



From Consumer Trends to Market

5 Strategies for FMCG Leaders to Launch
Smarter and Faster



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Introduction

For over a decade, Planisware has helped top FMCG brands turn ideas into real products—faster. Industry leaders trust Planisware to simplify product launch complexity, speed up innovation, and keep projects on track. Built hand in hand with FMCG leaders, Planisware gives teams the tools to launch the right products at the right time—without guesswork.

Since 2010, growth in the FMCG industry has become harder to capture, especially for large, established brands. In more recent years, since COVID, several new challenges have made the jobs of portfolio, category, and brand managers even more challenging. Consumers are demanding products that are personalized, sustainable, healthy, and convenient. For FMCG companies, this has led to increasing complexity in managing product variants, balancing customization, regulatory requirements, and supply chain efficiency while maintaining profitability.

Personalization:

- Consumers are looking for products and experiences tailored to their individual needs and preferences.
- FMCG companies are leveraging data and technology to offer personalized products, customized packaging, and targeted marketing campaigns.

PepsiCo leverages Planisware to personalize innovation at scale, aligning product development with consumer demand. By integrating commercialization, R&D, and marketing, they streamline thousands of innovation projects to ensure the right products reach the right markets at the right time.





Sustainability:

- Sustainability is no longer a niche concern but a mainstream expectation. Consumers are actively seeking eco-friendly products and packaging. **A Forbes study concludes that 69% of consumers are willing to pay a 35% premium** for environmentally friendly products.
- Companies can tackle sustainability in many ways. One major factor? Reducing the number of failed launches. **A report found** that 95% of plastic packaging's material value – worth \$80–120 billion annually – is lost due to short first-use cycles. Even worse, **25% of SKUs go unsold in their first year**, with that number climbing to 40% by the second year. These are scary numbers, but not as scary as a failed launch with 100% of SKUs going unsold combined with zero revenue.

Quadpack is driving sustainability by optimizing packaging innovation. Using Planisware, they streamline the development of eco-friendly packaging, reducing material waste, ensuring compliance, and accelerating the launch of sustainable solutions that meet consumer, regulatory expectations and are refillable. Thus, Quadpak's packaging can retain more value after first, and sometimes second use.



Health and Wellness:

- More consumers now choose products that support health and wellness. They want functional benefits, natural ingredients, and 'free-from' options like gluten-free, sugar-free, and low or non-alcoholic.
- This trend is pushing FMCG companies to reformulate existing products and launch new ones that cater to specific dietary needs and health goals.

Suntory Global Spirits has many well-known brand houses such as Jim Beam, Knob Creek, and Makers Mark. Suntory is also leveraging their R&D and Innovation teams to capture the Health and Wellness trend with low and non-alcoholic options.





Convenience:

- In today's fast-paced world, convenience is a major driver of consumer behavior.
- FMCG companies are focusing on developing products that are easy to use, ready to use, readily available, and fit into busy lifestyles.

Many of Planisware's customers such as Barilla, with their pre-cooked pasta and ready-to-use sauces, T. Marzetti's New York frozen bread, Keune's Keratin Smooth 2-phase spray, Hermes' toiletries, and British American Tobacco's Vuse product lines have all been successful product launches thanks to Planisware's solutions.

These macro trends highlight the complexity and opportunities within the FMCG industry. Businesses must stay flexible, be ready to pivot quickly, and adapt to new challenges. The job of portfolio, category and brand managers is to manage the demands of their customers as well as deliver returns for internal and external shareholders. Many tools help inform decision-making, but only Strategic Portfolio and Project Portfolio Management integrates all critical data into a single, comprehensive view—enabling smarter, more strategic choices

Compiled in this eBook are these lessons learned from PepsiCo, Suntory Global Spirits, Barilla, British American Tobacco, and many others. It's your playbook for mastering portfolio management. It will show you how to navigate through changing consumer preferences and make the most of the latest technological advancements to ensure that when things change at the last minute, right before launch, you'll be ready.

So, let's dive in, and gear up to turn heads with your newfound efficiencies!



The Best Kept Secret in FMCG



Innovation, R&D, marketing, and design management teams have their work cut out for them. Executives face constant pressure to restore consumer brands back to industry rock-stars. Before 2010, FMCGs crushed expectations and delivered strong returns. But for the last decade, the **FMCG sector has lagged the S&P 500**. Growth isn't as easy as it once was. Changing consumer habits, new competitors, and rising costs make it harder to win. The challenge now is to find smart ways to grow – fast.

With consumers changing their habits—like eating out more, **drinking more non-alcoholic drinks**, and demanding “free-from” products—predicting what will deliver high returns is tough. You know your markets and understand the trends, but we know the best ways to connect legacy brands, microbrands, and market shifts to find new pockets of growth and stay ahead of these trends.

The industry secret? It's not a lack of data. In fact, you have too much data and it is not useful. The most challenging task is keeping up with market demands and how the impact of last-minute changes on the multiple projects you're managing will affect your ability to deliver results. It's one thing to align product expectations with competing priorities (market demand, corporate demands, ESG demands) for a single project, or two or three. But when your portfolio isn't small, the challenge of maintaining focus on the bigger picture can be daunting

This is where Planisware's customers excel. As portfolios grow more complex, staying in control is critical. Planisware's portfolio management software cuts through the fog, replacing scattered data and spreadsheets with a clear, centralized system. Teams track progress, spot issues early, and stay focused on the bigger picture. No more guesswork – just smart, strategic decisions.



Implementing 5 Key Strategies for Success

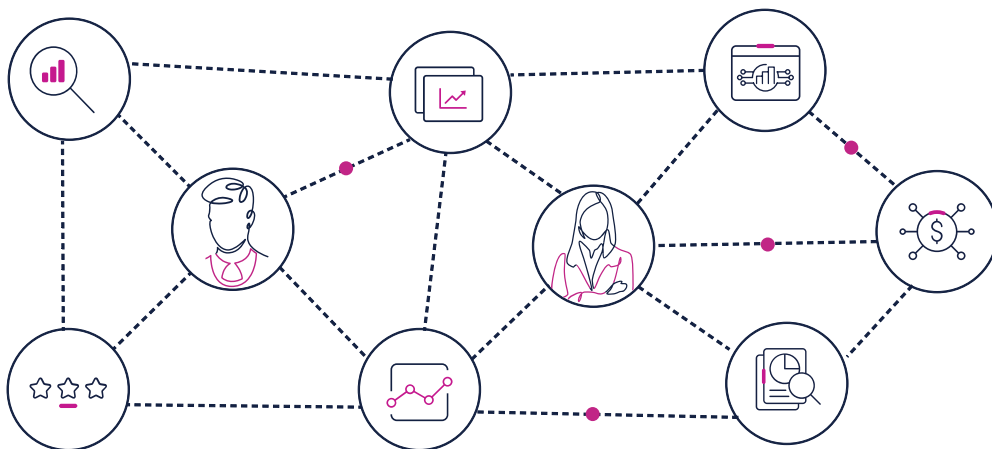
Below are 5 key strategies that Planisware's FMCG customers are currently leveraging to drive growth through innovation and restore brand superiority.

| Strategy 1 Turn Data into Useful Information

Yuval Noah Harari, historian and author of **"Nexus: A Brief History of Information Networks from the Stone Age to AI"** makes two points about data.

First, information is anything that creates a connection. This idea is central to what Planisware does and the work of portfolio, category, and brand managers, who link corporate strategy to consumers' needs and desires.

Second, organizations don't need more data! That's a bold claim. Since the early 1900s, businesses have not stopped collecting data from every possible source. But data alone isn't useful. As Harari explains, the difference between data and information is connection. Portfolio, category, and brand managers already have the data they need. The challenge is when data is locked in spreadsheets and silos, making those connections becomes guesswork.





| Strategy 2

Automate the Entire Process from Idea to Shelf

A **recent report from BCG** states that the whole “innovation system needs a reboot.” Many blame poor execution, but the real issue is fragmentation.

Innovation has many steps - ideation, prioritization, selection, labeling, sourcing, manufacturing readiness, supply chain, marketing and more. When these don't connect, delays pile up. A single automated platform links data, speeds decisions, and keeps execution on track.



| Strategy 3

Create Better “What-If” Scenarios for Product Rationalization

In **“Good Strategy/Bad Strategy”** Richard P. Rumelt writes that bad strategy exists “when leaders are unwilling or unable to make choices among competing values and parties.” No tool can fix indecisive leadership, but portfolio, brand, and category managers can use data to make smarter choices.

A simple exercise is to answer, “what must we change to grow YoY by x%?” No matter your approach—whether a house of brands, a master brand, corporate, or regional level—evaluating and optimizing your product portfolio is essential. Here is how to do it.





- **Increase prices** to close the gap between current sales and target sales.
- **Consolidate SKUs** to non-standard sizes or similar formulations.
- **Increase minimum quantities** to increase consumers' ability to personalize products.
- **Reduce service levels** to address new made-to-order categories.
- **Discontinue** to make room for new innovations.
- **Add new products** to the portfolio to drive growth.

None of these decisions are particularly difficult—if you have the right data in the right place. This is where some organizations struggle while others thrive. Success comes from presenting executives with accurate, well-crafted scenarios that make simplify complex trade-offs. The key is reliable data, strong analytics, and effective scenario planning.

| Strategy 4

Build Agility into your process

It is a common practice to delay decisions until the last moment, right up till the launch. But even a two-week delay can have devastating consequences – especially when products expire, and regulations change.

Take California's **recycling rule changes**. Hundreds of thousands of labels required instant updates. Without flexibility in the innovation process, small market shifts can turn into major bottlenecks. The key is adapting fast without straining scarce resources.





| Strategy 5

Incorporate real ESG projects into your brands, not just the scorecard

Recent studies from Harvard Business Review (H082TJ, H08BL0, H08AMY, and R2405F) reveal that many companies spend more time talking about ESG than actually doing it. Others struggle to measure real impact. Either way, trust is fading from both consumers and executives.

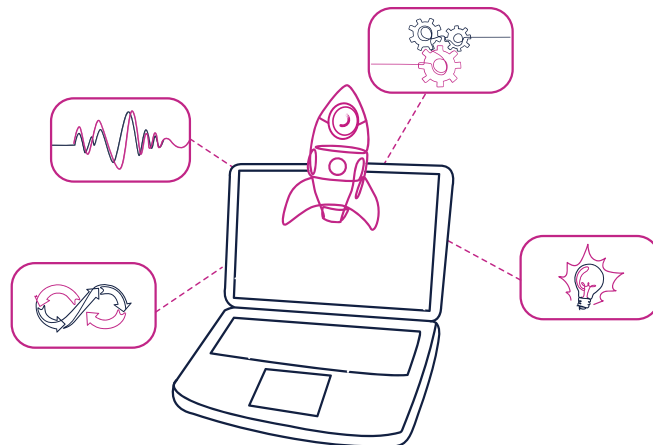
The **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** matter. Companies are tackling them by replenishing water, reducing waste, improving nutrition, using renewable energy sources, and developing sustainable products. But these are not side projects. They are core projects.

When ESG project efforts are part of the main portfolio, companies get real time insights. That means smarter decisions, better impact, and no more guesswork.



The Bottom Line

SPM tools do more than speed up actions—they ensure decisions are both fast and well-informed. In FMCG, changes often happen right before launch, leaving little time to react. With tight turnaround times, teams cannot afford to waste time searching for critical data. A centralized system keeps everything accessible so you can quickly adapt and stay on track. 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.



PEPSICO



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

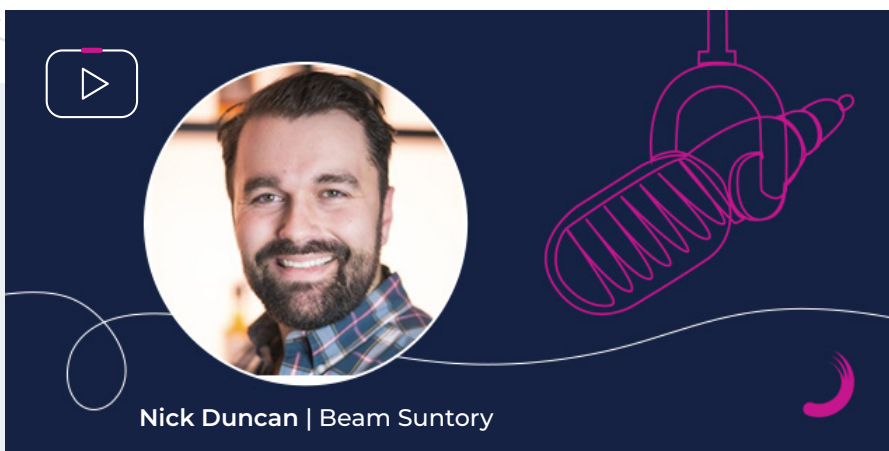
Established in 2014, Beam Suntory combines the world leader in bourbon and the pioneer in Japanese whisky. Headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, the company has a deep heritage, passion for quality, innovative spirit, and vision of Growing for Good.

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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