



Our secret ingredient: insight

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Our [Glanbia Nutritionals \(GN\)](#) team is exceptionally customer-focused when it comes to using insights to add value – customers’ questions even get worked into research. “We love collaborating with our customers and giving them the research and analysis they need to make important decisions,” says Niki Kennedy, Director of Insights and Content.

Niki and her team pull together trend maps consumer insights and market scoping data – what her team calls its insights trinity – to reach robust conclusions that keep the big picture in view. The result? Actionable thought leadership for customers that will bring them increased revenue and growth.

What we do with insights

“If we work with people behind a product that’s growing, for example, they might ask, ‘How does our product compare with others? What are the needs in the market? What should we be watching out for?’” explains Niki. “Our approach is: we understand the categories we’re playing in and we want to help you, our customer, understand too. When we build partnerships with our customers, we’re an open book when it comes to consumer and category knowledge.

“We use our insights trinity to tell a whole story. That’s about saying: does the trends data match up with what consumers are saying, match up with products that are on the market or products that the market lacks?” Niki says.

Organising it as a trinity minimises the dangers of getting tunnel vision from looking at little troves of data in isolation. “Your theories are tested, your assumptions are questioned, it means you don’t make statements lightly,” Niki says. “By taking this balanced approach, our findings have extra rigour and we can build an insightful story around what our customers need to know.”

How is our insights capability unique?

“We partner with our customers through the entire innovation process,” she says. “The insights function kicks in at the very beginning of the collaboration funnel. Then our product and R&D teams step in to make sure your new product has the right texture and the right flavour, and that what you make in a pilot lab will scale up true to manufacturing standards.”

GN’s insights team is constantly on the lookout for ways it can position Glanbia ahead of the curve, particularly on ingredients trends.

“There’s a continual evolution in ingredients technology,” says Niki. “We marry that up with changes in what consumers want from products and even the lens through which they’re looking at health and wellbeing. We use that to look for where growth – and threats – may come from.”

“What’s next?” Insights that add value

Consumers crave a different kind of benefit from enhanced nutritional products as part of a much bigger shift from health and fitness towards health and wellness. They’re now looking for [‘conscious indulgence’](#) and are [prioritising guilt-free pleasure](#) rather than seeking out good-for-you snacks primarily to support a fitness goal.

“They’re not willing to sacrifice flavour for function,” Niki says. “If they consume more protein, taste must deliver.” Products that don’t will struggle on the market, particularly if their name suggests decadence or a treat. “If you’re going to eat a cookie, you want it to taste like a cookie, right?” she says.

“We’re noticing differences in priorities between segments, too. Taking exercise as an example: Gen Z and millennial women use workouts as a way [to support their mental health](#) – and we’re interested in the products they’re using in conjunction with that. They’ll be very different to someone who’s going to the gym several times a week to build muscle and tone. So we try and shake some of that out of the research we do,” explains Niki.

“And, depending on what they’re going to be looking for – mental calm or muscle recovery for example – this gives us a heads-up that certain ingredients like magnesium or creatine may be in the spotlight.”

How do insights drive success at Glanbia Nutritionals?

GN’s insights are integral to business planning. “We regularly get together with the business to ideate on where we think that markets are going. That becomes an active part of strategic decision-making.”

“Our motto is Better Nutrition, Built Around You, the customer,” Niki says. “And that comes through in the way we gather data. We really work with our customers to understand their questions. These are woven right through our primary research.”

“We have a great blog post area on our website called the [Nutri-Knowledge Centre](#) where we share insights and thought leadership,” says Niki. “Then, once you become a key customer, the benefit of working side-by-side in partnership pays dividends.”

It’s all about providing a better service to customers and, ultimately, consumers, with the ultimate focus on business growth.

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