just costs more. This puts businesses in a tough spot: either cut into their profit margins or raise prices, which can scare away budget-conscious shoppers.





**Globalization** is making consumer behaviors and preferences more similar around the world. Social media and travel are big drivers here. People see trends online and bring back new experiences from their travels. Countries known as the “Emerging Seven” (Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia, and Turkey) each have a growing middle class with more money to spend on new and exciting products, reflecting changing demographics that will impact market dynamics.

**Technological Advancements:** Keeping up with the latest technology is crucial. Digital tools like AI and data analytics can make operations more efficient and provide better insights into what consumers want. But these upgrades are expensive and need everyone on board, which can be a challenge.

**Political and Environmental Impacts:** Political instability and climate change are also big issues. These factors can mess up supply chains, making it harder to get raw materials and push up prices. Companies need solid plans to manage these risks, keep things running smoothly and stay on the right side of new regulations.

**Social Media and Brand Reputation:** In today’s online world, a brand’s reputation can be made or broken in an instant. One mistake can go viral and damage your brand. Companies need to be on their toes, respond quickly to feedback, and make sure their products and actions reflect their brand values.

**Going Green:** Sustainable is a big buzzword right now, and rightfully so. Everyone—from shoppers to regulators—wants eco-friendly products. FMCG companies need to rethink everything from how they source ingredients to how they package and deliver products, all while avoiding skyrocketing costs.

**Supply Chain Squeeze:** Supply chain problems can really hit FMCG companies hard, creating big headaches that need smart, strategic solutions. Natural disasters, political conflicts and labor strikes can all cause delays or shortages. A strong, multi-tiered, adaptable supply chain is essential to keep things running smoothly.

These macroeconomic trends highlight the complexity and opportunities within the FMCG industry. To thrive in this fast-changing global market, businesses must stay flexible, be ready to pivot quickly, and adapt to new challenges as they arise. Being agile is essential to stay ahead.





# Life in the Fast Lane

## Navigating the FMCG Industry's Challenges



Consumers are looking for healthier options in everything from food to personal care products, and FMCG companies have their work cut out for them. Creating these healthier products often costs more and means shorter shelf lives, making pricing and inventory management tricky. Plus, with consumers changing their habits—like eating out more and jumping on new diet trends—predicting what will hit the mark next is even tougher. FMCG companies need to stay quick and accurate to keep up in this fast-changing market.

As FMCG companies strive to keep up with market demands, managing multiple projects becomes increasingly complex. It's one thing to oversee a single project or even two or three, but as your portfolio grows, so does the challenge of maintaining focus and control. What starts as manageable can spiral into a tangled web of overlapping priorities, making it harder to see the bigger picture.

When you're managing just one project, everything is clear. Each task and its impact on the overall goal is easy to track. Even with a few projects, you can still keep everything in focus. But as you add more to your dashboard—four, eight, sixteen or more—things start to blur. It's like trying to look through a foggy lens; the sharpness fades, and you begin to lose sight of how individual projects affect the whole.

At this point, you might find yourself questioning whether you're making the right decisions because the overall view is no longer clear. This is where the complexity of managing an expanding portfolio hits home. You risk losing oversight and, with it, the ability to steer your projects and innovation efforts effectively.

This is where portfolio management software becomes essential. These tools help you regain that lost clarity by centralizing and organizing all the moving parts. They allow you to track each project's progress while also understanding its impact on your broader objectives. With the right solution, you can cut through the fog, keep your vision sharp, and ensure that every decision is aligned with your strategic goals.





# Manage New Product Development (NPD) Complexity with Strategic Portfolio Management (SPM) Tools



## Streamline Operations with Centralized Data

Imagine all your project information in one place—no more hunting through multiple Excel files or wondering which version is correct. SPM tools centralize data and create a single source of truth for your entire portfolio. This integration gives you an instant overview of growth projects and their interdependencies at any level. With just a few clicks, you can see everything you need, tailored to the specific details required by different management roles.

## SPM's Impact on Decision-Making and Business Agility

With up-to-date insights from SPM tools, making swift executive decisions becomes second nature. These tools support your strategic direction and allow you and your teams to allocate resources more effectively. They also help prioritize projects that promise quicker market entry and higher returns. This means doing the right things at the right time.

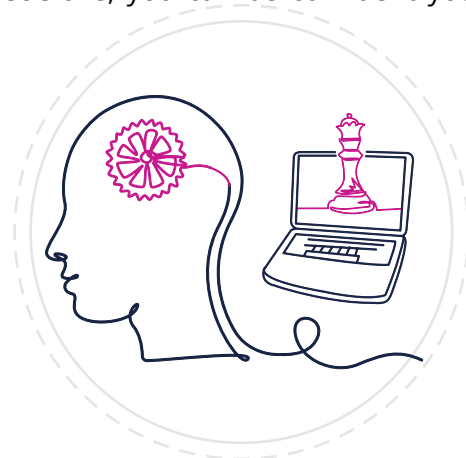
## Implementing 5 Key Strategies for Success

To truly leverage the power of SPM tools, consider these five key strategies: aligning your portfolio with corporate strategy, creating a centralized idea submission portal, prioritizing projects with measurable criteria, following a structured stage-gate process, and building a unique knowledge hub. These strategies ensure that you're not just managing projects, but driving them in a way that enhances decision-making, boosts agility, and maximizes business impact.



## | Strategy 1 Align Your Strategy with Your Portfolio

First and foremost, SPM tools help you ensure that every project in your portfolio supports your company's overarching goals. By aligning your corporate strategy with your project portfolio, your efforts are always driving towards what matters most. This alignment means that when you're faced with decisions, you can be confident you're moving in the right direction.



## | Strategy 2 Gather Ideas Through an Idea Submission Portal

Innovation is the lifeblood of FMCG companies. A good SPM tool allows you to harness that creativity effectively. Imagine having a centralized portal where your entire team can submit ideas for new products or initiatives. This isn't just about gathering suggestions—it's about creating a pipeline of innovation that feeds directly into your strategic goals. With everyone contributing, you capture a wider range of ideas, which could lead to your next big breakthrough.







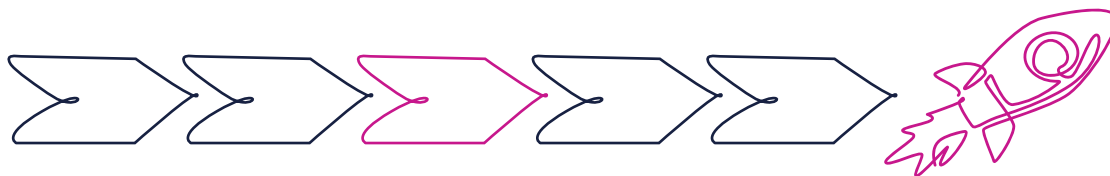
## | Strategy 3 Prioritize Projects with Measurable Criteria

Of course, not every idea will make it to the finish line. That's why it's essential to prioritize projects based on measurable criteria like potential ROI, market demand, and alignment with your strategy. SPM tools give you the framework to evaluate each idea objectively, ensuring you focus on the projects that will deliver the highest impact. This way, you're not just throwing resources at every new idea—you're investing in the ones that will drive measurable business outcomes.



## | Strategy 4 Follow a Stage-Gate Process for Development, Scale, and Launch

Once you've identified your key projects, the next step is to manage them efficiently. A stage-gate process is a structured approach that guides projects from development to launch. At each stage, you evaluate progress and make go/no-go decisions based on clear criteria. This method doesn't just keep projects on track—it also helps you reduce time-to-market, which is crucial in the competitive FMCG landscape.

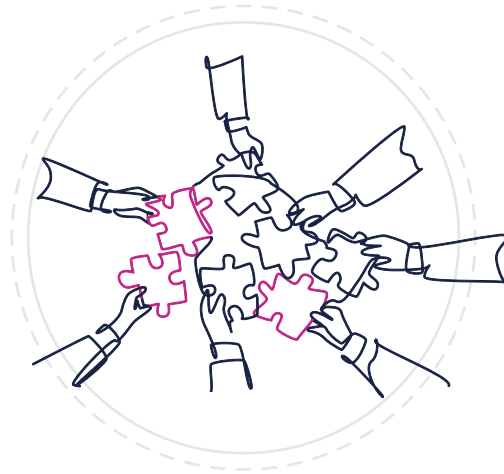




## | Strategy 5

### Create a Unique Knowledge Hub

Finally, one of the biggest advantages of SPM tools is the ability to create a centralized knowledge hub. This hub becomes a treasure trove of insights, where you can analyze market performance, learn from past projects, and continuously refine your strategies. By having all this information in one place, you ensure that your team is always building on what's worked—and avoiding what hasn't.



### The Bottom Line

SPM tools aren't only about making decisions faster—they're about making better decisions that align with your strategic goals. By following these five strategies, you'll be well-equipped to navigate the complexities of the FMCG market with agility and precision. In this fast-paced industry, having the right tools in place is the key to staying ahead of the competition.



# SPM in Action

## FMCG Use Cases



Planisware works with leading FMCGs to accelerate speed to market, mature PMOs, and elevate project management. Let's explore how our world-class SPM solution transformed companies like PepsiCo, Productos Ramo and Beam Suntory.

### Driving Efficiency and Data Quality For PepsiCo

PepsiCo is one of the world's largest food and beverage companies, with products consumers enjoy more than a billion times a day.

In 2020, PepsiCo tasked its innovation team to modernize its efforts. To do this, the team needed quality, standardized data that senior leaders could trust, and stronger pipeline visibility. This required refreshing its Stage-Gate process to ensure project managers were asking the right questions. PepsiCo adopted Planisware to help future-proof its innovation function.



- **Aligning Stakeholders.** PepsiCo needed marketing colleagues to be on board with new systems and processes. Planisware enabled marketers worldwide to easily collaborate with commercialization and research and development (R&D) functions.
- **Digitalization of the Innovation Agenda.** Using Planisware's technology, PepsiCo's cross-functional teams work in a shared digital space that houses all data. Team members can pre-circulate documents to senior stakeholders for them to approve, reject, or add comments to. The company was also able to elevate its data hygiene thanks to clear data standards that ensure necessary fields and forms get populated correctly.



**Multi-Year Journey, a Global Rollout, and More Integrations on the Way.** Capitalizing on Planisware’s seamless integrations is the next step for PepsiCo. The company plans to connect Planisware to internal systems to sign-off business cases, visualize internal net revenue, and measure performance in the marketplace.



## Powering the Productos Ramo Innovation Journey

**Productos Ramo** ('Ramo') holds a special place in Colombian hearts as the pioneer of prepared and packaged cakes since the 1950s. Known for treats like Chocoramo and Gala and savory snacks, Ramo employs over 3,500 individuals across Colombia.

In 2021, President and CEO Bernardo Serna Gámez wanted to build a culture that would speed up product launches (which, in the past, took two years). To do this, Ramo needed to enhance its Stage-Gate method within its innovation unit. Partnering with Sistemas Expertos and Planisware, Ramo implemented Planisware Orchestra. As a result, it has cut time to market by 75% and has many products in its pipeline.





- **Modernize, Transform, and Innovate Amidst Tradition.** Before adopting Planisware, Ramo's team would document new ideas in different styles across teams, from spreadsheets to PowerPoints. Organizing project ideas into a centralized Stage-Gate process was a challenge. In 2021, Innovation Manager Juan Pablo Molano identified Planisware as a solution that would accommodate the need to customize processes while managing tasks in a single place.
- **Orchestrating Innovation with Sistemas Expertos and Planisware.** Open communication and expert support from Planisware helped guide Ramo through initial resistance to change. Ramo partnered with Sistemas Expertos and Planisware to reduce its time to market from two years to six months. Now, Ramo has a single source of truth for all new product development. With a comprehensive new product roadmap, the company can incorporate vital milestones and project phases geared toward new product launches.
- **Streamlined Innovation, Real-time Insights, and Strategic Management.** Ramo now benefits from stronger strategic planning and execution, live data, and a new digital home for its Stage-Gate method. This cultural shift has inspired a more agile, collaborative approach to project management. The ability to customize the platform to fit its unique needs allows Ramo to adapt to changes fast. In turn, innovation-based sales have tripled in less than three years.



[Download the full case study](#)



## End-to-End Implementation of New Products with Beam Suntory

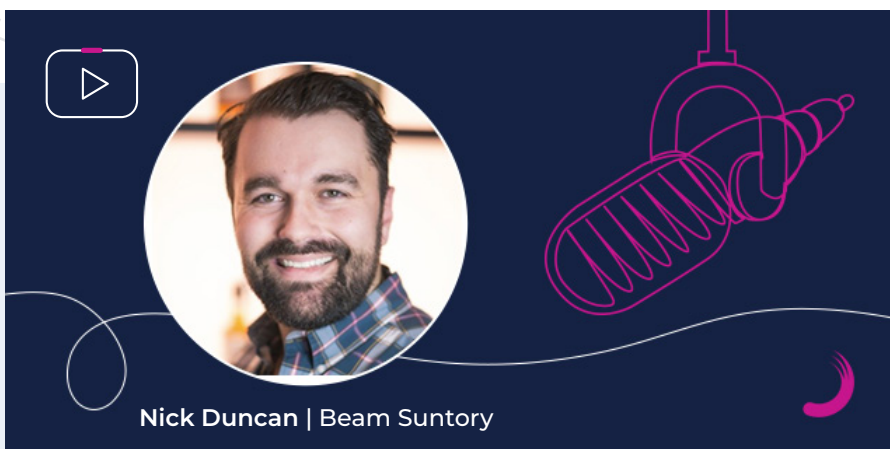
Established in 2014, Beam Suntory combines the world leader in bourbon and the pioneer in Japanese whisky. Headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, the company has a deep heritage, passion for quality, innovative spirit, and vision of Growing for Good.

Continued improvement is a key value for the organization. After a thorough review of its project management operations, the team recognized the opportunity to improve its existing Stage-Gate process.



- **A Bespoke Solution to Save Valuable Time.** Adding custom configurations within the Planisware solution automated several tasks. This freed up the project management team's time and resources.
- **End-to-End NPD Support.** Planisware helps Beam Suntory manage the end-to-end implementation of new products and supports changes to existing products. Everything from ideation and execution to governance takes place within the solution. Planisware supports the emerging business needs of Beam Suntory worldwide by helping to bring new products to life.

*Watch our interview with Nick Duncan,  
R&D Systems Manager at Beam Suntory*





# Embracing the Future

## | Trends and the Role of SPM



Change is inevitable, and for FMCGs, it's necessary. But what lies ahead for FMCG portfolio project managers? Let's explore the future of NPD and FMCG project management and how to harness SPM for future success.

### Forecasting Future Trends

- **Increased Digitalization.** More data. More intelligence. More technology integrations. Digitalization isn't going anywhere. So, you and your team must be ready to pivot to the next digital innovation. Opt for intuitive solutions that are easy to integrate and focus on **technical up-skilling**.
- **Greater Sustainability Drive.** Prepare for **regulatory changes** that push businesses to develop more sustainable products. Ensure ESG is a key metric and work with your providers to minimize environmental impact.
- **Enhance Personalization.** Expect access to more consumer data and **a growing demand for product customization**. Put these things together and prepare to build a supply chain that accommodates customization at scale.
- **Accelerated Time-to-Market.** FMCG NPD isn't slowing down. As competition grows, new marketplaces emerge, and consumer habits evolve fast, FMCG product managers must prepare to speed up NPD further.



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