

MADE SMARTER

The Protein Works Changing the game through tech innovation

A food manufacturer, supported by Made Smarter, has launched an innovative product to capitalise on the personalised nutrition market.

“The technology we are creating will transform the way data is gathered and information is analysed and how our business will operate.”



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abnormal.[®] is a new venture from the team behind The Protein Works, a fast-growing direct-to-consumer business that sells a wide range of protein powders, snacks, supplements, and foods, manufactured and distributed from its 75,000 square foot facility in Cheshire.

With the global meal replacement market valued at \$18 billion and forecast to grow, the business has invested over £1m in cutting-edge technology to produce a personalised, nutritionally-complete meal.

With Made Smarter support it has invested in a bespoke software solution to fully automate the process from customer order through to product dispatch.

The data and systems infrastructure links a front end web platform capturing data supplied by a customer to its back-office functions such as nutritional analysis, production, finance, warehouse management, data store, and business intelligence.

The result is a bespoke meal which is manufactured using paper-based product packaging and shipped direct to the customer on a 30-meal subscription.

Mark Coxhead, Founder and CEO, said: “The interest in personal nutrition has rocketed in the past few years. Consumers no longer believe that one size fits all.

“We have identified a huge market opportunity for abnormal which is why we’ve invested over a million pounds and spent two years building a very smart piece of technology in conjunction with bleeding-edge nutritional science.

“The support from Made Smarter has accelerated our journey to launch the product.”

The Opportunity

Since launching in 2012, The Protein Works has been on a rapid growth journey using its digital platform to sell to consumers directly both in the UK and globally to over 150 countries.

While athletes and bodybuilders used to dominate the sports nutrition market, these days healthy living and fitness trends are driving growth in the sector.

Mark said: “With the global meal replacement market estimated to be over \$18 billion in 2020 and forecast to continue to grow, complete meals have become a high growth sector with consumers wanting the convenience of a nutritionally balanced meal in a convenient powder format.”

The goal is to increase market share and capture a new generation of lifestyle customers who are looking for a healthy meal option by using digitalisation to personalise not only the product but also the purchasing and consumer experience.

The Solution

Made Smarter has supported the development of an integrated web platform, which has a marketing, subscription and commerce layer at the front-end and captures data supplied by a customer about their diet, lifestyle, health and habits, to create a unique profile.

The software then links to back-office functions such as nutritional analysis where algorithms process the data to create a meal containing the

right amount of protein, essential fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals for the customer. It even takes into account allergies and intolerances.

The meals are manufactured in-house using fully recyclable paper-based single serve sachets and personalised packaging, which includes a bespoke nutrition guide.

Any changes the customer makes to their profile will resync to create a new meal recipe on their next order.

Mark said: “Digital is at the heart of everything that we do, and we aim to innovate and improve by using leading edge technologies and real depth of data insight.

“abnormal. is about creating a great tasting, nutritionally balanced complete meal that is personalised to your own unique profile and lifestyle.”

The Benefits

The inherent automation that the new technology offers provides a competitive advantage in a new market and will give the business more opportunity to invest in achieving further efficiency and productivity gains as the business grows.

Mark said: “Having an affordable healthy meal, that is designed for the individual on so many levels, whether they are vegan, flexitarian or not, and has minimal impact on the planet, is a very powerful proposition. Personalised nutrition will be a game changer in the market.”

CASE STUDY



“The technology we are creating will transform the way data is gathered and information is analysed and how our business will operate.”

“These new technologies enable faster, more responsive, and more efficient processes to deliver higher-quality personalised products at a reduced cost.”

The project has created four new jobs and will upskill a further 10.

The Future

The company aims to invest more in the software and analytics to use data to empower decision-making across its range of brands.

Data will also drive continuous improvement and further investment in automation and

improving its manufacturing operations to become a state-of-the-art facility.

Its hardware and software solution will also enable the business to leverage its NPD team to continue driving innovation.

Mark said: “This is a transformational step for our business, as the data gathered will help to further develop the abnormal. nutritional proposition for our consumers. To create personalised nutritious food, which is backed up with a unique end to end experience.”

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