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Smart Order Solution for Sales Operations Excellence

Ganesh Sivakumar, Chief Data Analytics & AI Officer, Mead Johnson Nutrition

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Mead Johnson Nutrition

Nutrition | New Jersey, USA | IT&D | Data Analytics & AI
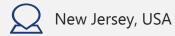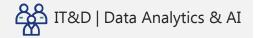
Smart Order Solutions

About Mead Johnson :

➢ Specializes in science-based **infant and child nutrition**, led by its flagship brand Enfamil
➢ Strong brand legacy and consumer trust with science-backed formulations
➢ Key Revenue Streams: Infant formula (retail, medical, and potential direct-to-consumer channels)

Ganesh Sivakumar - Global Chief Data Analytics and AI Officer

➢ With over **24 years of experience**, Ganesh has led impactful data and AI-driven transformations across Healthcare, Manufacturing, Ecommerce industries.
➢ Known for unifying cross-functional teams in Finance, Sales, Marketing, and Operations, he drives data as a strategic asset to fuel business growth.

Smart Order Solution

Business Problems :

Struggling to forecast & optimize the inventory order requirement based on store demand leading to excess / low stock thus not realising the stores potential

No prior system installed for store wide SKU assortment replenishment inventory forecast, so establishing automations took multiple iterations with x stakeholder teams

Recommend the correct quantity and assortment of products to order to maximise incremental Sales value and volume

Sales reps have no data driven visibility to give business recommendation to stores

Pain Points :

1. High call complexity with multiple brands, 80+ SKUs, and 20+ outlets/day leads to missed selling opportunities and difficulty prioritizing during calls.

2. Lack of store-level buying patterns, coupled with competing monthly priorities (NPD, promos, activations), results in overstocking and high returns

Objectives :

1. To forecast detailed demand for each store. This forecast includes details like product size, SKU style, geographical and location

2. To optimize inventory planning and sales operations

3. To maximize revenue/ store (incremental sales)

Smart Order Solution

What is Smart Order?

Leverage AI-driven guided selling to personalize SKU suggestions at the store level, using past sales data and store-specific insight. This is based on a 'Measurement' and 'Recommendation' systems.

Measurement System

Feature	Description
Historical Buying Analysis	Tracks regular selling lines based on each store's past purchase patterns.
Peer Store Comparison	Identifies must-stock lines by analyzing similar stores (same outlet type, sales volume, etc.).
Sales Rep Guidance	Recommends products for sales reps to prioritize in high-demand stores.

Recommendation System

Feature	Description
Optimal Product & Quantity Recommendation	Suggests the best mix of products and quantities to order.
Inventory-Aware	Considers current store inventory and minimum required stock levels.
Case-Level Optimization	Recommends orders in cases (bulk) rather than individual units for operational efficiency.

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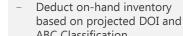
How it Works?

REGULAR SELLING LINE -

– Regularly Purchased By Store in L6M (Net of return)
– Return Criteria
– More than 30% will not be recommended

+

MUST SELL LINE –

– System generated MSL SKUs based on outlet/channel potential.

–

Inventory

– Deduct on-hand inventory based on projected DOI and ABC Classification

A - SKU: 75 Days (80%)
B - SKU: 60 Days (15%)
C - SKU: 60 Days (5%)

+

Promo, NPD and Focus SKU

– New Product SKUs or Priority SKUs
– Promo SKUs will be based on allocation

Benefits

➢ Drive IMS Maximize store buying potential
➢ Building the right assortment
➢ Ensure distribution of NPDs
➢ Reduce Returns by selling right SKU at right store
➢ Better in-store execution
➢ Better Visibility on Order to improve Fill Rate

WHERE TO SELL

WHAT TO SELL

HOW MUCH TO SELL

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IMPACT

- **98%** accurate sales forecast in each store

- **15-20%** improvement in product variety across stores

- Improved sales **conversion and revenue uplift**

- **152 Sales Reps** are using Newspage and can have this visibility

INNOVATION

- **Analyses Real-time data -** real-time analysis ensures that every recommendation is based on the most current and relevant information available
- **Predict** – The primary objective is to forecast detailed demand for each specific store
- **SKU Selection-** The tool provides highly personalized and strategic SKU recommendations by analyzing several factors
- **Store patterns-** identifies a store's unique historical buying patterns

- **Industry trends-** analyzes the sales data of similar stores (e.g., same outlet type or sales volume) to identify "Must Stock Lines"—essential products

- **Store type** - e.g., large supermarket vs. small convenience store

- **Geography-** System considers regional preferences and location-specific demand drivers

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Lessons Learned

Harmonizing AI with Human-Led Sales Operations Is Critical

Simply building an AI model isn't enough—integrating it seamlessly into the daily workflow of 150+ sales representatives across 17 distributors required a strong change management framework, intuitive interfaces (via Newspage HHT), and iterative feedback loop

Start Small, Learn Fast, Scale Strategically

We piloted Smart Order in stages—first with limited inventory logic, then scaled across regions with increasing sophistication. This allowed us to fine-tune logic like DOI-based assortment and ABC SKU classification, based on pilot learnings.

Enabled Through the Support of Technology and Business Partners at MJN

Special Thanks to Erwin Tumbaga and Vinisha Patel