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Welcome >>

CONSUMER FOCUS – ISSUE 5

Welcome to the latest edition of Consumer Focus. Nigel Wright Group's in-house magazine. In this issue we take a closer look at the evolution of the consumer industries, focusing in particular on the empowered consumer, the changing nature of retail, supply chain dynamics and the rise and rise of ecommerce and digital marketing. >>

Eurozone instability, mixed consumer confidence, rising commodity prices and inflation (to name a few macro factors) are still making life difficult for consumer companies. There is some consensus among analysts that confidence will return to the market, yet uncertainty regarding whether this will be six, twelve, or eighteen months still exists.

At the moment, for many organisations, it's still very much a 'batten down the hatches' mentality. However, the 'back to basics' approach adopted by some companies has helped many to maintain healthy balance sheets. Regaining control of the supply chain, reducing manufacturing 'footprints' and developing supplier relationships, for example, are trends that have been particularly prevalent in the consumer sectors. You can read about our own research on supply chain trends on page 25.

The economic climate, however, is just one factor forcing companies to be innovative in their approach to the market. On page 26 Boston Consulting Group gives its view on how the new informed and empowered consumer is another catalyst driving operational changes.

Innovation is taking place at a rapid pace across the whole spectrum of businesses in all sectors. In retail and consumer products, for example, building ecommerce capability is taking centre stage as consumer habits continue to evolve and digital marketing, particularly via social media, smart phones and tablets, is becoming the new 'panacea' of the trade. On page 12

Adish Burman from corporate finance analysts McQueen explains what retailers are doing to leverage ecommerce and digital marketing capability.

Ecommerce and the changing nature of retail are themes that run throughout this magazine and we also include interviews with online fashion retailer Net-a-Porter's CEO Natalie Massenet; The Body Shop's Benelux Chief, Bianca Verburg; Tim White, Head of Digital Commercialisation at pharmaceuticals firm Novartis and Chel Agency's new European President of Shopper Marketing, Simon Hathaway. Our own research on the

digital marketing phenomenon, found on page 34, also looks at the skills angle, highlighting how both traditional retailers and 'pure plays' are seeking talent with commercial intellect, innovation management, entrepreneurial flair and talent development skills, as well as the ability to influence across the organisation.

Talent management today, particularly for many multinational companies, is very much focused on building capability overseas, in emerging markets. The era of 'talent migration' sees a new competitive environment emerge where companies fight for the best 'multinational talent' around the world. This talent could exist anywhere, but it is slowly migrating from West to East and from North to South. On page 44, one of our emerging market experts, Eylem Emiroglu,

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talks about the abundance of opportunities in developing economies despite the knock-on impact of the Eurozone crisis. We also outline some future research we are conducting in this hugely significant area on page 48.

Throughout this issue of Consumer Focus you can read about the latest organisational and strategic initiatives from across Europe, in exclusive interviews with Viking in the Nordics and Mars Chocolate in France. And in the UK, consumer products giant Procter & Gamble give us a fascinating insight into the instrumental role it played at this summer's Olympic Games. The luxury goods industry also continues to be dynamic in tough market conditions; we take a closer look at growth trends in that sector and chat to Montblanc CEO Lutz Bethge on page 22.

In 2012 Nigel Wright reaffirmed itself as the industry's leading consumer recruitment group and earlier this year we were delighted to expand

our office space in Madrid, Oslo, Düsseldorf and Geneva, we continued to strengthen our teams with industry experts across the European territories. While we have maintained a strong market position in Europe, our unique ability to source the very best talent anywhere in the world has helped us to continue growing organically in strategic markets further afield. Emerging markets in particular are a focus for many of our clients and we have again been instrumental in helping them build teams in Africa, Asia, the Americas and the Middle East, in line with global demand. Furthermore, we were very pleased to announce new Director and Managerial posts for some of our 'home grown' talent in Germany, Norway, Spain and The Netherlands.

As well as the in-house thought leadership reports we have published this year on topics such as ecommerce, digital marketing and supply chain, our marketing team has been busy planning networking events across all the major disciplines for business leaders in our European territories. These have included a joint event with Sephora in Copenhagen, a shopper marketing forum in Oslo

and an emerging market leaders' dinner in Paris. We have also once again been the proud sponsor of the Swedish Retail Awards, the Danish Beauty Awards and the UK ICD awards, as well as the forthcoming UK Food Manufacturer and DIY awards, maintaining our commitment to supporting the industry sectors we are passionate about. We have a number of events in the pipeline over the next few months and moving into next year which we look forward to telling you about in due course.

We hope you enjoy the latest edition of Consumer Focus Magazine and would welcome feedback on any of its content.

JON MCNEISH
GROUP MANAGING
DIRECTOR

