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Weetabix implements global demand planning software

£300 million breakfast cereals company Weetabix is on the final leg of implementing new supply chain demand planning software in an effort to improve its global forecast accuracy.

The company, which also owns the Alpen and Ready Brek brands, services 80 export markets and says that the new system, from TXT eSolutions, will help it remain competitive by applying sophisticated statistical algorithms to sales histories to determine demand levels.

Weetabix demand planners will thus be able to work more effectively with marketing and production to determine cereal production at the company's principal 90-acre manufacturing plant in Northamptonshire.

Increased collaboration and sharing of sales data is increasingly being seen as a means to improve forecast accurately and thus improve sales, cut costs and improve profitability.

Jeff Seagrave, head of forecasting at Weetabix, reckons retailers and manufacturers will both benefit from collaboration. "Both have the same objective," he says. "To take out the peaks and troughs of the supply chain, so there are no out-of-stocks and no disappointed customers."

He believes that TXT e-Solutions' software will have positive impact right through the business – citing, for example, providing for manufacturing efficiencies, warehouse stock reduction and better transport utilisation. He also says that because around one third of all sales are promotion-led, the true impact of campaigns will be measured more accurately so they too can be honed for increased profitability.

"The risks of not properly understanding a promotion these days are getting greater and greater," says Seagrave. "Demand and promotion planning tools ensure that budgets are achieved and shelves remain stocked."

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