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NIGEL WRIGHT 
CONSUMER

Welcome to the new edition of Nigel Wright's UK Consumer Update

Consumers have been at the forefront of UK growth this year with low inflation and mortgage rates together with rising salaries, giving spenders significant buying power.

The latest figures suggest that the quantity of consumer goods bought in the UK is rising, setting the scene for what will likely be a strong Christmas as well as beginning to 2016. However, issues such as the imminent EU referendum and introduction of tax credit cuts could certainly impact spending. Slower GDP growth and relatively weak manufacturing performance also mean that businesses must remain vigilant as we enter the New Year.

While enjoying high footfall and boosted sales, many brands and retailers are realising that the pervading culture of discounting in the industry is stifling growth. Investment, in many cases, is required to simply maintain stability rather than engender more profit and there is now seemingly a determined effort in the grocery trade, and specifically by those in the food and drink sector, to curtail promotional activities. With the subsequent impact this will inevitably have on prices, brands are working doubly hard to improve innovation, product performance and quality to keep consumers interested.

Sales online and via mobile devices are still growing strong and developing 'e' and m-commerce capability remains important for consumer product manufacturers, as well as retailers. Mobile devices and social media also continue to dictate the evolution of consumer behavior; people now expect to be able to access information about products and services, as well as make purchases, anywhere, and brands must now commit to developing omnichannel solutions to satisfy this need. Those that adapted early to the rise of omnichannel retail have created a significant advantage over rivals and others are now desperately playing catch-up.

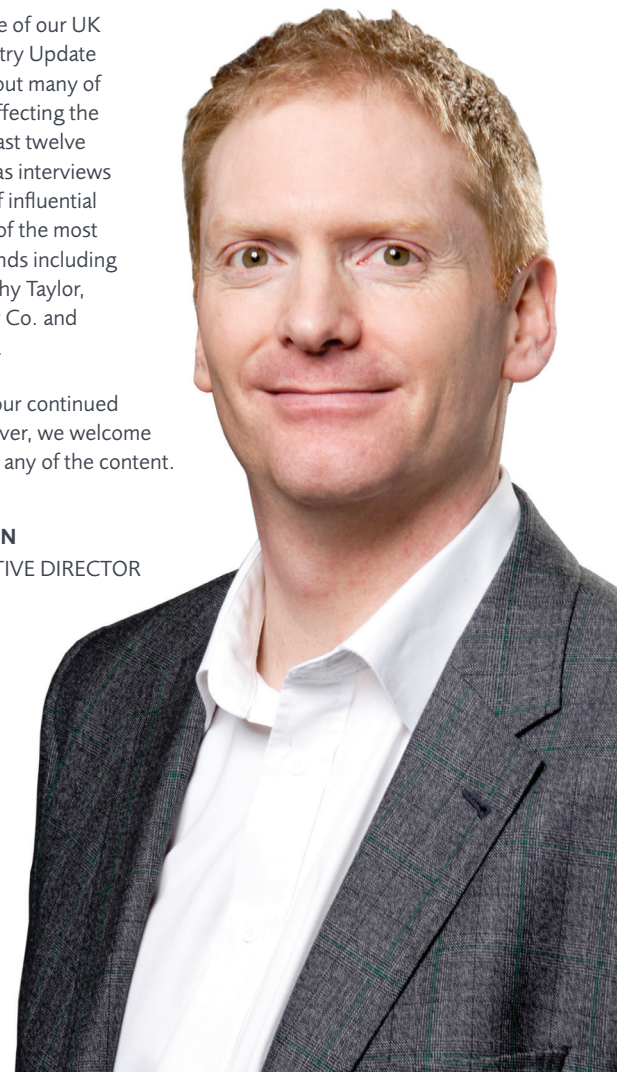
The increasing importance of embedding sustainable practices and capitalising on 'big data' continue to be key trends in the sector. Recent research has again confirmed that brands which focus on sustainability activities tend to outperform rivals in the market. And the ability to build a genuine connection with customers has led to greater investment in big data analytics, as firms attempt to turn large amounts of available and complex customer data into powerful insights. Brands with relatively small marketing budgets have to be extremely creative in this regard, and practical ways to develop products and services at a relatively low cost is a key challenge.

As we go to print, the recruitment industry is still showing strength with the number of vacancies across the UK currently ten percent higher than this time last year, in line with rising employment. And with hiring intentions remaining on the agenda for firms over the next few months, Nigel Wright is expanding its teams to accommodate growing demand. While the buoyant economic environment has certainly led to an increase in the number of clients approaching Nigel Wright, the reshaping of our business over the last twelve months has also had an impact and we are confident that the market continues to value our specialist industry and discipline expertise as well as our unique approach.

In this latest issue of our UK Consumer Industry Update you can read about many of the challenges affecting the sector over the last twelve months, as well as interviews with a number of influential leaders at some of the most dynamic UK brands including Berghaus, Timothy Taylor, The Good Whey Co. and Mayborn Group.

Thank you for your continued support and as ever, we welcome any feedback on any of the content.

MARK SIMPSON
GROUP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR







James Harris

Chief Operating Officer at Berghaus Ltd.

Berghaus started life in the back room of a single shop in Newcastle upon Tyne nearly 50 years ago, but today the maker of iconic outdoor clothing is a £50+ million global business employing over 140 people across the UK, USA and South East Asia. We caught up with outdoors enthusiast and COO James Harris, to talk about some of the latest operational challenges the business is facing as it continues to expand internationally.

First of all, what is your role at Berghaus and what attracted you to the opportunity?

My role here at Berghaus has changed over the years, but, fundamentally, I lead the global operations team, driving improvement in key processes and platforms, work with the Berghaus senior executive team to develop and deliver our short and longer term business plans, and develop the commercial areas of the business I have responsibility for.

I'm also part of Pentland Brands plc (our parent group) Global Supply Chain team, which is focused on sharing best practice and achieving the group's longer term ambitions. My attraction to the role was driven by my love of the outdoors and the opportunity to lead change through a geographically diverse team. My last boss described the opportunity as "like being handed the keys to the sweet shop". It was a good analogy!

You joined Berghaus with an agenda to improve end-to-end supply chain processes. What progress have you made in this area?

We have made a lot of progress on several fronts, from simplification of who we work with and how we work with them and greater visibility of the value stream, to the reduction of non-value added activity and more effective management of our key measures.

This was recognised when our largest UK customer awarded us with an operational excellence award at the end of a specific collaboration project that aimed to improve on shelf availability via a step change in delivery performance.

Berghaus has recently become the first British brand to join the bluesign® system. Can you tell us more about what that is?

The bluesign® system is a globally renowned initiative which works with chemical suppliers, textile mills and component manufacturers to eliminate harmful substances from the supply chain, ensuring that products are safe for consumers, workers and the environment.





Berghaus has worked with bluesign® and its supply chain to ensure that our products meet demanding requirements in terms of hazardous substances, worker safety and environmental protection. Ours is the first British clothing brand to join the bluesign® scheme and the move is part of a sustained programme that we've embarked on to reduce the environmental impact of our activities.

What are the other big supply chain challenges for Berghaus this year?

As well as our drive in corporate responsibility, there are four other key areas we are focusing on this year. The first is margin. With increasing product costs, despite a major drop in oil pricing, maintaining our margins is an ongoing challenge. We work closely with our supplier base to identify ways of improving our margin without compromising what Berghaus is famous for, namely our innovation, product performance and quality. Inventory management is also important.

By focusing on demand planning we ensure that availability of our core products remains above target and that we minimise obsolescence risks. We have been running a Total Quality Management (TQM) programme for the last three years that has delivered some impressive results and we are now looking at the next phase of this work.

Finally, both from a supply chain perspective but also as a business, we need to look at everything that we do - empower the business to experiment with different ways of doing things, evolve our processes,

Our challenge will be to ensure that we keep listening to our customer needs and developing our operational activities accordingly.

Our insight work has identified that millennials do shop very differently. They do more online... and expect brands to behave in a responsible manner.

capture the benefit and then share with other areas of the business and group. I work closely with our Continuous Improvement (CI) coaches and departmental champions to ensure that all ideas are captured and acted upon.

You have P&L responsibility for developing the Berghaus business in the USA and Asia Pacific region. From an operations perspective, how do you see the business evolving to meet its growth targets in these regions?

When we looked to launch in the US, we designed and developed the end to end process for a business that was selling a reasonable volume, before a single item was ordered. This was a departure for Berghaus, but has enabled us to offer greater service to our rapidly expanding customer base from day one. Our challenge will be to ensure that we keep listening to our customer needs and developing our operational activities accordingly. The challenges for Asia Pacific are more around simplified logistics direct from Asian suppliers and the seasonal product differences between northern and southern hemisphere. So we are working with our logistics partners to identify opportunities to add value to our operation.

What further plans does the business have to expand in these regions and how will the supply chain support future growth?

We work with our partners in the Asia Pacific region to develop the brand awareness with target consumers and ensure our supply chain has capacity to meet future potential for these markets. For the US, despite being a relatively new brand in the market, we are seeing our customer base expand swiftly. As it is the largest outdoor market in the world, we are constantly monitoring business performance against the specific strategy we are working to. We have capability to expand quickly if needed, and our relationship with key suppliers allows us to update them on progress.

How are you developing the supply base in emerging markets? What is Berghaus doing to plan for potential supply chain disruption in this environment of greater complexity?

We currently source predominantly from China, Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia, but we also monitor what capability is being developed in other markets. Due to the performance requirement of our products, we look for skill set and technical capability in our suppliers, among over 20 other factors.

Sourcing from Asia means that we have to plan for disruption, and our approach to this means that we already have the flexibility to

absorb some limited disruption. Our sourcing strategy ensures that we manage our risk, monitoring suppliers and, where it is required, moving our operations to minimise that risk.

What technology improvements is Berghaus seeking to make to its supply chain?

We have recently gone live with a new product line management (PLM) system that will help our supply chain in a number of areas, specifically with simplified technical specifications that the supply base can see and comment on much more swiftly. It also supports our CR strategy and offers product developers a better view of our current material and trim selections. We have also implemented a new warehouse management system that will allow for improved export capability as it offers a duty management system that has been particularly helpful for our Nordics business.

How does Berghaus address skill shortages in its supply chain?

We try, wherever possible, to develop internal talent, both in Berghaus and across Pentland, through succession planning and talent development. We do need to bring certain skills into the business on occasion, an example of which has been our Corporate Sustainability Officer who was recruited from Melbourne.

You indicated that there is a big focus at Berghaus on how to engage with millennials. What does that mean for you and your team?

Our insight work has identified that millennials do shop very differently. They do more online, usually on a mobile device, and want very swift service and expect brands to behave in a responsible manner. They will also share their experience on review platforms.



Berghaus Chief Operating Officer : James Harris

Berghaus started life in the back room of a single shop in Newcastle upon Tyne nearly 50 years ago and now employs 140+ staff in the UK and many more around the world.

For Berghaus, this has meant significant investment in our websites and, more specifically for my team, movement of our e-comm distribution facility earlier this year to drive better availability of our range online.

Berghaus has recently invested in new innovation labs and sample rooms. Could you give us an insight into how these will be used?

Yes, we upgraded both facilities as part of our ongoing building refurbishment. Both the lab and sample room are used as proof of performance for any of our new innovations, such as the idea of 'body mapping' that is used in a number of our products, and they allow us to bring new ideas to market more effectively. The second key purpose is as part of our TQM programme where we use them to test materials and trims to ensure that they meet our standards.

What role does manufacturing play in the innovation process? How does it link up with the commercial teams?

Manufacturing plays a big part in our innovation process, as we need to ensure that new ideas that work in the lab or sample room can be mass produced. If the innovation requires investment by a supplier, e.g. laser cutting or ultrasonic welding, then we have to identify these suppliers and capitalise on the investment. The link with the commercial team starts early in the process, where initial ideas are shared as part of a longer term plan so we can then start to identify suitable suppliers who will work with the development team to finalise the technical specification.

Marketing and sales then become involved later as we identify the most effective way of communicating the innovations to the customer and consumer. Our award winning ECO Wovens range is a good example as it uses innovative yarn production techniques that reduce water usage by 89% and chemical usage by 63%. Our marketing team have created some great labelling and point of sale assets to support consumer education.

The Berghaus business has evolved significantly over the last few years to counteract new challenges. What are they?

Berghaus started life in the back room of a single shop in Newcastle upon Tyne nearly 50 years ago and now employs 140+ staff in the UK and many more around the world. The growth of the company

itself has brought with it many challenges, and we have certainly had to adapt to thrive. In recent years, globalisation has meant that the competitiveness of the whole outdoor market has increased massively, particularly now that the sector is more attractive to brands that haven't traditionally operated in it.

Within that mix, Berghaus has had to work hard to maintain its brand and business position. Looking ahead, the biggest challenge is one that everyone in our industry faces. Although we all know the huge benefits that outdoor activities brings to those who participate, there's a real inactivity crisis developing as more young people fill their leisure time without leaving their home (or even the sofa). We all need to inspire more youngsters to make some of the same choices as the people who created such a success out of Berghaus and the other brands in our sector.

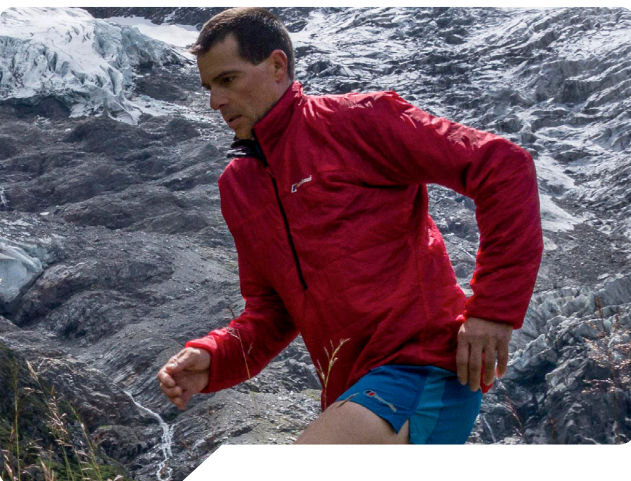
How has the business met these challenges?

It's our people who make that possible, at every level of the business. We have a fantastic blend of experience and youth at Berghaus and everyone is completely committed to making sure that this company continues to be a leader in the outdoor sector and a successful, profitable business.

You have specialised in lean manufacturing for many years, how has lean manufacturing evolved during that time? What are the latest trends internationally?

I have seen lean manufacturing develop during my career from JIT, basic Kanban systems, through six sigma and on to the current lean system thinking. Our suppliers deploy lean manufacturing / lean systems to varying degrees of success. Those that fully embrace it across the total business have been very successful. The future is all about continuously reviewing the value stream, not just in the manufacturing arena, but throughout the end to end supply chain, solving the next set of problems and removing as much waste as possible.

The key for me at Berghaus has been to be able to give the team the tools to identify the value streams and then empower them to identify solutions that lead to step change in all areas of the business. To use a climbing term, this is the crux of our CI programme.



Throughout my career, one thing has been constant - change. Businesses need to embrace change to keep up with consumers' ever changing needs.

You've dedicated your whole career to the consumer industry. What attracted you to it in the first place and why should others consider a career in the sector?

The attraction of the consumer sector for me is the pace of change. Throughout my career, one thing has been constant - change. Businesses need to embrace change to keep up with consumers' ever changing needs. Look at consumer behaviour in the last 20 years and then consider what the next 20 years could bring - what could be more interesting?

What kind of leader are you? How do you get the most out of your teams?

I think my team would describe me as being an empowering upbeat leader; one who is open to their views, listens and is approachable.

I also like to have fun with them while giving clear direction, so our team meetings always involve some laughter. To get the most out of them I try to provide as much clarity as to why we need to do something, give team members the reason to buy into a decision, then empower them to find solutions.

They will make mistakes from time to time, but always learn from them, and I support them through that process. The challenge for me is making sure that teams from the UK, around Asia and in the US are all aligned in the same direction. It is amazing how much can get lost in translation, so simple and clear objectives are key.

Outside of work, how do you challenge yourself?

Challenges outside of work are, unsurprisingly, outdoor ones. I have been rowing for over 30 years, and now run the Masters squad (for those over 27!) at my local club. My challenge is to get a gold medal at the Masters National Championships. I have to balance training needs with the needs of family and work, so this is a tough one. Our squad is strong, but we all travel too much and have families who want to see us occasionally too! We are getting better each year, but the gold is still elusive.

I'm also raising some money for charity later in the summer by completing two cycle challenges, the Manchester 100 mile ride and a coast to coast ride. Non sporting challenges revolve around the work I do as a trustee for the Great North Air Ambulance, helping them with strategic and operational planning, as well as parenting two children.

Nigel Wright Report Highlights

3% Increase In UK Consumer Industry Salaries

In March we published our annual UK Consumer industry salary survey. The report was compiled from over 1,000 respondents, across different consumer sub-sectors, who completed our online survey between the beginning of December 2014 and the end of January 2015.

The survey is timely, as the start of the year is when pay reviews are announced. Our large data-set allows us to understand the average salary and benefits packages people receive within the industry. The report confirmed that salaries in the UK Consumer industry increased, on average, by 3%. Low interest rates, a strong labour market and high levels of consumption certainly bolstered a recovering UK economy, enabling firms operating in the domestic market to make significant gains, while companies have also been able to become more competitive outside of the EU. With recruitment very much back on the agenda, it was no surprise that increased competition for talent pushed salaries up.

Executive salaries saw the largest increase at 4.5%, on average. Notably, those working at Marketing and Operations Director or equivalent level, received the highest pay increases, while those at Supply Chain and Sales Director level tended to report lower rates of increase. At management level, the average percentage salary increase was 3.5% across the Marketing, Sales and Operations disciplines. Those in supply chain and sales received, on average, higher increases, while those in Marketing and Operations reported slightly lower rates of increase.

Other factors covered included the benefits regarded as important in a remuneration package, the reasons why people move jobs internally or externally, as well as the methods utilised to search for a new job. Some of these other highlights of the survey are detailed opposite.



[Click here](#) to download the full report from our website.

Benefits

- Employer pension contributions remained static with average contributions fixed at 6.5%. Employee contributions, however, went up slightly to 5.2% from 4.5%;
- More people indicated they received a guaranteed bonus in this year's survey and the average bonus increased from 6.1% to 11.7%;
- Company bonuses remained fairly static, up 1% to 14.8%, while personal bonuses declined on average by 6% to 11.5%; although, more people received them;
- Candidates open to a new job indicated that an improved work-life balance and flexible working conditions, alongside promotion and remuneration, were factors which might persuade them to move on.

Job satisfaction

- Overall job satisfaction went up by 7.7%;
- At the executive level, however, those claiming to be 'very satisfied' in their job declined by 14%.

Searching for jobs

- For job seekers, using job boards and social networking sites to find employment have both increased again (13% and 9% respectively);
- Utilising social networking sites when searching for a job has increased by 30% in our survey between 2010 and 2015 and is now an integral part of the recruitment process.

The Nigel Wright Group salary review is based on the details we hold on our database and is supplemented with the information that we have collected as part of our annual salary and benefits survey. Whilst we make every possible attempt to ensure the data we provide is accurate it should be noted that salary levels can vary depending on company size, industry sector and the availability of candidates in a specific discipline.

Key trends in HR: Overview of 2015

It has been another challenging year for HR professionals as they continue to navigate the fluctuating landscape of the global economy. Demographic, technological and societal shifts mean that HR leaders need to constantly analyse and understand the changing nature of work and the needs and the expectations of the workforce and employers, to fully prepare organisations for the future. In this article, we discuss some of the key themes in HR that have, and will continue, to dominate the HR agenda as we move into next year.

Technology can bring together the collective talent of organisations

In every industry, technology continues to have a huge impact on work. HR teams today must consider the influence of different technologies across a multitude of areas including recruitment, wellbeing, employee feedback and behaviour, employment brand, as well as training and development.

As a recruitment business, we are all too aware of the impact new technology has had on talent acquisition. Social networking, for example, is the fastest growing online behaviour and job seekers now rely on social networking more so than ever. The HR teams at the forefront of 'best practise' in social media and technology regularly ask themselves questions such as 'how do I use LinkedIn and Facebook to expand the pool of available candidates?'

Certainly, within the context of recruitment, social media now plays an integral part in many companies hiring strategies. Yet, the HR&D technology category recognises much more than simply social media recruitment practises.

HR teams can demonstrate excellence in best practise through a variety of other strategic HR areas. It could be utilising blogs, wikis, and other collaborative technology to deliver engagement initiatives, company communications, training and development and HR policies; creating interactive online support channels, reducing enquiries or empowering managers to manage teams more effectively. Investing in efficient systems can also be an excellent way for organisations to identify key data and metrics and add real value to the bottom line.

Advances in new technologies are also having an impact on how learning and development strategies are conceived and many organisations are adopting eLearning and virtual classrooms as efficient ways to train and develop employees. These are just some examples of how HR is improving the efficiency of HR service delivery, while providing consistency across the business.

There is no doubt that technology has the power to bring together the collective talent of employees, fuel innovation and deliver organisational transformation. For it to succeed however, HR must essentially lead a cultural revolution in the organisation by winning the hearts and minds of people at all levels of the business. The HR teams that are most successful at this are the ones that can provide a return on investment, as well as facilitating collaboration, innovation and learning.

Managing change is a personal thing

Change is the new norm in today's business world, and HR&D is now widely recognised as the function responsible for developing organisational capability to enable companies to deal effectively with perpetual change.

HR&D must respond to the changing external environment, as well as shifting strategic direction driven from the top of the organisation. Fundamentally, its role is to make sure that the business is primed to deal effectively with change and that everybody is aware of, and supportive of, changes that are taking place.

This can involve expertly delivered internal communications, as well as the creation of competencies, initiatives and attitudes aimed at getting

the buy-in of the business as a whole. Failure to achieve success in this critical area can result in a business losing its competitive edge.

As a provider of talent solutions, we are often very close to organisations while they are going through change. They could be expanding rapidly, establishing new business units, becoming more commercial, managing costs, acquiring a new business or launching a new product or service.

Usually, these activities go hand-in-hand with a period of organisational 'soul-searching', where the leadership team, together with HR&D, attempts to redefine the business values and working environment. This is often where change is met with the most resistance from employees, and it is why engagement on a very personal level is crucial.

During periods of change, employees will naturally worry about job security, remuneration and benefits, career development and working conditions and so on. The best HR&D departments, therefore, are able to demonstrate unique and innovative ways to engage with workforces in such a way as to make it clear why change is necessary, but also get their people to recognise what the benefits will be for them and empowering them to feel that they're part of something new and exciting.

Creative and cost effective HR&D solutions are the key for SMEs

We quite often hear how SMEs are the 'lifeblood of the UK economy' and this statement couldn't be truer anywhere in the UK more so than it is in the North East. With 85% of registered businesses in the region classified as SMEs, it's fair to say our local economy is powered by these 'engines for growth.'

A question often raised in the debates concerning SMEs, however, is do they actually need an HR function? When people think about progressive HR&D, it's usually within the context of large and complex organisations going through transformational change and expansion. Conversely, within the context of a smaller business, HR&D is usually associated with being a bureaucratic barrier to long term growth.

As a talent advisor to businesses of all sizes, however, we recognise that the basic objectives of a HR&D function are ultimately linked to the same resource objectives shared by any business regardless of its size. For example, SMEs must make sure that good levels of employee motivation and engagement exist, that talent is successfully recruited and retained, effective training and development programmes are available and employees are being rewarded correctly.

Our 'trends in HR' report from last year showed how SMEs typically have HR teams ranging from between one and four people, depending on the actual size of the business. These relatively small HR teams must try

to achieve all of these things with few resources and often a lack of support from the top - in fact, one of the biggest challenges for HR&D practitioners in the SME environment is building credibility with the senior management team.

HR&D practitioners in the SME environment, therefore, must be highly creative and persuasive in order to achieve the best solutions for their business. Leveraging company values and culture to drive business growth, developing cost effective in-house recruitment



processes, innovating in-house training on a cost and time budget and coming up with cost-effective rewards, for example, are just some of the areas that will be on the agenda again next year.

How to get diversity and inclusion on the agenda

We live in culturally diverse times and recognising and accepting diversity today is an integral part of everyday life. Perhaps because of this, in the business world, recognising and accepting diversity is sometimes taken for granted.

This was highlighted in a recent Deloitte report which revealed that diversity and inclusion were most commonly rated as the least important issues for HR decision makers. The underlying attitude here is conceivably: 'We're a modern business and it's highly unlikely that any of our employees would feel discriminated against in the workplace, so we don't need to prioritise diversity and inclusion initiatives.' But sadly, when organisations dig under the surface, they often find that certain non-inclusive attitudes still prevail.

What has become apparent over the last 12 months is that businesses that excel at promoting diversity in the workplace all have a common attribute - the diversity dialogue is driven from the very top of the organisation. There have been great examples recently of top down driven diversity initiatives organisations that have appointed senior leaders as diversity champions to drive cultural change across the wider business. Another way organisations have made diversity and inclusion part of a wider organisational priority, is by developing external projects that support diversity in the community.

Both of these approaches to dealing with diversity and inclusion at work have a real impact on changing attitudes and help to create healthier, harmonious working environments.



Peter Groves

General Manager at The Good Whey Co.

Upbeat, the dairy protein drink made by Hertfordshire based The Good Whey Co. has achieved a turnover of over £4m in just over two years. Nigel Wright caught up with General Manager Peter Groves who explained how creating a fun and inspiring place to work has helped build the brand to where it is today.

You left a twenty six year blue-chip career to take up the reins at The Good Whey Co. What was it about the business and the opportunity that made it attractive to you?

When I was at Mars I was always inspired by the stories of the founders building global brands. When Upbeat approached me in 2013, it still hadn't established a presence in the market and I immediately identified it as an opportunity to actually build a global brand myself.

So the combination of innovation, entrepreneurial spirit and a brand that really excited me was too much to turn down. I mean, how often do you get the chance to create a totally new category? I am also very fortunate that we are a private company, with owners who are passionate and offer a great level of support.

Together we want to help consumers live healthier lives through the benefits of dairy nutrition. Everybody needs protein and deserves great tasting products; Upbeat offers health, taste and convenience in abundance.

Upbeat was originally targeted at 'busy people interested in a healthy diet' but its growth has been driven by sales to women who are increasingly turning to nutrient-rich foods instead of fatty snacks. Why is that?

I will spare you the science lesson, but we all need protein - men, women, young and old. Protein is the building block for healthy skin, bones, teeth and hair; but most of us, because of the busy, frantic lifestyles we lead, don't always make the right snacking choices and get the protein that we need in our diet. Upbeat is aimed at anyone who is looking to take care of themselves and knows the simple truth – that to live longer we need to eat well and keep active.



Image: Peter Groves, General Manager at The Good Whey Co.



We actually use the tag-line 'a bit of extra willpower in a bottle' in our marketing because the product genuinely helps consumers avoid unhealthy snacks and keeps them fuller for longer. It's fair to say that a lot of our communication has been directed towards women because (sorry fellas) they just get it; but ultimately, we remain focused on helping busy people make the right choices and feel more Upbeat.

The brand is now featured in 4,500 stores across the UK, including all the major supermarkets. Are you investigating other channels or markets?

That number increases every day, and we have received great support from many retailers, not just the grocers. We are available at Boots, in the petrol channel, travel outlets, independent retailers – you name it. As a ready-to-drink, on-the-go product, we want to be listed as broadly as possible. Basically, anywhere consumers gather we want to be there.

Upbeat is currently focused on the UK and Irish markets, but we're sure opportunities for growth exist in other markets too. I was lucky to have worked in the emerging central European markets during the 1990s, and I can't wait to use my experience to grow Upbeat internationally.

Did you anticipate your success or has it been a surprise?

We listened to consumers, built a plan and worked hard. It's always best to strive for success but remain paranoid that it's not going to happen.

Upbeat was the first of its kind but, as expected, other established companies such as Danone are now entering the whey protein drink segment. How are you different? How will you stay ahead of the competition?

Our brand is unique, that always helps, and new entrants coming into the market is never a bad thing because it expands the market and keeps us on our toes.

Mark Neville is obviously the founder of The Good Whey Co and is still involved in the business through Volac. Do you work alongside Mark? Does he have an influence over the direction of the brand?

As one of the fathers of the Upbeat brand, Mark still has a say in its direction. He is great to work for because he's passionate about the brand and really supportive of what we do. I also have a great marketing team who rise to any challenge. Do we always agree? No. Do we always agree to get on with it? Yes.

You've worked alongside a variety of creative agencies including The Independent Orchestra, 7Stars, Frank PR, Disrupt and Velo Marketing. Moving forward, will you maintain these relationships or gradually bring skills in house?

Firstly, as a small brand, we will always spend money wisely. However, we are also smart enough to know when we need external help because we don't have all of the answers. We currently work with a great set of agencies who share our passion for growing Upbeat and I expect those relationships to continue moving forward. There are no plans to build a big internal team.

Where do you focus marketing activity?

One of our biggest challenges is making limited funds go far, so we have to be extremely creative in order to build a genuine connection with customers. We drive the Upbeat van and get out there and meet as many people as possible. We attend events such as the 'Race for Life', we do a fair amount of sampling and give away Upbeat to people so they can spread the word.

We have been on TV too, with a fun creative ad that really raised awareness and drove sales. A key part of our marketing is actually raising awareness of protein, because it's a bit of a forgotten nutrient. We also focus a lot on showing people the benefits of Upbeat and how it can fit into their lives.

You've successfully built a team of experienced FMCG commercial people. What's the secret behind your talent attraction strategy?

Certainly the biggest challenge so far has been finding the right talent. When I joined I needed to quickly establish a team of vibrant, committed and enthusiastic people all inspired by the opportunity to help others make healthier choices. From the outset, I've tried to make this a really fun and inspiring place to work. No one wears a suit, and I've made it absolutely clear that you must bring your sense of humour to work with you.



We listened to consumers, built a plan and worked hard. It's always best to strive for success but remain paranoid that it's not going to happen.

I believe that everyone must share in the 'Uptimism' and that means getting people excited about what we are trying to do here.

We describe ourselves as 'Upfront, Up for it and Uptimistic' which means we are open and honest, passionate about building a brand and are always positive. I believe that everyone must share in the 'Uptimism' and that means getting people excited about what we are trying to do here.

We always make sure recruiters visit our offices and get a sense of the Upbeat vibe and understand our vision, so they can then share this with prospective candidates. If we can bring the excitement of working here to life, then we will always be an attractive employer. We now have an exceptionally talented team, where everyone is completely clear about and committed to the role they're playing in building the Upbeat brand.

How do you get the best your of your teams?

By not complicating things, but rather keeping objectives simple and focussed. I like to be clear about what we are trying to achieve and make sure that people are having fun doing their job. I never underestimate the importance of having fun and working hard.

How have you found the transition from working for 'big corporates' to managing a smaller, agile business? What advice would you give to other people looking to make a similar career move?

I was very lucky during my career at Mars because I was given the opportunity to manage a number of smaller teams focused on emerging markets. That team ethos is so important and you build really long lasting friendships. So the transition to Upbeat was actually very easy for me. I would recommend joining a small business to anyone who has learnt the ropes in a big corporate firm. You can take all of the skills you've learnt throughout your career and use every single one of them every day - it's incredibly fulfilling.

Which brands do you look to for inspiration?

The plucky challengers and the ones that inspire brand love through clear consumer insight like Dove, Harley Davidson, M&Ms and, obviously, Innocent Drinks.



Consumer Event Series

As part of our continued focus to engage with our clients and better understand their needs and requirements, Nigel Wright Consumer is hosting a series of leadership events throughout 2016.

If you would like to attend any of the events or an event that is specific to your relevant specialism, please email the contact detailed below who will be delighted to update you with current developments and future topics.



**Grocers & Discounters;
Winning in the heat of battle**

**14th January 2016
London**

Managing and negotiating with disruptive grocery players.

How successful new entrants to the market are using disruptive strategies to increase the odds of competitive success and are sidelining grocery giants.

Contact:
chris.vallow@nigelwright.com

Consumer Events

Save the Dates in 2016

Harrogate: Hotel du Vin & Bistro

10th March 2016: HR Directors' Dinner

16th June 2016: Managing Directors' Dinner

Birmingham: Malmaison

15th September 2016: HR Directors' Dinner

17th November 2016: Managing Directors' Dinner

Nigel Wright Consumer is hosting a series of events in 2016 to bring together industry experts to engage in stimulating debate as well as share information and valuable insight amongst peers. If you would like to attend any of the events or an event that is specific to your relevant specialism, please add the date to your diary and email Jemma Devine who will include you on the guest list and keep you up to date with developments and proposed topics.

Contact: jemma.devine@nigelwright.com

NIGEL WRIGHT
CONSUMER

save THE date

March 2016						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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HR Directors' Dinner Hotel du Vin & Bistro Harrogate						

June 2016						
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Managing Directors' Dinner Hotel du Vin & Bistro Harrogate						

September 2016						
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HR Directors' Dinner Malmaison Birmingham						

November 2016						
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Managing Directors' Dinner Malmaison Birmingham						

I thoroughly enjoyed the Nigel Wright dinner in Birmingham; the informal and intimate nature allowed for real conversations and discussions on a variety of topical matters.

The food and service were both close to matching the enjoyable conversation and company and it was great to meet some new, and some old, colleagues from the industry.

A great venue choice. My thanks to the Nigel Wright team who capped it all as perfect hosts.

Stuart Branch, Group Human Resources Director, Weetabix Food Company

HR & Talent Directors' Dinner, Malmaison Birmingham, July 2015



Case Study: Hovis

Nigel Wright leads multi-assignment project focused on building the marketing function at newly formed Hovis Limited

About The Client

Hovis is an iconic British bread and flour manufacturer which dates back to the 19th Century. It is one of the UK's best loved brands, cementing its place in the hearts and minds of the public with its famous 1973 TV commercial 'Boy on a bike.' It employs approximately 3,800 people at ten bakeries, six flour mills and two regional distribution centres across the UK.

Hovis was acquired by Premier Foods in 2007. In recent years, however, the ambient food giant chose to focus on developing its core brands including Bisto, Mr. Kipling and Sharwood's. In January 2014, Premier Foods agreed to sell a majority stake of Hovis to US private equity outfit Gores Group, creating a new vertically integrated company, Hovis Limited, as a joint venture.

Executive Chairman Nish Kankiwala was appointed by Gores Group in April 2014 to help reinvigorate the Hovis brand. Premier Foods and Gores Group also announced a joint £200m five-year investment programme to upgrade Hovis' operational infrastructure and factories, as well as providing the business with up-weighted marketing spend.

Since agreeing the sale of Hovis, as well as the five year investment plan, the Hovis brand is no longer part of the broader Premier Foods commercial strategy. Hovis Limited is a unique standalone joint venture with a new single minded focus. Gores Group is entirely committed to supporting Hovis Limited in once again becoming a sustainable and growing business.

Background

In acquiring Hovis, Gores Group aim to bring fresh outside thinking to the Hovis brand and its portfolio of products. With the emphasis on brand and innovation, its plan includes provisions for raising the credibility of Hovis by 'winning over health-conscious customers', offering more 'on-the-go' options and capitalising on new flavours to offset the broader decline in the bread category.

In August 2014, it was announced that former Diageo Marketing Director Philip Gladman and his team of seven from Flintlock would join Hovis to kick start the Marketing and Innovation agenda. As well as creating the new structure for the Hovis marketing function, one of the team's other deliverables was to recruit the long term marketing department.

In October 2014, Nigel Wright was appointed to lead the recruitment of ten critical roles within the new marketing team at Hovis. Hovis selected Nigel Wright due to its reputation and network within the private equity community, as well as its in-depth understanding of the dynamics of the broader consumer industry.

The Challenge

To successfully achieve the objectives set out by its new owners, Hovis needed to quickly establish a team of experienced brand and innovation marketers who understood the challenges the business faced and who could have an immediate impact on driving value and growth for the brand.

Prospective candidates needed to have core discipline knowledge, likely developed through early training within a large blue chip environment, as well as experience of managing a P and L. Although perhaps used to working within a process driven culture, they also needed to demonstrate the ability and desire to perform with increased autonomy and responsibility in a leaner, more fluid and agile environment.

Nigel Wright's initial brief included ten roles comprising both a Brand and Innovation Director, an MS&P Director, a Head of Insights and Head of Category and Shopper Activation, as well as Marketing Manager roles covering core brand and innovation. Additionally, Nigel Wright was asked to identify candidates for two new commercial roles – a Grocery Director and a Convenience and High Street Director – who would enable Hovis to get closer to its customers.

The challenge was twofold. On the one hand, a large number of candidates would have to be identified and assessed to ensure only the best candidates were being put forward. Secondly, in going to market, it was essential that prospective candidates were made fully aware that Hovis Limited was a unique standalone joint venture where Gores Group had full autonomy and ownership.

Nigel Wright Solution

We recommended an eight week process focused on an executive search and professional networking strategy complimented by a proactive marketing campaign. The executive search phase involved targeting specifically agreed organisations and utilising our broad networks within the consumer industry, as well the wider private equity community, to source referrals for potential candidates.

A significant factor in the success of this project was Nigel Wright's proactive marketing campaign. Led by our internal marketing team, the strategy consisted of creating a microsite and candidate pack and managing a branded email campaign. This aided candidate engagement by articulating the story and potential of newly formed Hovis Limited, as well as enabling us to expertly sell the opportunities and extend their reach beyond our own networks.

The marketing campaign specifically sought to leverage the fact that this was an opportunity to create a legacy, developing one of the all-time great British brands, as part of a wider transformation programme led by Hovis' new owners. We made it clear that Premier Foods was now very much focused on growing its own portfolio of iconic British brands and that the creation of a standalone JV was a positive development for both businesses.

Because this project involved a large number of different roles at several levels, various teams in different locations worked collaboratively on the assignments. They included Nigel Wright's Executive Search team and UK Consumer Sales and Marketing team in London, our internal marketing function in Newcastle upon Tyne, as well as Hovis' internal recruitment team in High Wycombe, tasked with filling a number of junior roles within the new structure.

All teams communicated with each other regularly and worked hard to update candidates on their progress, ensuring continued engagement and guaranteeing that the 'employer brand' of Hovis was managed in the most positive manner. Client update meetings were also held every week with Hovis' Head of HR to make sure the process was meeting its objectives and that all stakeholders were informed of its progress.

During the frequent meetings with Hovis, Nigel Wright was able to add value to the development of the new marketing function by endorsing various changes to the initially proposed team structure. For example, Hovis decided to remove the brand director role therefore allowing the innovation director to be clearly recognised as the most critical position reporting into the CMO. This enabled Nigel Wright to engage more high calibre candidates in the market.

Nigel Wright was instrumental in successfully identifying outstanding talent for all of the assigned roles within the agreed timeframe. Our marketing campaign was also successful in persuading these individuals that Hovis was a business worth considering at a time of change and perceived upheaval for the business, as well as within the context of heightened competition for talent in the UK food industry.

On the back of these campaigns, Nigel Wright's partnership with Hovis continues today.

Client Testimonial

"This was a very challenging project but Nigel Wright performed brilliantly to ensure that all of the candidates were an excellent fit for each of the roles. Their impressive networks, in-depth industry knowledge and collaborative way of working were the factors that led to success. The types of candidates that Nigel Wright has successfully placed at Hovis Limited all bring broad industry and category experience that will no doubt give the business a clear edge in the market."

Phillip Gladman: Founder, Flintlock





Steve Parkin

CEO at Mayborn Group

Since its acquisition by private equity firm 3i in 2006, Cramlington based Mayborn Group, the owner of the iconic tomme tippee® brand, has enjoyed rapid growth in the UK and overseas. We caught up with CEO Steve Parkin who explained how the business is investing heavily in digital marketing, New Product Development (NPD) and organisational 'up-weighting' as it seeks to further develop its reputation as a world leader in baby essentials.

The business has grown rapidly during the last few years, both here in the UK as well as overseas. What has driven this growth?

There have been three main drivers behind that growth. The first was consolidating and then increasing the market share of our UK business from twenty five percent to around forty percent. This created a strong foundation from which to then invest in other markets outside of the UK. The second driver of our growth has specifically been our success in opening up three key international markets of scale - North America, France and Australia - by establishing direct company ownership of our business units in those countries. Our total overseas business now represents circa sixty percent of our overall turnover. The third factor behind our rapid growth, and one which sets us apart from our competitors, is our aggressive NPD and innovation pipeline. Over a third of our incremental business each year now comes from these areas.



CEO at Mayborn Group: Steve Parkin



What organisational challenges have you overcome so far and what further challenges do you anticipate facing, as Mayborn Group transitions into a global business?

In the last twenty four months, we've invested around three million pounds in organisational 'up weighting.' This has involved changes to our executive, global leadership and regional teams, making significant improvements to our innovation and digital capabilities, and defining and embedding a common set of values for our 'global' business. The speed and scale of change has been very challenging for a company of our size, but change needs to become a part of the DNA and culture of this organisation if it truly wants to become a global leader. Certainly an ongoing challenge for our global leadership team is to look for ways in which we can constantly push the boundaries of what we do further and faster.

What ambitions are there to grow further beyond the UK? How is Mayborn Group typically approaching overseas markets?

We follow three international development models: direct to market as well as third party and classical distributor management. The first two are the main catalysts for our international growth. So, our first

priority is to drive significant growth in international markets where we have already established company-owned business units - notably North America, France and Australia. A second priority is to continue to develop partnerships with global and pan European retailers such as Amazon, Toys R Us, Carrefour and Tesco. Then a third driver is to use classical distributor management to help us engage with smaller, fragmented international markets.

Mayborn Group acquired its French distributor in 2013 and more recently acquired the tomme tippee brand for Australia and New Zealand in 2015. Is growth through acquisition still on the agenda for Mayborn Group in the near future?

There are certainly lots of opportunities for route to market acquisition where we could acquire a direct relationship in market like we did in France and Australia, and establish company-owned business units. If a market has scale, then this approach is on the agenda and over the next five years we will be assessing the viability of this model in a number of new markets in Europe. Another area we are investigating, however, is brand and product acquisition. For this to be successful though it's important to first identify products that have international appeal and where there is intellectual property which supports the journey we're on.

Customer recommendations and word-of-mouth marketing are a key factor in developing Mayborn Group's brands. How does the business engage with Mums and parents? Where do you invest your marketing activities?

There has been a fundamental shift in the power of recommendation. Fifteen years ago, your decision to buy a particular product for your baby or infant child would have been wholly influenced by a health professional, or you would have simply followed tacit beliefs passed down through your family. Today, it is very different. Over eighty percent of purchases in our sector are based on recommendations

Certainly an ongoing challenge for our global leadership team is to look for ways in which we can constantly push the boundaries of what we do further and faster.

from friends, which now also includes your online 'social community' of friends. Our research suggests that every mum has a huge influence over other mums, so as you can imagine, customer recommendation is at the heart of our strategy and it is our ambition to be the most mum-to-mum recommended brand within our sector. Over ninety percent of all of our brand investment is now in social and digital marketing. That includes engaging with mums via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram as well as via retailer sites such as retailer.com, amazon.com and mothercare.com and the plethora of parenting sites like Mumsnet, to raise awareness and create an emotional engagement with our brand.

Have the actual shopping habits of parents changed in the same way that purchasing habits have changed in the grocery sector?

Yes, massively. Five years ago, in the UK, our online sales accounted for a small percent of all sales. This year, just under thirty percent of our UK business' revenue will be due to sales online. That's a phenomenal change in such a relatively short period of time. It's true that new mums today spend more hours on social networking sites and on mobile devices researching and buying products than any other consumer group, so we have to be 'laser focused' in our targeting and interrupt the purchasing journeys of new parents. What's really apparent though is that our customers are becoming truly multi-channel shoppers. Consequently, we've had to make sure that the front end of our commercial business is completely aligned to the multichannel mind-set.

Mayborn Group is renowned for product innovation. What is the innovation process like at Mayborn Group? In your view, what are the barriers you need to overcome to succeed at innovation?

NPD is the biggest growth driver for our organisation and our process is to blend different sorts of NPD and innovation for different purposes. In terms of classic innovation, we create value and grow market share by developing products that solve unmet needs. The 'Closer to Nature®' bottle, which we launched in 2009, enabled mothers to interchange easily between breastfeeding and bottle feeding; nothing like that had ever existed before and it represented a real step-change for Mayborn Group. A more recent example is the Perfect Prep Machine™, launched in 2013, which essentially automates the twenty two manual steps involved in preparing a baby's



bottle. We also do a lot of 'renovation' to help incremental category growth and to ensure we are putting news out to the consumer and the retail trade that helps keep our brand moving forward. With regards to barriers, the biggest issue we have is making sure that the funnel of ideas is broad enough and then we must also tackle other typical important areas such as intellectual property and making sure we obtain a strong return on investment.

What is Mayborn Group currently doing to attract talent? Why should people join the business?

We're spreading the message that coming to work here means working for an established, well respected 'global' brand where you will get the chance to fulfil a nice blend of personal and career aspirations. So, yes, we are headquartered in the North East but we also have offices in Boston, Melbourne, Paris and Hong Kong and we increasingly offer our employees the opportunity to travel or live and work overseas. I believe that is a very attractive proposition. Finding

We're spreading the message that coming to work here means working for an established, well respected 'global' brand where you will get the chance to fulfil a nice blend of personal and career aspirations.

Mayborn Group is definitely a much sharper commercial organisation now than it was pre-acquisition. The business was always commercially driven, but there is now a lot more emphasis on the importance of growth.

talent based in the North East isn't a problem either. We have some great people here already and I think the strength of our brand helps us to attract the best. There are also a lot of highly successfully 'expats' who we have been lucky to entice back home. Mark Hall (CFO), Martin Cooke (Global Brands Director) and James Young (Global Head of NPD) are all originally from the North East and before joining Mayborn Group, enjoyed international blue-chip careers. I do think the attractiveness of working in the region is still massively understated in the UK and that has caused issues for us in the past. More work could be done at a regional level to improve this.

You've worked at the business pre and post-acquisition by 3i in 2006. How has the culture of the business changed since then?

Mayborn Group is definitely a much sharper commercial organisation now than it was pre-acquisition. The business was always commercially

driven, but there is now a lot more emphasis on the importance of growth. The management team has been tasked with the job of establishing Mayborn Group as one of the largest baby essentials brands in the world, and this has led to more risk taking across the organisation, because if you want disruptive revolutionary growth then you need to start making bold choices. And that is exactly what we've done over the last few years.

What kind of leader are you? How do you get the most out of your teams?

Honesty and integrity are the two values that I try to live by as a leader. I also play to win; I hate losing and really drive my teams to always try and be the best at what they do. My style isn't commanding, however, I'm very approachable and will happily listen to people's problems and ideas. It's a real privilege to bring great talent to the North East and develop talent from within the region and as Mayborn Group continues to grow, it's important to recognise that our success is down to our people and my job as CEO is to communicate that message internally and externally.

What keeps you busy outside of work?

I'm very competitive in my personal life, as well as my professional life, and satisfy that need by running and playing a lot of football. I also help coach my son's football team and generally spend a lot of time outdoors with my family, walking and playing or watching sport.





How talent mapping can help

Secure Your Business' Future

With the economy returning to growth, businesses are aware that the most talented employees are coming out of hiding and seeking new opportunities to help boost their careers amidst positive market conditions.

The best people, however, are also usually the most discerning and will only engage with roles and companies they perceive to be absolutely right from a personal and professional point of view.

Put simply, although it's possible to attract the best talent in a buoyant market, it's even harder for companies to intimately understand what they need to get right, to get the best on board.

Research by CIPD suggests that talent management and succession planning are the number one priorities for HR&D functions today.

Talent gaps are a major strategic concern and developing or investing in innovative ways to engage, hire and retain the best talent is what will ultimately set businesses apart from their competitors, and play a critical role in their immediate and future success.

Talent mapping is increasingly seen as the definitive way to ensure that these objectives are achieved. It's important, however, that businesses are absolutely clear what the talent mapping process is, why and when they need to carry out a talent mapping exercise and how they will make sure the process is successful.

What is talent mapping?

Talent mapping is often confused with the preliminary stage of the executive search process. This is when a search firm and its client jointly identify businesses where it is believed the right kind of people will exist. The search firm will then target those companies, with the aim of finding and hopefully teasing out the right kind of talent before approaching them with an opportunity. This is a valuable service but it is also part of a fixed project, with a very specific objective to find one particular person.

Talent mapping, on the other hand, is a strategic service that is used by businesses to plan for short, medium and long term talent acquisition. It is used by the most perceptive companies to ensure that a recruitment process a number of strategic talent acquisitions over a prolonged period of time.

Entering into a talent mapping partnership involves the search firm helping its client to measure and define its internal current capability, as well as its future potential capability. This process should reveal various immediate or future talent requirements and whether or not those needs can be met internally or externally. The search firm will then gather intelligence about organisations, industries and talent on an on-going basis, building a talent pipeline, which the client can access whenever demand is required.

Talent mapping recognises that if you're trying to identify candidates for multiple potential vacancies, you need a large pool of candidates from which to make your selection. Often, those engaged during the talent mapping project are regularly contacted and updated over a long period of time, meaning when there is an immediate need, they can be reached quickly and the search firm doesn't have to repeatedly start from scratch and sell opportunities to the market.

When and why do companies talent map?

Companies can benefit from talent mapping during times of growth or austerity, and because there is such a broad range of analyses that can

be done during the process, they can be selective about what aspects on which they would like to focus, to best suit their needs.

The benefits of using talent mapping go way beyond simply giving a business the capability to make multiple hires over a long period of time. It also increases the chances of them hiring the absolute best candidate. Organisations that talent map also find that it can improve their employer brand and raise their reputation in the market.

Furthermore, because the process involves gathering industry and competitor data, as well as finding the best talent, it acts as a great benchmarking tool for strategy, remuneration and employee benefits, competitor structures and reporting lines, level of responsibility, skills, academic background and so on.

Stock-piling this kind of intelligence over a sustained period of time can give businesses a detailed and holistic view of the market for talent and it enables them to be decisive in their hiring, while building a clear foundation for succession planning.

How can Nigel Wright support you?

In support of our clients' future business plans, Nigel Wright offers a robust talent mapping and succession planning (TMSP) service. Our sector expertise across the world means that we can provide our clients with an in-depth analysis of how their organisational capabilities compare to others in the sector. We can then use our extensive networks to help our clients plan for the future, by identifying the right talent internally and externally for their business.

Our TMSP service has become increasingly popular with clients over the last few years. Some notable recent examples of companies we have assisted in this capacity include L'Oréal and Henkel in the Middle East, DBApparel in Europe, Grupo Siro in Iberia and the Americas and Greencore in the UK. If you are interested in finding out more about our TMSP service, as well as our other services, please visit nigelwright.com.



Consumer division demonstrating impressive customer service results

Nigel Wright measures its customer service performance using the NetPromoter Score (NPS), a global management tool that can be used to gauge the loyalty of a firm's customer relationships.

In the company's last financial year, Nigel Wright's consumer division had an impressive NPS of 45%, following submissions from over 900 clients and candidates.

Analysis of other B2B providers indicated that a NetPromoter Score of 30+% means you are largely seen as 'unique' by your customers.

The table below shows the NetPromoter scores for Nigel Wright Consumer's main markets, as well as the overall score for the division. Nigel Wright's Andrew Openshaw commented,

'Collecting valuable customer data gives us a strategic advantage in the marketplace by allowing

us to identify any issues and then make immediate improvements across all areas of our business. NetPromoter gives us a really clear and more in-depth idea of how our customers value our service.'

Research suggests that NPS is actually correlated with overall revenue growth and the score achieved by the consumer division this financial year is certainly in line with the heightened demand for Nigel Wright's services in the sector.

Openshaw continued, 'We are always looking for ways to improve scores and in May 2016, when next year's final results are in, we anticipate that the consumer division's NetPromoter score will have grown during that time.'

DIVISION	FY14 - 15 (%)
Norway	64%
Sweden	60%
Denmark	51%
UK	40%
Germany	37%
Spain	34%
France	30%
Overall	45%

Nordic expansion continues...

Since the last issue of Imagine Magazine, Nigel Wright has opened a further two new offices in the Nordics to service its growing portfolio of clients in the region.

Since launching in Stockholm in 2006, Sweden has consistently been one of the Group's best performing divisions. On the launch of its new Malmö office in February, Country Manager Simon Taylor commented:

'We already have excellent exposure to the Swedish market, yet this additional office has given our business the added ability to get closer to clients and offer a greater diversity of specialist sector and discipline knowledge, as well as expertise which is not locally or regionally limited.'

Tobias Sjöberg, who rejoined Nigel Wright as Regional Manager after working for a global FMCG business, relocated to Malmö in February to manage the new location. He has been focusing on developing relationships with key clients in the local area and is now looking to hire additional consultants over the next few months to facilitate its growth.

In January, Nigel Wright's Country Manager Thomas Thorsen and Senior Consultant Søren Hjorth Lee, moved from Copenhagen to Århus to launch Nigel Wright's new Danish office.

Since opening its first Danish office in Copenhagen in 2008, Nigel Wright has enjoyed a great deal of success in the Danish market, becoming recognised as a 'top 10 Danish search and selection company' (Økonomisk Ugebrev, 2011) as well as one of Denmark's 'best performing companies' (Børsens Gazelle, 2013).

Thomas commented: "We are an international organisation, so having an international focus is key to us, both in terms of the market knowledge that we can offer, and also in ensuring that our clients have access to the best candidates in the market, nationally and internationally. At the same time, our roots in the local market allow us to understand our domestic clients and source the best talent to suit their needs. We are very happy and proud to have opened a second office in Denmark."

In total, Nigel Wright now has six offices across the Nordic region.



Nigel Wright in Africa

As part of its overall strategic growth plans, Nigel Wright will be opening an office in Dubai during 2016 and has also appointed Wladimir Topaloff to drive further activity in this region.

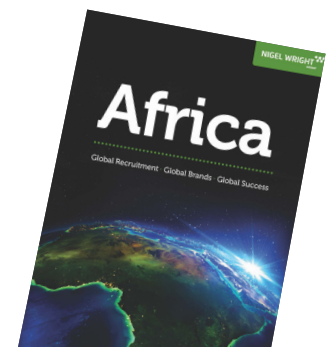
Wladimir is a French national currently based in Paris. He has previously lived in Gabon, West Africa, where he was the country manager for Diageo. He subsequently had a successful recruitment career and has a proven track record recruiting across the African continent.

CEO Paul Wilson commented "Dubai will be a key strategic hub for Nigel Wright to expand across the whole Middle East and Africa region, where it has recruited now for many years. Our specialist team, presently operating from London and Paris, have extensive knowledge of working and operating across this diverse continent and we are delighted to welcome Wladimir to our leadership group.

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Tim Dewey

CEO at Timothy Taylor

Former Diageo, William Grant and Drambuie Liqueur Marketing Director Tim Dewey was appointed CEO of Timothy Taylor in December 2014. In this interview he explains to Andrew Openshaw his vision for the award winning ale brewer as the business gears up to launch its 'big communications idea' later this year.

What was it about the role and the organisation that attracted you to this opportunity?

I've worked with premium brands for most of my career and I immediately recognised this as an opportunity to be part of a very successful premium branded business, but where there was a great deal of scope for me to develop and improve the premium aspect of Timothy Taylor's brands and make them even more successful. I was also impressed with the organisational structure and board and the fact that it's a very well-run company. The other aspect was the fact that this was an opportunity for me to be CEO of an established business for the first time, which was really exciting.

You're actually the first non-family member to become CEO. How much influence does the Taylor family still ultimately have over the brand?

The Taylor family and its offshoots, such as the Horsfalls, have complete ownership of the Timothy Taylor business. There is, however, a strong system of corporate governance in place, which ensures there is a good balance between family members and non-family members on the Board of Directors. It currently consists of myself and two other executives, two independent directors and three family members, including the Chairman Charles Dent, who has married into the Taylor family. Timothy Taylor also has a number of interested family shareholders who attend our AGM and get in touch from time to time. This is absolutely right, as the family are still the soul behind the brand and it's vitally important to them that the business stays true to its values. That means having a commitment to using traditional brewing

There was a great deal of scope for me to develop and improve the premium aspect of Timothy Taylor's brands.

methods, making sure only the finest ingredients are used in the ales, and that the business is maintaining a high quality of service. During the selection process for the CEO role, the Board were very clear that they would only choose someone who they felt could protect those values. The environment here is a very collegial and supportive one, where everyone works closely and with the Company's best interests in mind.



Image: Tim Dewey, CEO at Timothy Taylor

After a period of gradual decline in the ale industry, the market has turned a corner and is returning to growth. What is behind this change?

The Progressive Beer Duty introduced by the Gordon Brown administration has certainly benefited brewers, especially microbreweries. It was a great financial incentive to encourage people to enter the market and take risks in product development. The result is a galvanised ale market, which has rekindled the interest of the consumer by offering them a broader choice of beers, as well as attracting a new younger legal drinking age consumer to ale. For companies like Timothy Taylor, however, this has been a double-edged sword because it has essentially allowed the smaller brewers to sell craft ales, which should command a premium, at low prices, which has ultimately devalued ale in general. It is fair to say that a number of brewers in the UK don't actually make any money from their beer, but instead focus on developing their pub estate. That isn't the approach we want to take and we believe it's time for producers to try and build increased value into the ale category.

So, what is your overall vision of the brand? What key objectives are you hoping to meet in your first 12 months?

The vision is for our beers to create a genuine and recognisable premium segment in the UK ale market. The ale sector in the UK is unusual because it is largely undifferentiated in terms of price.



The vision for our beers is to create a genuine and recognisable premium segment in the UK ale market.

The duty distortions I've already mentioned, as well as ale's traditional role in British culture as 'the working man's drink', has led to the perception that there is a cap on the price that can be charged for a pint, even relative to other beers, such as lager. It's clear from my time here at the Brewery, however, that given the attention to detail involved in the brewing process and the quality of the ingredients used in the ales, that Timothy Taylor's brands deserve to be sold at a premium. So, during the first twelve months, we're working on putting in place a strong commercial and marketing strategy that will ultimately help Timothy Taylor achieve this vision.

What actions have you taken so far?

When I was preparing for the Timothy Taylor interview process I asked a friend in a media company to analyse the overall media spend on Timothy Taylor, as well as its most well-known ale Landlord, during the last three years. The result was £6,000! So, it was pretty clear to me that Timothy Taylor hadn't really engaged in marketing activity before, but rather, has largely relied on word of mouth to grow its brands. In order to achieve our vision, I needed to change this approach.

I've since established a full-time in-house marketing resource and now we're looking at ways to start engaging with consumers. In my previous role at Drambuie Liqueur, we conceived the 'A Taste of the Extraordinary' communications idea to help explain the complex multi-dimensional taste of Drambuie to consumers. It's the relevant communications 'big idea' for Timothy Taylor that we're currently working towards. There are a number of agencies already involved in this process and the brief I've given them is focused, but with room for interpretation. Once we have that simple yet effective idea in place at Timothy Taylor, we can then focus on developing our multichannel approach.

I know Timothy Taylor launched Pint Finder last year, will social media continue to be one of the channels you develop moving forward?

There's no question that social will have a role to play. I've ensured that our new Head of Marketing is very conversant and comfortable in that channel and since she started a few months ago, we've already seen significant improvements in our content and engagement. One of the things that will really help this development is when we land our 'big communications idea', as it will offer a theme and approach to draw together our messages through the social channels. While we are awaiting for that idea to be fully defined, I'm sure within it, we'll focus on making sure we tell consumers exactly where they can buy our beer, as well as giving people a real insight into what happens here at the brewery and how our beers are different.



Does Timothy Taylor have plans to develop its portfolio of pubs? How key are they to the success of the brand?

We currently have a small estate of eighteen pubs, but we plan to acquire one or two additional pubs per year, in the right sort of locations. They are going to play an increasingly important role in the development of our brands. There is a lot of anxiety in the UK surrounding the fact that there are a number of pubs closing down. Timothy Taylor understands the relationship British people have with their pub, and we aim to make sure ours remain a relevant and vibrant part of the community. However, we're equally cognisant of the fact that drinking at home is now very popular. Our research suggests that the take-home trade will continue to grow and that ale is underrepresented in the take-home segment. So, we're also investing in the off-premise trade and I'm glad to say we're getting some good growth through supermarkets too, despite the fact that overall consumption of alcohol has gone down.

How do you work with retailers to maximise sales?

We have a relationship with a brewer based in South West England called Hall & Woodhouse, who represent Timothy Taylor brands to the off-premise trade. Hall & Woodhouse is another family owned brewer with similar values to ours and we work in partnership with them to identify the best opportunities for our ales. They have existing strong relationships with relevant buyers and good customer and channel knowledge through selling their own 'Badger Beer' brands. The key challenge for us, which relates back to what I said earlier, is trying to ensure we project a premium image in the off trade. There's still a

trend within retail to 'treat all ale brands the same' and often, within supermarkets for example, there are category promotions where Timothy Taylor ales are selected with other brands in '3 for £5' deals. We want our brands to be recognised as premium ales and therefore separate from mainstream products in this context; but it's difficult because ultimately the retailers have full control over pricing. So it is an education role for us; we need to talk to them about not just building volume, but also value into the ale market.

Do you have a different approach to the on premise trade?

Yes, absolutely. We manage our relationships with pubs directly and are very selective about the outlets that choose to sell our beers. It's a key principle of ours to only deal with customers who genuinely value our proposition and the quality of our products. Timothy Taylor brands are not cheap, so we need to be reassured that outlets that stock our ales fully appreciate the premium image that corresponds with the price, and that the outlets recognise they too can benefit from having the same image through an association with Timothy Taylor. I've already spent a lot of time on the road with our sales representatives and it's clear that they work extremely hard to get to know their customers and meet their needs and pay regular visits; contact that is surprisingly lacking from a lot of larger companies.

Innovation is obviously a key factor to get right in the drinks industry. In your view, what are the barriers you need to overcome to succeed at innovation? What is the innovation process like at Timothy Taylor?

Early in my career I worked for International Distillers & Vintners, now Diageo. Instead of doing twenty stages of research, the business had what was called a 'vitality test', which basically involved finding a sample of outlets and trialling new products in them. Sprints such as Baileys, Malibu and Archer's Peach Schnapps were all put through the 'vitality test' approach before being launched. I still believe that you can only look at the theoretical aspects of a product for so long before, ultimately, the best thing to do is get your product out there and see how the consumer reacts. At Timothy Taylor, I'm keen to build a pilot plant facility, which would allow us to develop more seasonal or limited edition beers, where we could produce them in smaller volumes and get the ales into our pubs quickly. So, to summarise, I think the trial and error aspect of innovation is important; you've got to find practical ways to develop products at a relatively low cost with a low risk, learn about consumers' responses quickly and then adapt the products if necessary.

Timothy Taylor understands the relationship British people have with their pub, and we aim to make sure ours remain a relevant and vibrant part of the community.

Timothy Taylor products continue to win awards and be category leaders. What plans do you have to develop the brands and take them to the next level beyond 'best beer'?

Our research suggests that there are still lots of areas in the UK where people have never heard of Timothy Taylor and its brands, so there is a lot of work to do to raise awareness - we can't just rely on winning awards to do this. The limited edition ales I mentioned earlier will be helpful, but there's no doubt the real thrust of our go-to-market strategy will be promoting our existing brands, particularly Landlord, which makes up around three quarters of our overall business. Despite the fact that Landlord has been voted Champion Beer of Britain a record four times, and Boltmaker won the award in 2014, many ale drinkers still don't know these beers exist. So, getting existing products to customers who have never heard of them is a key priority. Strangely, in extreme cases, there are some real ale pubs who won't stock Landlord because they see it as 'too big a brand.' To resolve this issue we need to clearly communicate that rather than being a large scale operation, Timothy Taylor is still producing its beer using traditional craft methods with, for example, open fermenting tanks located in traditional Yorkshire squares.

How have you found the transition from working for 'big corporates' to managing a business with a more restrained budget, specifically with regards to communicating with customers? What advice would you give to other people looking to make a similar career move away from a blue chip environment?



I'm keen to build a pilot plant facility, which would allow us to develop more seasonal or limited edition beers...the trial and error aspect of innovation is important.

While I enjoyed my time in big corporates, I did find that the politics and the bureaucracy became quite an irritation over time. I've really enjoyed my last two roles as they've been in smaller businesses where the focus is about getting on and achieving things. I find that extremely liberating, regardless of budget (and small budgets force you to be more focused and creative, which I enjoy). To other people looking to make this move, my best advice is that they do a high level of due diligence to understand the culture, stability, and corporate governance of their prospective companies. A small business, particularly a family business, without these elements can be an extremely difficult environment in which to work. It is important that you talk to people currently working in the business and those that have left to get a balanced view.

You're a marketer by trade; what particular marketing trends do you anticipate dominating consumer product marketing over the next decade?

I will be most interested to see how the nature and balance between traditional media and new (social) media evolves over time. While I recognise the power of social media, how many brands can we genuinely expect consumers to engage with at any one time? In the meantime, traditional media has become so fragmented and is starting to evolve so much (for example, people watching TV on demand) that there are enormous challenges in this sector as well. I think a key challenge for marketers has been, and will remain, how to utilise all of these channels in the most effective way for their particular brand.

What brands do you look to for inspiration?

I believe Peroni has done really well in recent years to position itself as a premium lager brand and I would like to think we could achieve something similar here at Timothy Taylor. In time I would like to think Landlord could become recognised as the 'Peroni of ales', though with a substance versus style approach.

How do you keep yourself busy outside of work?

I was ranked as a junior tennis player in the USA and still enjoy playing and watching the game. I also visit the gym when I can and spend a lot of my free time with my family. Since becoming CEO here I've discovered the beautiful Yorkshire Dales, and my wife and I are looking forward to exploring them further in the coming months.



Nigel Wright Raises Over £10,000



for Cancer Research UK

In July 2015, the company raised a grand total of £10,700 on behalf of the charity by taking part in the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge.

Twenty seven employees from across seven international offices took part in the walk, with many completing the route in under nine hours.

Sarah Dargue, managing consultant of Nigel Wright's finance team, made an outstanding individual contribution by raising over £1,000.

The Company regularly raises funds through a variety of activities and a significant contribution was also made as part of the Nigel Wright Summer Party event which brought together its employees to celebrate a great year so far for the company. Here, we raised £1,300 towards our fundraising.

Our aim in 2015 is to raise an overall total of £20,000.

CEO Paul Wilson, commented:
"We are delighted to have Cancer Research UK as our designated company charity and to continue our support for this wholly worthwhile cause. Additionally, we are extremely proud of our team for taking part in the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge and indeed many of the other events that we organise."

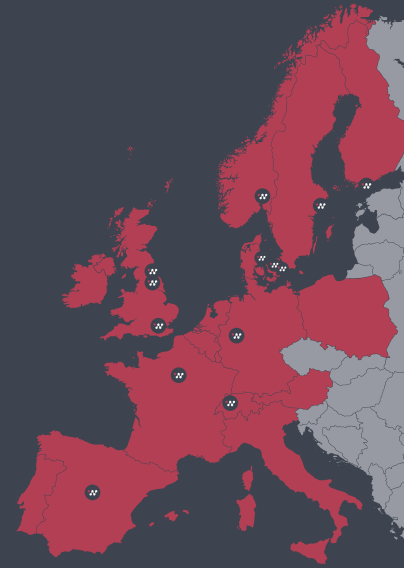
So far, a fantastic sum of money has been raised and our gratitude extends to the friends and families of our employees who take the time to donate and spread the word of our efforts."



About Nigel Wright Group

Since its formation, Nigel Wright Group has become a leading specialist consumer industry search firm. We have extensive experience of bringing together high-calibre candidates and world-class organisations. Our consultants are committed to delivering a quality service, to clients and candidates alike.

www.nigelwright.com



OUR CAPABILITY

NIGEL WRIGHT

GLOBAL DATABASE OF TALENT

We can find the best candidates from anywhere in the developed world. If you require a pan European or a global search, we have the candidates and contacts in your markets to get the results you need.

LOCAL DATABASE OF TALENT

We have native consultants present in each of our key territories. They all have strategic relationships with managements up to board level executives that extend over a number of years. This gives us an in-depth knowledge of your national talent pool.

CONSUMER INDUSTRY SPECIALISTS

We are the largest specialist recruiter for the Consumer sector. We have over 100 international consultants communicating to the market on a daily basis; building a powerful network of clients and candidates.

LINGUISTIC CAPABILITY

A multi-linguistic capability is essential in today's global businesses environment. We cover 25 languages including all European languages through to Arabic and Japanese.

ALL FORMS OF RECRUITMENT

We offer our clients executive search and selection, headhunting, professional networking, database searching and press and online web advertising.

SALARY LEVEL

We recruit at two levels on a permanent and interim basis: management and executive. All projects would be managed by a senior consultant, Manager or Director, where applicable.

DISCIPLINE

We recruit across various disciplines ranging from Finance, HR, Operations / Supply Chain, Commercial / Marketing & General Management.

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