



A DATASSENTIAL CASE STUDY

- **\$18+ billion in revenue**
- **100+ brands**
- **Sold in over 100 countries**

Note: these figures are for General Mills corporation, not specifically NAF division.

The North America Foodservice (NAF) division at General Mills is no stranger to vast amounts of data. Given its focus across multiple industries, from K-12 to hospitals and from pizzerias to hotels, the problem tends to be on the data management side. The division spends a lot of time and resources trying to reconcile data from multiple sources to optimally identify and capture the white space in a given vertical and/or market.

SPOTLIGHT CLIENT

The NAF division at General Mills has a lot going on. Not only is the team responsible for selling a wide range of products - from operator-focused back-of-the-house solutions to leading front-of-the-house consumer-facing brands - but it also sells variations of these products across multiple industries, including lodging, healthcare, K-12, convenience stores, restaurants, and several others.

With so much ground to cover, quality data is integral. The business development team relies on sound operator and market data to surface untapped growth opportunities across industries and product types while the field sales team relies on the data and intelligence to develop more effective selling strategies.

THE CHALLENGE

When Jonathan Guyer, a 15-year General Mills veteran, took on a data governance role on the NAF sales team in 2018, he was shocked at how much time was being spent simply cleansing and integrating the NAF team's data. In order to ensure coverage across all its target markets, the team was receiving data from 7 different industry-specific vendors on a regular basis.



Jonathan Guyer

Business Development
Manager



With varying file configurations, data attributes, and transfer schedules across all the sources, the job of cleansing and organizing the data was extremely challenging. In fact, so much time was going into data management that there were not enough resources to focus on actually extracting value from the data.

THE SWITCH

Jonathan knew that there had to be a better solution and began researching solutions to address the inefficiency caused by receiving data from multiple sources. He initiated the RFP process to identify a vendor who had sufficient coverage, both from a volume and attribute perspective, across the NAF division's core markets. He quickly narrowed down his choices to Datassential's operator sales data and intelligence product and 2 other competitive products.

"[Firefly] blew the other products away. We liked the transparent pricing model, and we loved the web interface - it was significantly more user friendly than any of the other products," recalled Jonathan. Jonathan proceeded to replace the cobbled-together data sources with Firefly, which became the team's single source of truth.

THE IMPACT

Consolidating from 7 industry-specific vendors to Firefly, a single source of data that spanned across General Mills' core markets, was transformational for the organization. The time that was previously spent on cleansing and harmonizing the data was reallocated to higher value projects that made the data more actionable.

"Once the switch had been made, Firefly ultimately became the backbone of our CRM system," said Jonathan. Today, the NAF team organizes all its operator data in Salesforce using Firefly's IDs and categorizations. The team can either access Firefly data through the Salesforce integration or login to the Firefly platform directly.

There are a handful of users at the corporate level and over 200 field salespeople who regularly rely on Firefly's menu insights and operator data to sell more effectively and close new business. "We have an internal social media platform that the sales team uses to share details on the "why" behind wins and Firefly is consistently mentioned as a driver of success." Jonathan, who is also responsible for sales training, said he also loves Firefly because anyone can learn to use it quickly. As a result, engagement with Firefly is high among the sales team, further increasing ROI.

WHY THEY ARE LOYAL DATASSENTIAL USERS

Jonathan not only cites the ongoing data harmonization and high sales engagement as the reason they continue to use Firefly, but also his experience as a Datassential customer.

"Our Datassential representative is amazing. They take the time to understand our goals. They also know the product really well, and they come to the table with ideas and solutions to help us extract more value out of our investment."
- Jonathan Guyer

