

COMMON MISSTEPS & HOW TO AVOID THEM

1 Not hitting the mark with consumers- and paying the price.

Capturing consumer interest can be a small window. With the breakneck pace of development and launch cycles - it can be difficult to ensure that true and timely consumer sentiment is informing your decisions.

Consumer testing takes time. Developing the right positioning, understanding the

labeling possibilities, claims - it can be a whirlwind. Maybe you're budget-strapped and consumer testing is falling on the priority list. Perhaps you've always worked with dry formulations and you're just getting started in the RTD arena. The fact is: You don't know what you don't know. It's critical to hear those consumer "whispers" early and often.

■ REAL ADVICE FROM EXPERTS:



"We've just completed some in-depth research into the protein beverage consumer. When it comes to RTDs, 67% of consumers are interested in cafe inspired tastes like mocha, putting it in contention with traditional favorites like chocolate and vanilla. We're also seeing that high protein, great taste and low sugar are the top priorities for these RTD consumers - so our guidance is to put those needs at the forefront of product development."

Nicole Albert - Business Industry Manager

2 Relying on the traditional scale-up process, which is complex & inflexible.

You've likely been there: you wait weeks and weeks for your scheduled scale-up test at a co-manufacturer. Everything is on the line - weeks of preparation and a big chunk of your budget. If every single piece of the puzzle doesn't fall into place - if one ingredient is

delayed- you have to wait all over again, and request a new time slot.

You spend weeks and weeks and gallons of product and it can all be in vain. Flexibility and simplicity are possible, though sometimes they seem out of reach.

■ REAL ADVICE FROM EXPERTS:



"In a word, don't. Don't feel like you have to rely on something that isn't working for you. Don't settle. My advice is to think outside the box and leverage the best and brightest of your internal people - and external vendors. It's possible to approach the scale-up process in new ways. You might be surprised at the ideas that can rise to the surface."

Andrew Kittle, Senior Applications Technologist



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3 Feeling like you have to “go it alone”.

Think of designing and developing an RTD product like the construction of a building. Without a project manager – do the electricians know what the carpenters are doing? Will the flooring installers need to work around the plumbers? There are so many

moving parts – it’s the same in your product development. How do you make sure that everything is on-track while executing with speed, efficiency and relevance? When everything rests on your shoulders, true partnership with a reliable go-to is essential.

■ REAL ADVICE FROM EXPERTS:



“Leverage your ingredient suppliers. If your partners aren’t willing to welcome you into their building and roll-out the red carpet to help solve your problems and take on your challenges – you might need to think about having frank discussions – or finding new ingredient suppliers.

Cara Newkirk, Beverage Business Director

4 Letting taste & texture challenges derail your hard work.

Ingredient changes affect taste, texture and aroma in a host of different ways. From off-notes to chalky perception – one change to your formula is like pulling a thread on a sweater. Everything’s connected (and it can all fall apart.) Maybe you’re facing a short-

age of key ingredients and are tasked with reformulating. Do you have experts you can lean on, to predict taste and texture changes accurately? You deserve someone in your corner who understands the complexity at play, and can anticipate the impact on taste, aroma and texture.

■ REAL ADVICE FROM EXPERTS:



“I’ve screened literally thousands of protein beverages, and if there’s one thing I’ve learned it’s that you shouldn’t underestimate the impact of any ingredient change – no matter how minor it seems – on your product. Communication early and often when those decisions come up – that’s my best advice.”

Shondra Cook, Senior Scientist

